

St. Marys Independent

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Issue #1199

Thursday, February 22, 2024

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The Raes win all three games of Family Feud Canada



The Rae family celebrates after winning three straight games of Family Feud Canada. Photo courtesy of CBC

By Wendy Lamond

What do the Azeez, Clarke and D'Souza families all have in common? They were all beat out by the Rae Family of St. Marys on Family Feud Canada.

Many people in St. Marys tuned in for three nights watching as the local family pulled off three straight wins. In the second game, siblings Natasha Banks and Brent Rae managed to surpass the 200-point mark in the fast money round to win the \$10,000 prize money.

Two of the games had Shauna Rae competing in sudden death action and coming out on the winning end both

times. The very funny host Gerry Dee seemed to have a lot of fun with the family and learned some new things like how to play bum darts and that Kathy liked to skinny dip.

It was an exciting week for the Rae's reliving the fun of being on the show and they have shared with the Independent some of the behind-the-scenes experiences.

When asked about their coordinating outfits, Kathy Rae commented there were strict guidelines for what to wear and they had three days to submit photos of them.

Continued on page 2

St. Marys council amends parking bylaw with fines for improper parking at EV charging stations

By Galen Simmons

St. Marys council is paving the way for the upcoming installation of electric-vehicle (EV) charging stations with an amendment to the town's parking bylaw that includes fines for improper parking at EV charging stations.

At the Feb. 13 town council meeting, St. Marys councillors approved an amendment to its parking and boulevard maintenance bylaw in support of the town's participation in the Perth County Electric Pathways project – a project aimed at installing a network of EV charging stations across the county's geographic area. In this initial phase, the project will see charging stations installed at the Pyramid Recreation Centre and in the Jones Street parking lot downtown, however more chargers could be installed in other public and municipal parking lots, as well as in on-street parking areas in the town's downtown core.

In addition to adding definitions for terms like electric vehicle and EV chargers to the bylaw, and allowing for some parking exceptions to the current parking bylaw to allow electric vehicles to be parked and charging longer than three hours or overnight, the amendment also introduces fines for non-electric vehicles parked at EV charging stations and for electric vehicles parked at charging stations that aren't actively charging.

While the proposed set fine for a non-electric vehicle parked at an EV charger is \$120 or \$100 if voluntary payment is made within seven days, the

Continued on page 2

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COMMUNITY

St. Marys council amends parking bylaw with fines for improper parking at EV charging stations

Continued from page 1

set fine for an electric vehicle parked at a charger but not actively charging is only \$70 or \$50 if the fine is paid within seven days.

"If you park in one of the spots (in a non-electric vehicle) and you pay within seven days, it's going to be \$100, but then if you have an electric

vehicle and you park in the spot and don't plug in, it's going to be half that. Why?" Coun. Jim Craigmile asked.

"Likely, the person has unplugged in most examples and remains sitting there, so they had other charges (for charging their vehicle)," responded town clerk Jenna McCartney. "There just wasn't a better way to capture it. We wanted to make sure it is im-

pactful. If you are sitting there (in a non-electric vehicle) and taking up a space so other people can't use it, that was the reason for the higher fee."

Before the amended bylaw can take effect, McCartney said the town must send it to the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General for approval, a process that could take several months. In the meantime, she said the town

will launch a public-awareness campaign to ensure residents understand the new parking rules before town bylaw officers begin issuing tickets.

The total expected cost of the bylaw amendment will be roughly \$750 -- \$250 for designated signage at EV charging stations and \$500 for the awareness campaign.

The Raes win all three games of Family Feud Canada

Continued from page 1

"We were turned down with our first outfits because they were popular colours this season. Natasha did the work shopping Labour Day weekend while the rest of us were all over the place. She had to take those back and start again, and that was looking for two pregnant women," Kathy Rae said.

The family was also responsible for doing their own hair and makeup.

"It was so funny watching the boys powder up for the shows," said Shaina Rae.

When asked at what point the show receives all the personal stories about each of them, Brent Rae said it was all through the interview and application process and then they write a script, in a sense. Dee doesn't know the stories, but he is given cues and the family is supposed to tell their stories when he gives those cues.

"The biggest thing though, and what most people don't know, is that he gives a cue every time before an answer so you're almost more worried about what story he is going to ask about rather than answering the question and that's why, when it's edited, it may seem like you don't have an answer. Sometimes you're so distracted you forget what your answer was going to be," Brent Rae said.

Other than the fast money prize, the show gives \$5 for every point won, so even though there were two games where they were short points for the \$10,000, the Raes still took home approximately \$900 each show.

If you have ever wondered about what happens backstage when you are waiting for your turn to play fast money, Brent Rae says they put earphones on you and blast music and there is a producer giving you hand signals to be ready to take them off, and then you run right out ready to

go.

The whole process and time commitment for the show was a lot, and there was a point that the Raes wondered if they should continue. People don't know it, but the family made a trip to Toronto for a scheduled date and got six minutes away from the condo they rented to do their hair and makeup when they got a message that they wouldn't be needed. There was never a guarantee as it just depended on whether families kept winning.

"We owe it to our community," Don Rae said.

Seeing the reaction from the community this week on social media, it is a good thing that they did continue. Don Rae's favourite part of the show was playing the game with his family

and seeing how they all reacted under pressure.

One thing the Rae's all agree on is the experience was fun and exciting. The trips home from Toronto were great talking about the show, and the support from family, friends and the community has been incredible.

"Watching back and seeing it with everyone has been the most fun," Banks said

For those watching on Valentine's Day when a member of the D'Souza family announced her pregnancy, Banks was in the middle of giving birth to her third little boy.

Congratulations to Banks and the rest of the Rae family!



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COMMUNITY

St. Marys council proclaims Feb. 19-23 Kin Canada Week

By Wendy Lamond

The week of Feb. 19-23 has been proclaimed Kin Canada Week.

Feb. 20 is Founders Day, marking the day the organization was started in Hamilton, Ont. in 1920. The Kinsmen and Kinettes of St. Marys sent a proclamation request to the town, which was approved at a recent council meeting.

"We are very fortunate to have an active Kinette Club and Kinsmen Club in our community," St. Marys Mayor Al Strathdee said. "The family of Kin have contributed to our community in so many ways, touching many lives. It is with gratitude that council has made the proclamation of Kin Canada Week as a gesture of recognition and thanks for all the great work done to help our community."

The Kin Flag will be flown at town hall for a week to show appreciation for all past and present volunteer members that selflessly give of their time. The flag will be raised on Feb. 20 at 4p.m.

Both the Kinsmen and Kinette clubs of St. Marys, like all service clubs, are a vital part of our town. The money



they raise from events goes back into the community and towards Kin Canada's main fundraiser in support of Canadians with cystic fibrosis.

For the Kinsmen, Kin Summer Fest, the Kinsmen fruit sale and the Christmas tree pick-up are just a few of the many initiatives club members busy themselves with.

"It's a real honour to have the Town of St. Marys raise the Kin Flag in recognition of the many years of service the clubs have provided the town," said club president Cliff Sterritt. "As well, having the flag visible for all to see during Kin Week is a good reminder to the citizens of St. Marys that the

Kin Clubs are here to serve the community's greatest needs."

According to St. Marys Kinette president Terri Iredale, there are 371 Kin Canada Clubs coast to coast with 4,600 members across the country. The St. Marys Kinette club currently has 18 members, and the Kinsmen have 24.

The St. Marys Kinette Club is also celebrating its 55th year in service this year, commemorating their official charter night on March 1, 1969, at the St. Marys Legion.

Phyllis Spearin was a charter member and reflected on what the club means to her and what changes she has noticed over the last 55 years.

"The people I have met and the lifelong friendships I've made over 55 years are truly a blessing to me. I'm still participating in the club and feel it is my way to pay back to my club and community," she said.

"A couple of big changes I've seen over the years are when we started out 55 years ago, your husband had to be a Kinsmen for you to join Kinettes. Also, the governing structure of national, district and zone levels have changed and amalgamated to accom-

modate the drop in memberships throughout service clubs in general."

She went on to say that joining the Kinsmen and Kinettes was one of the best decisions of her and her husband's lives.

The Kinettes are not currently planning anything for the 55th anniversary other than a few celebratory events at their club meeting.

On March 2, the club will host a St. Patrick's Day Pub Night at the Legion and, on March 3, the club will host the draw at Snapping Turtle Coffee Roasters for the club's Fill Your Fridge Lottery. Also, coming up on Easter Weekend is the ever-popular annual Easter Egg Hunt.

Feb. 24 is National Day of KINdness and the Kinettes are handing out kids activity sheets and treats at a few locations in town. So far this year, the club has served a community dinner, sold poinsettias and delivered Meals on Wheels.

Congratulations to the St. Marys Kinettes on 55 years of service and to all Kin as they celebrate Founders day for Kin Canada Week.

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COMMENTARY

The TriCounty Foodgrains Group thanks community and shares plans for 2024

By Nikki Taylor

Thanks to the community's generous support and the government's four-to-one matching program, the TriCounty Foodgrains Group raised approximately \$30,000 this year to help end hunger in our world.

A partnership between East Nisour Union Church, St. Marys Presbyterian Church and St. Marys First Baptist Church, the Tri-County Foodgrains Group is run exclusively by volunteers. We grow crops that are sold at the St. Marys Farmers Market with all proceeds being donated to the cause. Generous donations of crops, plants and land from the Hitching Post, Petals and Foliage, Janie Gras and Sheila Greason are much appreciated and greatly

contribute to this project's success.

For 2024, volunteers have decided to grow red and white potatoes, onions and squash for sale at the market.

A Music Night fundraiser showcasing the talents of Chet Greason and Aimee Jesso of The Bone Radlers will be held at St. Marys First Baptist Church on Sept. 21 at 7:30 p.m. A freewill offering will be accepted from attendees at that time.

We are always looking for new volunteers and supporters of the project. If you would like more information or would like to get involved, please contact Bob Pickel at (519)-461-1400 or Nikki Taylor at (226)-921-6178.

See you at the Market!

Bravo

We have 2 Bravos this week.

1) Bravo to Mary Smith for another fascinating double article on the Wright family, the forebears of the celebrated Canadian artist Kent Monkman who was born in St. Marys.

2) Bravo and thank you to the person that cleaned out my laneway on Church St. S last week.



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

Boo

We have 1 Boo this week.

1) Boo to the Town of St. Marys. While they really do a fantastic job the majority of the time, why, when the town is full of dog-owning families, can they not use a pet-friendly ice melter instead of the rock salt currently used? Our dogs and the other dogs we notice holding their legs up during their morning walks would be forever grateful. I'm sure you can do better.



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

Quote of the Week

"Reports of Alexei Navalny's death are tragic and horrifying. An unwavering advocate for Russian democracy and freedom, his courage was unparalleled. To be clear: He should never have been imprisoned to begin with. Let this be an important reminder that we must continue to promote, protect, and defend democracy everywhere. The consequences of not doing so are stark."

- Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Feb. 16, commenting on the death of Alexei Navalny in a Russian prison.

Overheard at the Coffee Shop

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It was fun watching the Raes win on Family Feud!

Throwing a hat onto the ice to salute a three-goal game is one of hockey's great traditions.

Have you heard something humorous around town that you think might be of interest to others?

Either email them to us at info@stmarysindependent.com with the title "Overheard at The Coffee Shop", call 519-284-0041 or drop by the office to let us know!

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The St. Marys Independent

THOUGHTS
OF THE WEEK

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It's the friends we meet along the way that help us appreciate the journey.

Good friends are like stars, you don't always see them but you know they are always there.

A real friend is one who walks in when the rest of the world walks out.

Stick with people that pull the magic out of you, not the madness.

COMMUNITY

Perth County approves a 12.31 per-cent tax levy for 2024

By Amanda Modaragamage, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

At the regular Perth County Council meeting Feb. 15, Perth County council approved the 2024 capital and operating budgets with a 12.31 per-cent increase to the levy, totalling \$22,198,354.

This is an increase of \$2,432,781 over last year's budget.

The programs and projects approved for this year's budget are influenced by the county's corporate strategic plan for 2023 through 2026. The five main goals of the plan include growth and economic development, regionalization and service effectiveness, customer service excellence, community development and planning, and corporate sustainability.

"We acknowledge that this is a difficult tax year," said Corey Bridges, the county's manager of finance and treasurer, at the meeting. "Municipal staff continue to work towards maintaining current service levels and addressing corporate priorities while striving to ensure resiliency, sustainability and accountability from the corporation.

"We took a refreshed approach to the development of our streamlined budget package this year. The county is experiencing budget pressures similar to those of other municipalities across the province. This year, inflationary pressures were the primary source of increased expenses across all service areas."

The 2024 Budget was initially presented to council in December 2023 and then later, the treasurer delivered capital and operating budget presentations over several council meetings in January.

A dedicated capital levy increase of 1.06 per cent was approved to continue to move the county's asset management plan forward.

The operational levy increase of 11.25 per cent will ensure the maintenance of the current service levels and address corporate priorities.

"Council is confident that this budget supports the continued excellent programs delivered by the county," said county Warden Rhonda Ehgoetz. "I look forward to seeing the completion of some exciting projects in the county in 2024."

Some of those projects include the completion of the courthouse campus, completion of the new Official Plan, road, bridge and culvert replacement projects, public works and paramedic fleet vehicle replacements, and the regional automated external defibrillators (AED) program.

"Staff work hard each day to deliver efficient and effective services across Perth County," said county CAO Lori Wolfe. "All of our programs and services are connected back to the goals and objectives of the county's strategic plan, and we appreciate council's support of that vision and the work we do."



STONETOWN CRIER

The latest municipal news from the Town of St. Marys



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

March 8, 1 PM | Friendship Centre

Join the St. Marys Friendship Centre on Friday, March 8 at 1 PM for their free 2024 International Women's Day event! Pre-registration is required.

townofstmarys.com/activenet or 519-284-3272

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Weekend Quiz

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1. Worship of Krishna is observed by which Religious Faith?
2. From which country does Gouda cheese originate?
3. What was Disney's first animated movie?
4. What sport is dubbed the "king of sports"?
5. In little red riding hood, who does the wolf dress up as?
6. Area 51 is located in which U.S state?
7. What is the loudest animal on Earth?
8. In what type of matter are atoms most tightly packed?
9. Pikachu is from what fictional universe?
10. For what movie did Steven Spielberg win his first Oscar for best director?

This week's answers are found on pg. 31

COMMUNITY

Friendship Centre to celebrate International Women's Day with energetic, inspiring afternoon

By Emily Stewart

The Friendship Centre will be hosting an afternoon social for International Women's Day to inspire and engage the community.

The centre's event will begin at 1 p.m. on March 8. The afternoon will be filled with guest speakers, snacks and socializing.

"It is a pretty energetic vibe just with the people that do come, and they celebrate and motivate," said Pauline White, the senior wellness services coordinator at St. Marys Friendship Centre.

The Friendship Centre will feature Anne Innes, who served on the United Nations' (UN) Association for Country Women of the World for four years, as the keynote speaker. At the Friendship Centre's event, she will talk about her experience with trustees and what she learned about the status of women. Innes ran educational programs for immigrants, newcomers and rural parents struggling with isolation, and attended the UN's 2022 International Women's Day Event in New York.

The event will also have Frances Taylor of the Huron Perth Seniors Mental Health and Addictions Response Team talking about factors impacting older women's mental health and directing attendees to resources. Jenn Taylor of The Local Community

Food Centre will also address food insecurity. The Friendship Centre selects guest speakers whose work ties into the yearly International Women's Day theme, this year's being "Inspire Inclusion."

"I think education employs growth, and togetherness builds a sense of community which leads to empowerment," White said. "So, all things considered, we can inspire inclusion for everyone with our words and actions."

The Friendship Centre has hosted International Women's Day events since 2018 and always has a strong turnout. The centre saw 120 people attend the event in 2023. Even during the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic when events were held over Zoom meetings, 70 people attended the event.

White said the event is for all genders and ages, with young women popping into the Friendship Centre and men baking desserts to be served. Admission is free and donations will be accepted for the Friendship Centre and the Local Community Food Centre.

To register for the Friendship Centre's International Women's Day event, visit in-person at the Friendship Centre, online via anc.ca.apm.active-communities.com/townofstmarys/home or call 519-284-3272.



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COMMUNITY

Significant public feedback received for proposed new Perth County Official Plan



Perth East farm owner John Van Nes was one of many who asked questions pertaining to the proposed Perth County official plan at a public meeting in Milverton last week. Seated from left are Perth County planner Andrea Hachler with planning associate Aubree Erickson. Photo by Gary West

By Gary West

There was a capacity crowd of more than 350 Perth East area ratepayers in attendance at the Perth East Recreation Complex to discuss the latest draft copy of Perth County's proposed official plan.

The public meeting was the fourth and final hosted in the county's lower-tier municipalities, with feedback from each compiled for council to consider before approving the draft plan. Other community meetings were previously held in Listowel, Mitchell and St. Pauls.

Following an hour long video presentation by WSP planning consultant Matt Alexander, many of the residents in attendance lined up to ask questions about the proposed plan.

There were many Perth County councillors in attendance including Perth County Warden Rhonda Ehgoetz, who is also the Mayor of Perth East.

"It was good to get the feedback and see that local ratepayers are engaged and are willing to express their concerns about the new official plan that is proposed," she said. "They are updating a document that is 25 years old with policies that need to be updated for growth and future development of Perth County. The county is looking at where the growth should happen for the next 20 years and we want to

ensure good planning practices are in place."

The county is also looking at long-term housing and employment-growth potential.

The county is predominantly agriculture, so staff and council are looking at agricultural issues, secondary farm occupations, and retail and small-to-medium scale commercial and industrial businesses.

While updating the official plan can be a daunting task, Ehgoetz said council wants to make sure the county gets it right. She feels the biggest issue with the official plan councillors are hearing about is the new natural-heritage land designation.

Many residents, including area farmers, have concerns with what it means and how it will affect their property.

She said council is trying to answer all the questions and they want to work with the ratepayers along with their consultants to help them get a better understanding of what is happening.

The warden said she feels that through the recent public meetings, council and staff will be able to achieve a new official plan that maps the future growth of Perth.

More info is available at perthcounty.ca

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COMMUNITY

Host families needed for international students staying in Stratford, St. Marys

By Galen Simmons

A company that works to bring international high school students to study at Canadian schools and experience what life has to offer here is looking for local families to provide lodging and help foster truly Canadian experiences for students that will be attending Avon Maitland District schools starting in September.

MLI Homestay, a division of MLI Education Group, is specifically looking for families in Stratford, St. Marys, Goderich and Listowel to volunteer as host families, something MLI community engagement and social media specialist Jodi Anderson says is crucial to international students getting the most of their stay in Canada.

"They're basically part of the family," Anderson said. "They need their own bedroom ... they make their own breakfast and usually their own lunch, but hopefully they have dinner together and just integrate in Canadian life. It helps them with their language; obviously they gain so much English in just communicating (with the host family). The family also helps with their independence in navigating wherever they live."

"Some kids come and they're in Vancouver, B.C., or Toronto, but a lot of them come and actually really want to have a more rural experience. We're seeing the program grow in Avon Maitland ... because kids want to be in just not as busy a place."

Students typically stay with their host families for anywhere between three and 12 months. A large part of

the experience international students look for while in Canada is the ability to participate in Canadian life with their host family. This includes enjoying various foods they have heard or read about, participating in the weekly family routine, and extracurricular activities they may not have at home such as skating, ice fishing, skiing, hiking through a forest, or even going to a local supermarket to see the various foods we have on our shelves.

Anderson said families are fully compensated for all food expenses incurred by their students and the students come to Canada with their own spending money.

"Families can come in all shapes and sizes. It could be a single mom, it could be a couple with a young kid or high-school kids, or empty nesters, or they're retired. Basically, students really just need to have their own private bedroom with a comfy bed, a window and access to the bathroom," she said.

MLI Homestay is looking for people to apply to be primary host families as well as respite hosts who can step in as a backup and provide housing in the event a primary host family has something come up that prevents them from fulfilling their duties.

The company is looking for families to apply now so it can begin matching families with students in April and May, well ahead of the start of the school year in September.

For more information and to apply to be a host family, www.mlihomestay.com.



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COMMUNITY

ONEXBUS secures St. Marys bus-stop locations

By Galen Simmons

After launching a route serving Stratford residents at the beginning of this year, ONEXBUS will soon be serving residents of St. Marys as it prepares to announce a few new stops in town.

In a post to the St. Marys Life Facebook page last month, a representative of the privately owned, intercity transit service based in Mississauga with routes from London to Toronto, London to Windsor, London to Stratford and Stratford to London via Kitchener asked residents for feedback on identifying a suitable location for a bus stop in St. Marys.

In an email last week with the Independent, ONEXBUS dispatch manager Andrea Medeiros confirmed the company had found a few locations for bus stops in St. Marys.

“ONEXBUS is glad to let residents know that in the incoming weeks, we will have secured a few stops to our route going in and out of St. Marys for residents to have easy and affordable access to London, Stratford, Kitchener, Brampton and Toronto,” she said. “This experience will allow residents to explore other communities and gain access to events, festivals or even transportation to the airport.”



A representative from ONEXBUS has confirmed the company has secured a few bus-stop locations in St. Marys to be announced in the coming weeks. Submitted photo

While the St. Marys stops have not yet been added to the routes and destinations page on the ONEXBUS website, residents are encouraged to

visit onexbus.com to find out where buses will be stopping in St. Marys once those stops are announced, and to provide feedback on service to and from St. Marys.

ONEXBUS, a leader in Ontario’s intercity bus service, was founded by John Samuel and his brother James Sam after they decided they had had enough of corporate bus services. They set out to change how bus operation works in Ontario by introducing their family-owned Ontario corporation dedicated to supporting local communities.

“We were looking at ways we could connect smaller communities that didn’t have any transportation means, and we wanted to provide a much-needed service,” Samuel told the Stratford Times after the service launched in the Festival City.

With the goal of enhancing customer experience, ONEXBUS currently offers services throughout the week and on weekends, with routes scheduled to leave as early as 6 a.m. and arrive home as late as 11:15 p.m.

ONEXBUS offers reasonably priced tickets. Stratford to London or Kitchener starts at \$12.99 one-way, and a Stratford-to-Toronto ticket starts at \$20.99.




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COMMUNITY

Saturday is the Coldest Night of the Year



McDonald's Restaurant is the lead sponsor of this year's Coldest Night of the Year walk in St. Marys. Pictured from left are Gabriella Mathieson, CNOY event campaign leader Pamela Zabel, Jordan Bucht, and store owner Kerry Prober. Contributed photo



TD Canada Trust is among the many local businesses and organizations showing their support for the CNOY event which takes place this Saturday. Pictured in the back row, from left are Melissa Wakem, Nicole Crawford, Diana Bordman, Joel Azzano, Cheryl Brooks, Cheryl Bester (branch manager) and Sahil Chawla. In the front row from left are Shelly Galloway and Ven Anusuri. Contributed photo

By Stewart Grant

This Saturday, Feb. 24 is the fourth-annual Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY) walk, a family friendly fundraising event in support of people experiencing hurt, hunger and homelessness in our community.

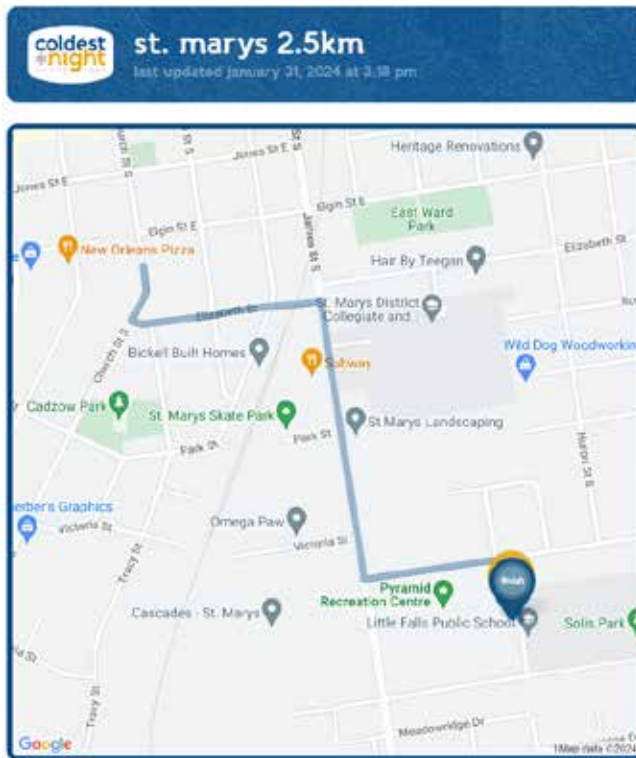
Pamela Zabel, volunteer CNOY event campaign leader, told the Independent the event is seeing great support from the community again this year.

"The St. Marys residents are really ramping up participation in St. Marys Coldest Night of the Year in 2024 with over 140 walkers. Thirty-seven teams have already signed up and many walkers continue to register at cnoy.org. We anticipate that we will reach the fundraising goal of \$56,000. Donations are still accepted throughout the month of March to support local United Way Perth-Huron initiatives such as Nourish Market and Community Outreach Worker."

Check-in for Saturday's walk begins at 4 p.m. at the 2/3 Hall in the Pyramid Recreation Center (PRC) with opening ceremonies scheduled for 5 p.m.

"Volunteer firefighters will join us again this year, along with the 'Chilly Unicorns' team and some amazing fundraising teams," Zabel added. "Walkers will be greeted after the walk by GoodMood Giant Polar Bear. Team spirits are bound to be high while walking together as a community to support people experiencing hurt, hunger and housing insecurity."

At 6 p.m., chef Nathan Brown will be serving two



delicious soups from produce typically supplied at the biweekly Nourish Market. McDonald's cookies will round out the snack meal.

Gwen Bradley, who is volunteer CNOY route leader and event organizer, reminds residents to please watch out for walkers and volunteers throughout St. Marys on Saturday to keep everyone safe.



"We are still in need of a few more volunteers to staff corners around town," said Bradley. "If you have two or three hours on Saturday night, please consider joining us to make this the best Coldest Night of the Year walk ever. Sign up at cnoy.org/ volunteer."

DELIVERY DRIVER WANTED

We are looking to add to our team and are seeking a driver to deliver copies of our Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette newspaper from St. Marys to pick-up locations throughout New Hamburg, Tavistock, Stratford and surrounding area. Once a week, every Thursday from roughly 7:30 am - 1:30 pm

Applicant must be responsible and have own vehicle.

Please send resume to Stewart Grant at stew@granthaven.com.

COMMUNITY

Student Summer Company grant applications open for ages 15-29

By Lisa Chester

Area students with that all-important entrepreneurial spirit once again have the opportunity to get the financial and organizational support they need to launch a business of their own this summer.

The Student Summer Company grant is made available to students aged 15-29 through the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development Job Creation and Trade. The grant is for \$3,000 in total and is available to those with a new business idea they wish to pursue for the summer period rather than taking the traditional summer job route.

"I'm grateful to the Province of Ontario and the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade for their continued support of young entrepreneurs through the Summer Company Grant program," said Joani Gerber, CEO of investStratford in a

press release. "Their funding allows us to continue to deliver mentorship, training and support to the next generation of business owners."

The grant is administered through the Stratford Perth Centre for Business (SPCB) and encompasses the Stratford, St Marys and Perth County region. The centre assists the new entrepreneurs in business practices they will need to succeed including how to draft a business plan, how to register and insure their business, marketing strategies and how to record expenses and profits.

Applications are open to those in high school and post-secondary schools who have not received the Student Summer Company grant before and who intend to continue with their education after the business period. The summer company program typically runs for eight weeks for high school students and 12 weeks for post-sec-

ondary students. The new business cannot be an extension of an existing family business.

Successful candidates will receive half of the grant money up front and the remaining half at the end of the program with proof that they have performed in their business successfully. Types of businesses created in the past included landscaping, swim instruction, website design, social-media marketing for small businesses, and YouTube content creation.

Historically, about half of the grant recipients have indicated they would like to carry on in business. In fact, about 20 per cent of recipients continue operating their business on a part-time basis. There are usually about 20 applicants and seven grants available. One application for 2024 has already been approved so there are six spaces remaining. Applicants

are encouraged to submit early.

"This year, we've seen an explosion of interest in the Summer Company program from students looking to spend their summer exploring entrepreneurship and learning how to handle running their own business in a time that will present multiple challenges for them to overcome," said Holly Mortimer, SPCB business advisor.

The Stratford Perth Centre for Business runs events throughout the year to support business and connect entrepreneurs. It also offers individual consultations and advice and is the access point for funding and programs to support start-up and established businesses.

For more information on this program and to apply, visit <https://www.stratfordperthbusiness.ca>. The application deadline is May 17, 2024.

Perth Regiment Veterans donate to St. Marys Minor Hockey



Bim Graham, president of the Perth Regiment Veterans Branch 236 R.C.L., presents a cheque for \$1,500 to Mark Brintnell of St. Marys Minor Hockey in the members lounge at the St. Marys Legion. The donated money comes from the veterans' group's lottery fund and is meant to support local youth groups and programming. Graham says minor hockey is just one of the many youth programs the group supports through its lottery licence. Photo courtesy of Perth Regiment Veterans Branch 236 R.C.L.

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COMMUNITY

St. Marys Yoga Chapple to close its doors by month's end

By Wendy Lamond

The Yoga Chapple, located above the Flour Mill, will be closing up shop at the end of the month.

The Chapple Studio was originally started in Stratford in 2017 by twins Claire and Joanie Chapple. When Covid hit, the sisters had a chance to start new in St. Marys, a community they adored, and they fell in love with the space in the Flour Mill building. It was a smooth transition as a lot of their clients in Stratford were from St. Marys.

The sisters brought their unique skills and the business was described by yoga student Carol Rothwell as a yoga chapel where life, love and laughter flow freely. When asked why they are leaving, they said it is because they feel like they have outgrown the space where they are and they had a good opportunity come up to move to Belfast, Ireland.

The last day of classes is Feb. 29 – which will be a mini goodbye party and everyone is welcome to come – and the duo flies out on March 13.

“We’re both in denial about leaving, but we’re excited about what comes next,” Claire Chapple said noting she and her sister are planning to be in Ireland for about five months.

When asked what they will miss most about St. Marys, they both agreed it is all the friends they made, the beautiful town and all of the great businesses. They were greeted here with open arms and are so appreciative of how great the community has been.

Opening the business seven years ago offered a place for people to come and be themselves. The only rule for the studio is there is no judgement of others and yourself.

The two are calling the change “a terribly beautiful move.” They want to thank the community for embracing them, and for the support they received. There is nothing negative about why they are leaving and want the town to know that they will be back.

“Joanie and Claire have built more than a yoga studio,” Rothwell said. “They have built a warm and inviting safe space for women to come and grow. It has flourished into a positive atmosphere where a collective group of women connect with each other with the intention of building a better version of ourselves, not only physically but mentally and emotionally.

“It is a space to share life’s journeys and experiences and struggles. It is a space to connect with each other and build each other up and to heal. I will miss The Yoga Chapple where this community of strong women meet, and I will miss Joanie and Claire’s bright personalities and positive and palpable energy they brought into St. Marys.”

To follow along with the Chapples’ travels in Ireland, check out The Yoga Chapple on Instagram. Joanie is hoping to start a blog for the community to follow and they are looking forward to what comes next, but will miss the town immensely.



Sisters Joanie and Claire Chapple are closing up their yoga studio at the end of the month and are heading to new adventures on a sabbatical in Ireland. Ana Sorys photo



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COMMUNITY

Continental Cup at St. Marys Curling Club



St. Marys Curling Club hosted its annual Continental Cup bonspiel last weekend with 32 curlers participating. The fun, two-day tournament, sponsored by Tim Hortons, featured four different formats of curling: standard, tankard, doubles and skins. Team yellow is pictured above after winning the Continental Cup trophy. Team members were Graham Rae (captain), Jason Blum, Adam Hudson, Allison St. Louis, Brad Everett, Brady St. Louis, Derek Galloway, Doug Blowes, Doug Ranton, Ellis Weber, Greg Bentz, Jason Clarke, Joan Blowes, Laura Hinz, Marjie Westerveld, and Tom Westerveld. Contributed photo

Local talent on display



Pictured is Noel Banavage, a local St. Marys musician playing one of his many instruments to a welcoming crowd at Snapping Turtle Coffee Roasters on Saturday, Feb. 17. He had a good seat right in the front window. Nancy Bickell photo



PROPERTY TAX REMINDER

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The First Interim Tax Installment is due on

FEBRUARY 28, 2024

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Failure to receive a bill does not exempt you from paying on time. If you have not yet received your tax notice, please call the Municipal Office at 519-268-7334.

Please make sure your payment is received at our office by 4:30 p.m. on February 28, 2024.

Penalty/Interest of 1.25% will be charged on the first day of default and the first day of each month thereafter, per the Municipal Act. 2001 s. 345 (2).

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SPORTS

Lincolns honour two great teams from the past

'92-'93 and '93-'94 teams both finished first with 84 wins in 104 regular-season games

By Pat Payton (Special to the Independent)

Two of the best teams in St. Marys Lincolns' history were honoured last Friday at the Royal Canadian Legion and the PRC.

The 1992-93 and 1993-94 teams both finished in first place in the Western Conference with identical 42-8-2 records. The Lincs' Alumni Group hosted the two teams, with former players, bench staff, management, and executives attending the reunion.

There are good reasons these teams were the class of their league from the fall of 1992 to the spring of 1994. In the two seasons combined, the Lincolns went 84-16-4 in 104 regular-season games. At the time, the regular season included 52 games.

Those won-loss records have never been matched by any other St. Marys team in almost seven decades.

1992-93 season

Starting with the 1992-93 squad, who were Western Conference finalists, the roster included: Ryan Lindsay, Steve DuBarry, Dan Schiedel, Jason Heywood, Dan Wildfong, Sheldon Mustard, Les McGregor, Jody Eidt, Mike Hodgert, Dave Landers, Steph Audet, Sheldon Lacroix, Mike Yeoman, Steve Papple, Chris Gaylor, Jason Martin, Scott Richardson, Dave Evans, Sean Oliver, Neil Ethier, Mark Rigby, Jason Glover, and goalies Mike Minard and Tyson Johnson.

Rick Bradford was the General Manager, and Mike Bannerman was the dedicated trainer.

The 1992-93 Lincs' executive consisted of: President Marty Thomson, Vice-President Jacques Cousineau, Treasurer Al Young, Secretary Bruce Symons, and directors Don Bartolacci, Bev Coveny, Andy Mallilieu, Fred Gracey, Scott Graham, Bob Frayne, Chris Bradley, and Don Vanstone.

Associate Directors were John Morton, Rob McNaughton and John Carruthers, and life member was Don Grantham.

Dave MacQueen and Gerry Seguin were coaches of the '92-'93 team. I believe that MacQueen was the best coach to ever stand behind the Lincolns' bench.

MacQueen and Seguin were a good tandem. Seguin played six years in the league and he knew how to play defence. 'Siggy' shared that knowledge and taught his defencemen how to properly defend.

16-year-old centre Ryan Lindsay led the team in scoring with 33 goals and 85 points. Steve DuBarry and Dan Wildfong had 68 and 65 points, respectively, and captain Dan Schiedel added 54 points.

That season, the Lincolns scored 83 powerplay goals..



The Lincolns' Alumni Group honoured two great St. Marys teams from the past at the Royal Canadian Legion and the PRC last Friday night. Both the 1992-93 and 1993-94 Lincs teams posted very impressive 42-8-2 records and finished in first place in the Western Conference. Members of the two squads who returned for the reunion were introduced on the ice following the first period of last Friday's game. From left are: Trainer Mike Bannerman, Nathan Perrott, Mark Rigby, Scott Richardson, Steve Papple, Paul O'Shea, Jason Martin, Martin Kearns, Jason Heywood, Dave Evans, Gordie Dulmage, Steve DuBarry, D.J. Deline, and Steph Audet. Pat Payton photo

Following the season, Coach MacQueen voiced an ultimatum. He wanted more "toughness" or he wouldn't return. He thought his team had got pushed around by Sarnia in the league final. GM Bradford and Head Scout Greg Clark got to work.

In the meantime, MacQueen got hired as Head Coach of the OHL's Peterborough Petes. Terry Uniack and Gerry Seguin emerged as the new Co-Head Coaches.

1993-94 championship season

When training camp began in August of '93, some big, tough, and talented recruits had arrived, including: Nathan Perrott, John Tripp, Gord Dulmage, Mike DeGurse, Scott Smith, Barry

Johnson, Paul O'Shea, D.J. Deline, Joe Philbrook, Chad Lawrence, Mark Phillips, Martin Kearns, Lance Sleight, Jon Schiedel, and goalie Terry Soper.

They joined returnees such as Jason Heywood, Dan Wildfong, Les McGregor, Sheldon Lacroix, Dave Landers, Mike Hodgert, Dave Evans, Jason Martin, Scott Richardson, Steph Audet, and goalie Mike Minard. Martin was named the new captain.

The '93-94 team scored 310 goals and allowed just 156 – that's a per-game average of just three goals against.

The Lincs' executive consisted of: President Marty Thomson, Vice-President Jacques Cousineau, Treasurer Al Young, Secretary Bruce Symons, and directors Bev Coveny, Pat Coveny, Don Bartolacci, Andy Mallilieu, Fred Gracey, Bob Frayne, Chris

Bradley, John Morton and Don Vanstone.

Associate Directors included Scott Graham, Norm Penney, Brian Reidy and Mark Nelson. A life member was Don Grantham.

Individually, Heywood led the team with 36 goals and 74 points, one more than Wildfong's 73. McGregor contributed 29 goals, Lacroix had 28, and DeGurse posted 27.

14 players had 10 or more goals – showing the team's depth and talent – while 10 players had over 100 minutes in penalties.

The Lincs were very good between the pipes. Minard earned 25 regular-season wins and rookie Soper went 17-3.

The team breezed through the first two rounds of league playoffs before meeting the Petrolia Jets, coached by former NHLer Mark Hunter, in the final.

The Jets were a strong team, but the Lincs were bigger, tougher and deeper, and won the rugged series in six games.

That was the last time Lincolns have hoisted the league's championship trophy. I was on the ice that night in Petrolia taking photos and it's hard to believe that it's been almost three decades since the Lincs have won the league title. It shows how difficult it is to win the Western Conference, which I believe is the most competitive division in the GO-JHL.

Continued on page 15



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SPORTS

Jr. Girls claim H-P Silver, headed to WOSSAA

By Spencer Seymour

St. Marys DCVI will be represented at the WOSSAA 'A' volleyball championships this week with the Junior Girls volleyball team qualifying by advancing to the final of the Huron-Perth playoffs last week.

Last Tuesday saw the Junior Girls travel to the Stratford Rotary Complex where they battled Mitchell for a spot in the Huron-Perth championship game. With the pressure on, the Salukis rose to the occasion, defeating Mitchell three sets to one with scores of 25-20, 25-7, 25-27, and 25-13.

Head coach Jess Chateauvert told the Independent her team came ready to play and hungry to earn a spot in the league's final match later in the week.

"The girls played with confidence and great energy," Chateauvert raved. "They fed off the atmosphere in the Agriplex where four matches were going on at the same time. They capitalized on pushing balls deep into Mitchell's backcourt and they served tough, especially Gracy Schlotzhauer. They were excited for the win and the chance to play against Stratford District again."

The Salukis were in for a tough test on Thursday of last week when they took on the high-powered Stratford District Secondary (SDSS) squad.



The St. Marys DCVI Junior Girls volleyball team came away with the Silver Medal at the Huron-Perth Playoff Finals last Thursday. They qualified by defeating Mitchell last Tuesday. Pictured in the front row, from left to right, are Alanna Savile, Regan Jones, Charlotte Richardson, and Nicki Wilson. In the back row, from left, are Coach Jess Chateauvert, Adrianna Hollestelle-Black, Cammie Lobb, Cortney Linton, Libby McCurdy, Marin Chateauvert, Katie Namink, Gracy Schlotzhauer, and Naomi deVries. Contributed photo

Though the Salukis were downed in three straight sets, they gave SDSS a good fight. In particular, the first set was especially close and finished 27-25 in Stratford's favour.

Chateauvert said they were missing some aggression in the final two sets

but maintained a solid compete level for much of the match.

"They went in as the underdogs today, playing against a big school with a lot of club players. Our goal was to limit their attack and to be aggressive ourselves in terms of an offence. In

the first set, they stuck to the game plan and the lead went back and forth before we lost 27-25. In the next two sets, they got down early and, although they battled back at times, they didn't attack the ball enough to keep Stratford out of their rhythm.

"It was an exciting match with many great rallies," continued Chateauvert. "It is always exciting for a small 'A' school to compete with the bigger schools in our board. The team should be very proud of winning silver in a league that continues to get better every year."

Energy and confidence, two of the central elements Chateauvert mentioned as keys to victory against Mitchell, have been major focuses all season for the Junior Girls. The head coach was happy to see all the team's work come to fruition in the biggest games so far in their season.

"It was great to see them play with energy and confidence. We talk a lot about the fact that volleyball is such a mental game, and positive energy is often the difference maker. Players on the court and the sidelines all contributed to maintaining that positive energy that we were looking for."

The Junior Girls will be in London this Thursday to compete at WOSSAA.

Lincs Alumni honours two great teams from the past

Continued from page 14

I believe the '93-'94 squad is the biggest and toughest team the Lincolns have ever iced. You mix in balanced scoring, depth, good goaltending, and solid coaching, and it added up to a championship season. I remember Coach Uniacke demanding accountability every night, and he got it from those players.

Eight players from two teams went pro

From the two teams, six players went directly to play Major Junior 'A' hockey and eight players went on to play professional hockey at some level. They included: Lindsay, Wildfong, Heywood, Glover, Tripp, Perrott, DeGurse, and Minard. Perrott, Tripp, and Minard ascended to the NHL. From the powerhouse teams, 11 players went on to play university hockey in either Canada or the United States.

MacQueen also coached in the NHL with the Tampa Bay Lightning. He has coached pro hockey in Europe for the past 12 years – the last five in Romania.

President Thomson provided strong leadership as president and was very accommodating to work with.

The St. Marys Lincolns helped put this town on the map and these two teams are part of the reason the Lincs boast such a long, rich and storied history.

U14 A Boys 'mentally succeed' in 2-1 win over Strathroy

By Spencer Seymour

Getting leads in the first two periods has not been an issue for the Frayne Custom Cabinets U14 A Boys St. Marys Rock this season. Keeping them, on the other hand, has been a different story.

On Monday night, that story finally flipped with the Rock hanging on for a 2-1 playoff victory over the Strathroy Jr. Rockets. Head coach Todd Dittmer was beaming after the game as he described what he saw as an evolution in his team's resolve between the ears.

"The boys mentally succeeded tonight," Dittmer told the Independent following the nail-biting contest. "That's their win tonight. They fought for it. In the moments when we might normally break down, they held it together. I'm extremely proud of those boys."

Dan Dittmer got the game's first goal at the 7:26 mark of the opening period. The eventual game-winner came on a nifty move by Graeme Froud on a breakaway at 13:13 of the second. Strathroy finally got on the board in the third, but St. Marys held on to

the one-goal margin, withstanding a late push by the Jr. Rockets with their goaltender pulled in the final minute.

Coach Dittmer said the team has consistently shown improvement but, in high-pressure situations, find themselves falling back on bad habits. However, the bench boss was pleased that didn't happen against Strathroy.

"We did the little things better. We didn't do them perfectly, but we did them better and that was the difference tonight. That means picking up your man on the back check, holding your spot in the defensive zone, and our offensive triangle with a high guy at the top. We're getting better in all of those areas.

"We're improving all the time but in the high-stress times, in the past, we've reverted back to our old ways," Dittmer continued. "That's why, if we do the little things, we do great. Strathroy gave us a good pushback, especially in the third, and it was awesome to see them hang on to it and fight for it."

SPORTS

Second-place Lincs two points back of first after winning two of three

By Spencer Seymour

Though they won't get many style points, the St. Marys Lincolns left their three-game Family Day weekend with two wins, putting them two points behind the London Nationals for the Western Conference's top spot and two ahead of the Strathroy Rockets. The Rockets have a game in hand on both St. Marys and London.

The Lincolns slate of games began last Friday when they hosted the Komoka Kings. Though the Lincs' 36 shots on goal nearly doubled the Kings' 18, St. Marys struggled to take firm control of the game. Despite the somewhat lacklustre performance, the Lincolns emerged with a narrow 4-3 victory. Head coach Jeff Bradley told the Independent even though it wasn't his squad's best showing, the important thing was the final result.

"It definitely could have been better," admitted Bradley. "But at this time of the season, you need every two points you can get, and we got them. We've had a tough week with guys missing every practice due to illness. We just got a couple of defenders back in the lineup and regardless of how it was done, we got it done and we got what we came for."

One of the major factors for the team's less-than-stellar game was the long list of players dealing with an illness or returning after prolonged absences from the lineup, the latter of which included Adam Barkley and Josh Cornfield. Bradley said several players showed a bit of rust but still brought an adequate compete level.

"It's a little bit of a process getting back to being game-ready and being the players we all know they can be. But considering they hadn't played in a while, it was good enough in the end and hopefully, we can keep getting better in these next couple of games."

The aforementioned Barkley put home the icebreaker with the only goal of the first period, a slapshot from the point. In the second, Ethan Weir netted a powerplay marker, his 16th of the season, before the Kings climbed back to tie the game at two apiece with goals from Jackson Doyle and Brody Fraleigh. However, before the period was done, a fortuitous bounce resulting from some strong forechecking by Ryan Hodgkinson on the penalty kill led to the puck getting by goaltender Connor Davis to restore the Lincolns' one-goal lead.



Brandon Abbott flashes a wry wink before leading the Lincolns out of the dressing room last Friday. Abbott started all three of the Lincolns' games last weekend and made 90 saves in 180 minutes of action. Photo by Spencer Seymour

Jack Jarvis tied the game for the Kings at the 6:41 mark of the third, leading to a 3-3 tie which lasted until Chase MacQueen-Spence scored the eventual game-winner with under three minutes left in regulation. In addition to his goal, Barkley tallied two assists. Noah VandenBrink also had a pair of helpers.

Coach Bradley credited the group for finding a way to win despite not being at their best.

"It's a good sign for sure," Bradley said. "We have a really good powerplay and penalty kill, our special teams are right at the top of the league, but we haven't really had to rely on our special

teams to win us games recently. Our special teams won us the game (against Komoka), so that's definitely a silver lining."

Wheels fall off in 6-1 Murphy's Law loss to London

One night later, the Lincs suffered one of their most disappointing games of the season as the visiting London Nationals walked into the Pyramid Recreation Centre (PRC) and hammered St. Marys 6-1.

According to Bradley, there was no good news coming out of the train-wreck defeat.

"It wasn't very good, to say the least. Quite honestly, there is nothing positive to take away from that game. London came in and looked like they were angry from us taking it to them a week prior. They looked like they were ready to play a hockey game for

first place and we didn't, it's as simple as that."

The Nationals were clearly the more dialed-in team from the opening puck drop with Zachary LeBlanc tipping home the first goal of the contest just two minutes and 23 seconds into the first. Joshua Lepain and Lucas Chard both found the back of the net over the next seven minutes and 14 seconds, putting the Nats ahead 3-0 before the halfway point of the opening frame.

In the second, 13 seconds after Talan Palmer made it a four-goal London lead, Weir extended his goal streak to three games to put the Lincolns on the board. Before the second was done, however, Palmer scored for the second time in the period to restore London's four-goal advantage.

While St. Marys was significantly better in the middle stanza, Bradley felt it brought very little comfort.

"I thought we rebounded big time in the second, but the problem was it was too late. They seemed angry and that they didn't want to quit, so at least there is some respect earned there, but honestly, at this time of the season, we don't need to encourage small victories like that. What matters is getting these points and we didn't do that. I think the only possible good that could come out of that is that we got embarrassed so badly that it develops a refusal to allow that to happen again."

Bradley explained how just about every aspect of the Lincolns' strategy was not executed sufficiently.

"We had clear guidelines for what the gameplan was and that was to be as simple as possible. We know what works for us and that is getting their defencemen on their heels. We wanted to pretend there wasn't even a puck out there for the first five minutes. We wanted support low in our end which we didn't get. We panicked with the puck. We didn't finish hits. We were undisciplined. Everything that could have gone wrong went wrong last night."

Lincs bounce back in 4-2 Family Day win over Sarnia

With the bad taste of Saturday's loss still in their mouths, the Lincolns welcomed the Sarnia Legionnaires to the PRC and got back in the win column, beating the visiting Legionnaires 4-2.

Owen Voortman, who entered the game with one goal in his last 17 games, had the only goal of the first period. The goal also marked the 50th point in the Thunder Bay, Ont. native's GOJHL career.

A flukey goal tied things at one apiece in the second period when a dump-in by Ethan Waddick from centre ice

Continued on page 17

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SPORTS

Second-place Lincs two points back of first after winning two of three

Continued from page 16

took an unexpected bounce on goaltender Brandon Abbott and went into the net. Despite the unusually bad goal, Abbott's weekend was still strong as the Baden, Ont. product started all three games for the Lincolns and made a total of 90 saves in his 180 minutes of duty in between the pipes.

Despite the second frame being a bit sleepy for the Lincolns, Bradley credited the team for their overall performance being dramatically improved from 48 hours prior.

"I thought we were great. We challenged them to get back to having

more simplicity in their game and they did that. Everyone worked hard. Aside from a lull in the second period, I thought we controlled the game. Before the game, Mike [Herman] talked about not worrying too much about the moment and enjoying it rather than getting stressed or frustrated. We did a much better job putting pressure on their defencemen and for the most part, we didn't force things."

Two minutes and 51 seconds into the third, Jaden Lee snapped a quick shot by Sarnia netminder Logan Phillips to put St. Marys up 2-1. Less than three minutes later, Voortman recorded his second of the game and

the eventual game-winner. The Legionnaires cut the lead back to one just over two minutes later but an empty-netter with 63 seconds left in the game sealed the Lincs' 4-2 victory.

Voortman along with several other two-way energy players were stand-outs to the bench boss.

"Blake [Elzinga], Ryan [Hodkinson], Matt [Prendergast] and obviously Owen [Voortman] were all excellent," Bradley praised. "Those are four guys who really came ready to battle and every time they were on the ice, they were doing something positive for our team. We were all really happy with what those guys did and how

they competed."

Bradley added that, with a day and a half to process the loss to London, everyone was able to shake off the sting of their defeat and bounce back with an excellent showing against Sarnia.

"Sometimes you make individual games out to be bigger than what they are, and both coaches can be guilty of this too. When we got to the rink today, you could tell everyone was in a great mood. They were all ready to play hockey, they were ready to play hard and they were ready to get a win, and their effort paid off."

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SPORTS

U15 A Boys win South Bend Cup

By Spencer Seymour

In a trip across the border to the Irish South Bend Cup held in South Bend, Ind., the St. Marys Army Navy and Air Force Veterans (A.N.A.F) U15 A Boys turned in quality performance after quality performance, ultimately leading to them winning the gold medals.

The U15 A Boys began their tournament in style last Friday morning as they played on an outdoor ice rink against Shaker Heights, based out of Ohio. Jack Turner and Nic Brintnell had the goals while Harper Murrell shut the door on Shaker Heights, giving the Rock a 2-0 victory.

Later that same day, St. Marys was back in action, this team against the squad from Kirkwood, Miss. Ben Ewing netted a hat-trick while Charlie Bender and Hayden Wright each potted a goal of their own en route to a 5-2 win. Brintnell picked up three assists.

Their third and final game of the round-robin had little significance to the Rock as they had done enough to advance in the first two games. Turner had the lone goal in a 3-1 loss.

The finals of the tournament took place on Sunday at the University of



The St. Marys Army Navy and Air Force Veterans U15 A Boys minor hockey team won gold at the Irish South Bend Cup in South Bend, Ind. Contributed photo

Notre Dame and featured a rematch of St. Marys' first game of the South Bend Cup against Shaker Heights. After falling behind 1-0, Bender tied things up at one apiece before potting his second of the period, sending the Rock into the first intermission with a 2-1 lead. A goal by Wright followed by a powerplay marker by Shaker

Heights gave the Rock a 3-2 advantage going into the third.

Turner scored to restore the two-goal deficit in the Rock's favour but, once again, Shaker Heights answered with a goal of their own. With around four minutes remaining on the clock, Cody King hammered the puck home to put St. Marys ahead 5-3, the eventual fi-

nal score.

Bender was named the tournament MVP and while he turned in an excellent performance, head coach Dan McIntosh explained it was an "entire team effort" that ultimately secured the team the tournament win.

"Charlie really stepped up in this tournament," McIntosh acknowledged. "But the collective effort of every player played a significant role in our victory. I'm thrilled to see the team's dedication throughout the season finally pay off. Despite falling short in previous tournaments, the hard work has now materialized into success and this win is particularly sweet."

McIntosh added that the team's high-octane pace throughout the tournament allowed them to find success, both in round-robin play and the gold-medal game.

"We effectively utilized our speed and capitalized on the opponents' errors throughout the entire tournament, which helped showcase our transition game. We continued the same in the finals and kept our composure as the score got tight in the third period with the tournament on the line."

Sr. Girls qualify for WOSSAA in challenge match

By Spencer Seymour

After dropping the opening set of their Challenge match against Goderich, the St. Marys DCVI Senior Girls volleyball team won the next three sets to earn a spot in WOSSAA this Thursday.

According to head coach Steve Chateauvert, once the group settled into the contest, they thrived and did exceptionally well.

"We talked at the start of the match that we needed to maintain consistently high energy and intensity for

the entire match, no matter if we were winning or not," Chateauvert told the Independent. "They played well in the first set, just a bit tentative at times, and they seemed a bit nervous. After settling down part-way through the first set, they almost came back to win but fell just a bit short. They came out strong in the second set, built up a bit of a lead and never looked back."

The Salukis narrowly lost 25-23 in the first set before posting 25-16, 25-13 and 26-24 scores in the following three. The performance by the Sa-

lukis only got stronger as the game progressed, said the head coach.

"The third set was even more convincing after getting out to a 13-3 lead," continued Chateauvert. "The fourth set was very close, back and forth all set. We were up 24-20 near the end of the set and Goderich battled back to tie it 24-24. Ellen Thorup hit a great cross-court shot that just hit the line and then served an ace to win the match."

When asked why they came away with the victory, Chateauvert said

it was a credit to the team's mental toughness and resolve in the face of adversity.

"They didn't let their mistakes negatively affect their play, which is something we've talked about a lot this season and something they've become a lot better at. When mistakes were made, they laughed them off and regrouped for the next point. We also served very consistently which is another area of our game that has improved significantly over the past couple of weeks."

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SPORTS

St. Marys Ladies Bonspiel celebrates 30th anniversary



Pictured from left to right are Kayla Ritz, Donna Brodhagen, Elaine Bancroft and their skip Audra Boersen, the team who came away as the Overall Winners of the 30th annual Ladies Bonspiel sponsored by the Independent Grocer. The Ladies Bonspiel, which was held at the St. Marys Curling Rink, marked the 30th anniversary of the event.



Pictured from left are Maggie Burns, Carol Ann Scott, Chris Thomas, and Sharon Eby, the foursome that were the First Draw Winners at the 30th annual Ladies Bonspiel at the St. Marys Curling Club. Sixteen teams participated in the event on Feb. 3 which was a big success, raising \$2,200 for the Club. Contributed photos of the event.

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Leah Van Straaten maneuvers around a defending player during the U19 St. Marys Snipers game last Saturday.



Caxton Stewart-Noeske dangles around an opposing defender during last Saturday's U9 LL Boys 1 St. Marys Rock game.



Scarlett Maddock fires the puck on goal during the Harris-Greig Automotive U9 HL Girls St. Marys Rock game last Saturday.



MacLean Ross loads up a shot during last Saturday's St. Marys Ford U9 LL Boys 2 St. Marys Rock game.



Maverick Akins turns back up ice to defend an incoming rush during the U11 LL Boys St. Marys Rock game last Saturday.



Goaltender Bryson Stacey makes a save during this past Sunday's U9 LL Boys 3 St. Marys Rock game. Photos by Spencer Seymour

COMMUNITY

Stratford's Festival City Rotary Club hosts Wine Survivor evening



Pictured are Sherry Grabowski, grand-prize wine-bottle winner from St. Marys, Rotarian Lucy Railton making announcements, and Rotarian Jean Aitcheson, one of the event organizers. Photo by Gary West

By Gary West

The Festival City Rotary Club of Stratford recently held its fourth-annual Wine Survivor evening at the Army Navy Air Force Veterans Hall.

Organizers said the event has always been held around Valentine's Day as it is aimed for couples and single women, all of whom tend to appreciate good wine and the opportunity to have a fun eve-

ning together.

"We were sold out three weeks before the event and some of the organizers wondered if they lost a few friends because they could not get them tickets," event organizer Jean Aitcheson said.

Ticket holders did not have to be there to win any of the 200 total bottles of wine, but they would have missed out on the excitement of the evening, which included live music, a wine-and-cheese tasting and a gift-card wall, all of which added to the celebration atmosphere.

All the profits from this Wine Survivor night will go to support the Stratford Hospital foundation. Past Wine Survivor events have supported Shelter Link, House Of Blessing, L'Arche, Special Olympics and many other community organizations.

LOOKING BACK



BY AMY CUBBERLEY

Kingsway expanding

25 years ago (1999)

Official approval was given to an expansion of the Kingsway Lodge nursing home by council last Tuesday, but that was made possible by a private meeting between the facility owner and nearby property owners in late January.

St. Marys OPP report that a man lost control of his vehicle downtown on the weekend and slid into a tree which knocked out a plate glass window at Gianni Shoes on Queen Street East. The driver, 22, had hit a patch of ice. No charges were laid in the incident.

The Friendship Centre's Stonetown Entertainers Choir has a new director. Donna Camp of St. Marys has an extensive musical background and is an accomplished pianist and flutist. She holds an Honours Bachelor of Museum in Education from UWO.

50 years ago (1974)

A glass case mounted on the interior south wall of the TD bank branch office here in St. Marys containing a number of very interesting swords, daggers, bayonets, etc. from the collection of Herb Sparling is attracting considerable attention.

A tractor-trailer, loaded with eggs, landed on its side in a ditch along Highway 7, just north of Charlie's Gas Bar, following a collision with a car on Tuesday morning. The driver of the truck was taken to hospital for a check-up. The driver of the car was uninjured.

Stonetowners are inclined to take the beauty of St. Marys for granted at times so it is nice to report that a Guelph landscape architect, Mr. Owen Scott, in town recently regarding tree planting along Trout Creek, was so impressed that he insisted on taking a walking tour rather than seeing the town through a car window.

75 years ago (1949)

The little chicks are hatching again at the Watt Hatchery on Church Street.

The flock of thirty-seven wild ducks owned by Lt. Col. G.D.L. Rice, which have besported themselves in the open water of the Thames opposite the Great Star elevators, went down the river with the ice breakup earlier this week. Great Star staff watched the apparently helpless ducks perched upon the heaving ice cakes as flood swept down the broken ice floes. Five of the ducks have returned by wing, but no trace of the others have been found.

The Legion Rooms are now equipped with a pool table as a recreational aid for the members.

100 years ago (1924)

It costs the City of Montreal \$425,000 a year to light the streets, which now have a total length of 750 miles.

The Union Jack will be hoisted on public school buildings in Ottawa for 28 days each year, according to a decision recently made of the Public School Board.

The firemen are asking the ladies of town to contribute homemade cooking to their Bazaar, to be held in Town Hall on March 6. They would appreciate any article you may have around the house that would sell at their auction sale as well.

THE WEEK AHEAD

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

Friday, February 23

- Royal Canadian Legion hot dog/sausage lunch at Noon
- A.N.A.F. meat draw - 6 pm
- Heritage Fair at the PRC - 7 to 9 pm
- St. Marys Lincolns vs LaSalle Vipers at the PRC - 7:30 pm

Saturday, February 24

- Coldest Night of the Year walk - Register at the PRC 4 pm, Walk at 5 pm, Light meal at 6 pm
- Royal Canadian Legion meat draw - 5 pm

Sunday, February 25

- Marg Hogg Memorial Tournament at the Army & Navy - Registration starts 12 Noon, Tourney at 1 pm
- St. Marys Lincolns vs Chatham Maroons at Chatham Memorial Arena - 7 pm

Monday, February 26

- Community Dinner at St. Marys United Church - 5 pm, Sponsored by Hodges Funeral Home. Admission is free but donations are greatly appreciated

Tuesday, February 27

- Woodstock Ag Society annual meeting at the Oxford Auditorium - 7:30 pm

Wednesday, February 28

- Ministerial Association Lenton Lunch & Worship Service at St. Marys United Church - 12:10 pm

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HISTORY

HISTORIC ST. MARYS: The L-Shaped House

By Mary Smith

One of the rewards for the St. Marys Museum volunteers who research the history of local properties is the opportunity to learn about the architectural styles favoured by 19th-century builders. Several weeks ago, this column discussed three of these styles found in early issues of *The Canada Farmer*, a journal that dealt with many aspects of rural life around the time of Confederation. The house styles described in 1864 – *The Canada Farmer's* first year of publication – were the Gothic Cottage, the Urban Villa, and the Ontario Farmhouse. A number of examples of all three of these kinds of houses can be found in St. Marys or in the countryside nearby. Museum researchers have prepared property history reports for several of them.

The Museum's most recently completed property report outlines the history of 29 Robinson St., located in the west ward overlooking the Thames River, the mill pond and the dam. It has recently been renovated to serve as a short-term-rental accommodation. This particular house conforms to the plans found in an 1871 issue of *The Canada Farmer* for an L-shaped house. The 1871 perspective view and a recent photograph of the Robinson Street house are shown with this week's column.

The rural architecture columnist for *The Canada Farmer* also provided floorplans. The layout includes a projecting block and a wing. A veranda fits into the nook or the space where the two sections meet. In the 1871 view, the main entrance is from the veranda. The floorplan shows the door opening into a hallway which contains a stairway leading to the second floor. The kitchen is in the wing, and in the block are two rooms – a dining room at the back with a doorway from the kitchen, and a parlour at the front with a doorway to the hall. Upstairs, there are three bedrooms opening onto a hall at the top of the stairs. It is called a two-storey house, although it is actually a storey and a half. The bedrooms on the second floor fit into the gables and parts of their ceilings are slanted.

This style of house was very popular in the United States as well, sometimes described there as a gable-front-and-wing house. It offered flexible interior space. Straightforward alterations could be made to the basic floorplans without affecting the exterior appearance. The builder of 29 Robinson St. may have consulted the L-shaped house plan in *The Canada Farmer* when he constructed the house in 1887. It certainly follows it quite closely. However, he made some modifications, perhaps at the request of his client, retired farmer John Johnson, the owner of the property. The gable roof, for instance, is more steeply pitched. Rather than the large, double window in the 1871 plan, a bay window shares the gable front with an entrance door leading directly into the parlour. The other, more frequently used entrance from the veranda leads into a hallway in the kitchen wing. The house at 29 Robinson St. also provides a window on each side of this door, giving more light to the west-facing space inside the house.

Similar to the plans for the 1871 house, there is a veranda on the west façade that protects the wing of the house from the sun, helping to keep it cool in summer. Larry Pfaff, an authority on local architecture, suggests that 29 Robinson St. is fortunate to have retained its veranda.

"They were often demolished, giving the façade a rather forlorn look," he said. "There may have been



The view of an L-shaped house from an 1871 issue of *The Canada Farmer* and, below it, a recent photograph of the L-shaped house at 29 Robinson St. Contributed photo

a similar veranda on the east side, providing extra outdoor 'rooms' on both sides of the wing."

Today, instead of a veranda on the east side, there is a large, enclosed sunroom as well as a covered deck. These areas provide a wonderful view over the Thames River valley. Various modifications have been made to other parts of the interior to accommodate modern necessities, such as laundry machines and bathrooms.

The surviving L-shaped houses in this area are usually either wood or brick construction. The 29 Robinson St. house is different. Its walls are made of a type of coarse concrete and have been parged to give a smooth appearance. Sometimes referred to in 19th-century descriptions as "gravel houses," they are not very common in St. Marys. There are a few examples, including the large house at 55 St. John St. S., once the home of F. E. Butcher, a former mayor of St. Marys. There is no indication why Mr. Johnson chose to have his new house built using this construction method. Perhaps his contractor persuaded him it was the most economical way to go.

A short news item in the *St. Marys Argus* dated Sept. 8, 1887, pinpoints the year 29 Robinson St. was built.

"A serious accident occurred last week in the West Ward. While Mr. J. B. Mitchell was shingling the new gravel house on Robinson Street, being erected by Mr. Johnson, he fell a distance of about 20 feet, thereby breaking four of his ribs and fracturing the clavicle. Dr. Midgely was called in to attend to his wants. From latest reports, he is doing well. Much sympathy

was expressed for the injured man."

John Johnson and his wife, Almira, probably moved into 29 Robinson St. by late 1887 or early 1888. However, they were already elderly and did not live in their new home for long. Following the Johnsons, the property had several successive owners including Armon and Evangeline Ready. It was inherited by their son, Clark Ready. He sold it to Fred and Dorothy Anderson who moved into the house from a farm in North Easthope Township. They lived there through the 1940s and 1950s and sold the property in 1965.

Some people in that west-ward neighbourhood may still think of 29 Robinson St. as the home of Kase and Joan Van Arkel and family. The beautiful sunroom on the east side was added during their ownership and they are remembered each spring when the many daffodils and tulips they planted are in full bloom. More recently, it was owned by Marjory Lanning and Moira Pollitt, two sisters from Montreal who bought the house together in 1990 to share in their retirement. Marjory (Madge) died in 2005 and Moira stayed on alone with great support from her neighbours and friends, including the members of her beloved Baha'i community. Moira Pollitt died in November 2021.

The L-shaped house at 29 Robinson St. has been standing for almost 14 decades and has provided a home for some interesting people. There are many other houses in St. Marys and area whose history can also be traced back more than a century. Some can be identified as having been built according to plans for a cottage, a villa, an Ontario farmhouse or an L-shaped house, all possibly traceable to the plans in *The Canada Farmer*.

At the St. Marys Heritage Fair this Friday evening – Feb. 23 from 7-9 p.m. at the Pyramid Recreation Centre – there will be a display featuring plans and elevations for houses from *The Canada Farmer*, some sample pages from that 19th-century publication and other material relating to early Ontario architecture. Plan to come to the Heritage Fair if you live in an old home and would like to try to trace its architectural roots.

There will be many more exhibits at the Heritage Fair presented by groups and individuals with interesting collections of antiques and collectibles, or organizations involved in local history and/or community projects. Admission is free and good conversation at the display tables is guaranteed.

There will be many more exhibits at the Heritage Fair, presented by groups and individuals with interesting collections of antiques and collectibles, or organizations involved in local history and/or community projects. Admission is free and good conversation at the display tables is guaranteed.

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Community theatre at its best

By Nancy Abra

Opening night for live community theatre usually produces some jitters for the actors and anxiety for the production crew. No amount of planning and months of rehearsals can ensure opening night will go off without a hitch.

Anthony Keenleyside's play, *Appearing This Evening*, is a creative portrayal of what can happen when the lead actor fails to show up for opening night. The stressed production staff dives into salvage mode to save the performance.

"From my first audition and stage performance in a musical in 1973, I have been hooked on live theatre ever since. Both my wife and I are actively involved in our local area," said Keenleyside, a retired attorney from Ottawa and with a strong admiration for community theatre.

Keenleyside revealed a couple of winters ago and being somewhat bored, he wrote *Appearing This Evening*.

"I took my experiences with live theatre and some stories of other performers for the basis of this play."

In live theatre, panic hits when the worst-case scenario happens and the antics of what follows builds the humorous storyline that morphs into the mystery of what happened to the lead actor. Keen-



Pictured in back row from left to right are Ed Lee, Ian Rogers, Connie Bontje, Michael Wydeven, Louise Gills, John Moore. In the second row sitting are Beth McCallum, Diane Elliott, Joe Facey, Lee Maddock, playwright-Tony Keenleyside, Murray Lee, and Kay Rogers. In the foreground sitting at the table is Penny Parker. John van Esch was absent when this photo was taken. Photo by Nancy Abra

leyside is very familiar with live stage performances.

"The characters' dialogue flows naturally like everyday speech as they react and respond to the developing circumstances. As well, the stage directions become fluid and are automatic," he remarked.

In one lengthy dialogue near the end of the play, Keenleyside cleverly weaves metaphors that are slightly jumbled to

keep the audience engaged. It works. As the constable is resolving the mystery in his unique way, his misconstrued metaphors produce laughter.

Last Saturday evening was the opening night of 2024 Thorndale Ag Society's Dinner Theatre and the premiere performance of *Appearing This Evening*. After a delicious roast beef dinner prepared and served by the Dorchester United Church, the play proceeded to a sold-out

crowd. Anthony (Tony) Keenleyside, his wife, Val, as well as over 45 of their close friends from St. Marys, the Ottawa area, and some family coming in from Indiana and California were also in attendance to witness this international debut of his work.

"I've been looking forward to being here." Keenleyside said. "I am ecstatic to witness my work come to life on the stage and delighted with the Thorndale Troupe's performance."

"With any premiere performance, it comes with its own set of challenges and Tony has been a delight to work with as we sorted them out," Thorndale's director, Kay Rogers, remarked. "The dedication from the cast members stands out the most to me as real-life challenges have come up."

The Thorndale Dinner Theatre continues Friday evening, Feb. 23, with some tickets still available and the final performance on Saturday Feb 24, which has been sold out for weeks.

The months of planning, hours of rehearsals and the transformation of the bleak gym into a cozy theatre setting totals the endless commitment and dedication of community members and residents. Community theatre is at its best and it is here in Thorndale.

Shrove Tuesday supper tradition at St. George's Anglican

By Nancy Abra

On Tuesday, Feb. 13, Shrove Tuesday, St. George's Anglican Church hosted its annual pancake supper which has been a tradition for over 60 years. Jeff McDonald and Mike Gerrits grilled over 850 pancakes with Melanie Gerrits assisting and other church members assembling approximately 185 pancake-sausage suppers which were then hand-delivered to the waiting lineup of cars in the church driveway.

Laurie McDonald, the lead organizer for this event remarked, "The turnout was about the same number as last year and I would like to thank the community who continue to support us. Some made cash donations to the church as well, which we greatly appreciate. I would also like to thank our church volunteers who helped and many thanks to Thorndale Farm Supplies for looking after ordering the sausages. We are so blessed to have a wonderful supportive community."



Pictured are St. George's Anglican Church Shrove Tuesday supper volunteers Melanie Gerrits, Jeff McDonald and Mike Gerrits. Photo by Nancy Abra

COLUMN

WHAT'S FOR DINNER: Quick weeknight dinners in 30 minutes or less



By Lauren Eedy

From a curry in a hurry to a speedy Pad Thai or crispy pork stir fry, these weeknight dinners are a guaranteed hit with the family and are also full of beneficial, healthy ingredients and spices. Enjoy.

Thai Yellow Fish Curry

Fragrant yellow fish curry with steamed jasmine rice and fresh lime. Warm naan optional.

Prep: 15 minutes; Cook: 10 minutes; Serves: 4; Calories: 389;

2 tsp peanut oil

2 red onions cut into wedges

1 and 1/3 cups Thai yellow curry paste

270 ml coconut cream

500 g white fish filets such as tilapia cut into 4 cm pieces

300 g snow peas, ends trimmed and halved diagonally

2 tbsp lime juice

1 tbsp brown sugar

2 tsp fish sauce

1/2 cup coriander leaves

Steamed jasmine rice to serve

Warm naan to serve

Lime wedges to serve

Method:

- Heat oil in a wok over high heat. Add onion and stir fry for 2 minutes or until lightly browned. Add curry paste and stir fry for 1 minute or until fragrant.

- Stir in coconut cream and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium low. Add fish and snow peas. Cook, gently stirring occasionally for 5 minutes or until fish and peas are just cooked through. Remove from heat. Stir in lime juice, sugar and fish sauce. Taste. Season with more lime juice, sugar, or fish sauce if desired.

- Divide curry among serving bowls, sprinkle with coriander. Serve with steamed rice and lime wedges and warm naan if desired.

10-Minute Vegetarian Pad Thai

Cook: 10 minutes; Serves: 4; Calories: 409

150 g dried Pad Thai noodles

2 tbsp peanut oil

300 g firm tofu

1/4 cup tamarind purée (can be found at Troyer's Spices or specialty stores)

1/4 cup lightly packed brown sugar

2 tbsp fresh lime juice, plus wedges to serve

1 tbsp light soy sauce

2 garlic cloves, chopped

250 g package stir fry vegetables

2 eggs, lightly whisked

Crushed peanuts to serve

Bean sprouts to serve

Fresh coriander sprigs to serve

Method:

- Place the noodles in a heat-proof bowl. Pour over boiling water. Set aside, stirring occasionally for 9 minutes to soak and soften. Drain and cover with a damp tea towel.

- Meanwhile, heat the oil in a wok over medium-high heat. Pat tofu dry and chop. Add to

wok. Cook, stirring often for 5 minutes or until golden.

- While tofu is cooking, combine the tamarind, sugar, lime juice and soy sauce in a small bowl. Stir to dissolve the sugar, set aside.

- Push the tofu to one side of the wok and add the garlic. Cook for 30 seconds. Add the vegetable stir fry. Toss to combine. Push the mixture to the side and add the eggs. Stir for 1 minute until combined.

- Add noodles to the wok with the sauce. Cook for 2 minutes to coat.

- Serve with peanuts, bean sprouts, coriander and lime wedges.

- Feel free to add protein such as sautéed shrimp to this dish.

Curtis Stone's Crispy Pork Stir Fry with Baby Broccoli

Prep: 10 minutes; Cook: 10 minutes; Serves: 4

2 tbsp vegetable oil, divided

1 bunch baby broccoli, florets separated, stems thinly sliced

1 garlic clove, finely chopped

3 tsp finely chopped, peeled ginger

2 spring onions, white and green parts separated and thinly sliced

500 g minced pork

1/4 cup soy sauce

1 tsp corn flour

1 tsp white sugar

2 cups long-grain rice, steamed

Method:

- Heat a heavy frying pan over high heat. Add 1 tbsp oil. When smoking, cook baby broccoli for 2 minutes or until crisp, transfer to a plate.

- Return pan to heat and add garlic, ginger and white parts of spring onions. Stir for 30 seconds until fragrant. Add pork and cook, breaking up until cooked through. Spread pork in an even layer and cook without moving for 3 minutes or until crisp underneath.

- In a small bowl, whisk soy sauce, corn flour, sugar and 1/3 cup water. Add sauce to pork mixture and return baby broccoli to pan. Cook for 1 minute and divide rice among serving plates. Spoon stir fry over top and garnish with remaining spring onions.



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Ask the Arborist

By Joel Hackett | 519 272 5742 | jtsquote@gmail.com



Dear Arborist,
What is the biggest, tallest tree in the world?
Sincerely,
Owen (age 8)

Dear Owen
The tallest tree in the world is named Hyperion. It is a Coast Redwood tree in California and stands 380.3 ft tall. However, though it is the tallest tree, it is not the biggest tree. There are several very large trees in the world, one tree is so big it takes 10 min just to walk around it. The biggest tree in the world is named the General Sherman. The General Sherman is located in the Sequoia National Park, also in California. The General Sherman is 52,508 cubic feet, which is equivalent in size to almost 500 dump truck loads.

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

COLUMN

HOSTING UKRAINE: Dealing with death the Ukrainian and Canadian ways

By VJ Knutson

"Kindness is an integral human quality that God gave us," wrote Tatyana Zhyvak-Ianchuk in a message to me this week. "Some lose it, while others show it."

Tatyana, her husband and son arrived in Canada on April 1, 2023. As their anniversary nears, they are filled with gratitude for their hosts, Alyce and Murray Pink, of Wellburn, Ont.

"These wonderful people provided shelter, warmth and care to our family. Their kindness enabled us to adapt. Because of the terrible war, we left our native home, work and loved ones. We started life here with a clean slate. Now our loved ones have become this family of Murray, Alyce and their children. We visit them; they come to us. Our parents, who remained in Ukraine, are always grateful for the hospitality of these wonderful people. Canada has become our refuge and second home."

The Ianchuks now reside in St Marys. Husband, Alex, works in Stratford, Platon is happily settled at Little Falls Public School, and Tatyana was cooking at Westover Inn, and is now focusing on getting her driver's license. They are a warm and welcome addition to our community.

Lesia Danyliuk, Tania Romaniuk and I had the honour of being invited by the Motherwell branch of the Women's Institute to present at the Friendship Centre last Wednesday. Lesia and Tania spoke of their lives in Ukraine and now Canada, practicing their new English skills. We were all delighted to learn more about this group of women who carry on a longstanding tradition of outreach and community.

It's been a busy week of meetings, emails and messages. Our newest Ukrainian newcomer arrived last Wednesday and had a job interview the next day thanks to a fellow Ukrainian. Ruslan will be start-



Ukrainian newcomers, the Ianchuks and the Pinks, at Toronto Airport and the Motherwell chapter of Women's Institute. Photo collage by VJ Knutson

ing work this Wednesday at Calendon Tubing. We continue to seek employment for Svitlana who arrived one month ago. The disparity in job offerings, men to women, does cause me to pause.

Another Ukrainian wrote to me about the death of her host's mother.

"They are going through a difficult time. ... How to talk about it and support it. I don't understand at all."

I remember this response from when my mother died. Vira wrote: "As far as I understand it, in Canada it is called a celebration of life, and in Ukraine they say, 'Send off on the last journey.' This week, Vlad and I attended a traditional celebration of life. ... We came to support our friends in the grieving period.

"First, what surprised me was that during the funeral, (people) come ... with a card of support (for

the relatives of the deceased person, which is very important because (it) can be read (over) again. We do not have such a tradition. (In Ukraine), you say words of encouragement and bring flowers in even numbers, or if it was a very close person, you buy a wreath and sign it.

"In Canada, recalling funny stories ... is a (display) of care and encouragement. ... For Ukrainians, laughter at funerals is generally unacceptable."

Vira does confess that she added a funny phrase in her own Mother's eulogy to relieve the tension. "Something good in the midst of grief."

"Now I realize that we are all different and it's good to be ourselves by listening to our hearts," she said.

Thank you, Vira, for sharing your thoughts and condolences to all involved.

Until next time. (Reach me at english.knutson@gmail.com)

Sudoku

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Solutions on page 31

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Riddles

- What's black, white, black, white, black and white?
- A penguin rolling down a hill.
- What did the boy octopus say to the girl octopus?
- "I want to hold your hand, hand, hand, hand, hand, hand, hand, hand."
- What rolls and jumps but never walks?
- A soccer ball
- What do you call a person with a tree for a briefcase?
- A branch manager.
- Why can't you borrow money from a leprechaun?
- Because they are always a little short
- What kind of chickens lay golden eggs?
- Golden Chicks
- Why did the boy take a packet of oats with him to bed?
- To feed his nightmare
- How do you get a baby astronaut to sleep?
- Rock-it.
- What happens when you throw a purple rock into a yellow stream?
- It makes a splash.

- Word Search -

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Word List

- February
- Twenty fourth
- Winterrific
- Family friendly
- Walk
- Support
- Donate
- Volunteer
- Team up
- Challenge
- Fundraise
- Homelessness
- Assistance
- Outreach worker
- Nourish market



The Riddle Kid OF THE WEEK

How do you get a tissue to dance?



Put a little boogie in it!

Mary McCutcheon (11)

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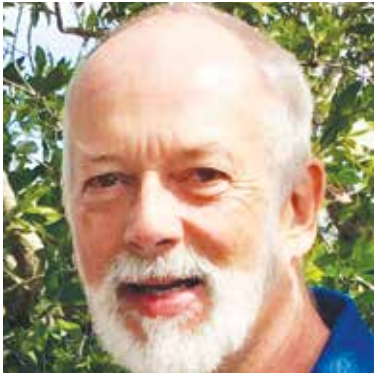
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COLUMN

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Tourist attractions that open our eyes and minds



By Paul Knowles

It seems to me that travellers have a choice; we can travel with our eyes wide open, or we can travel with our eyes shut tight to the current realities of our world. I hope I am an eyes-wide-open guy who travels with an awareness of the environmental and social challenges that are ever-present dangers wherever I go.

But even if I keep my eyes open, I have to admit a new friend of mine, Jason deCaires Taylor, goes beyond keeping his eyes open. In fact, he does everything he can to open the eyes of everyone else too.

I met Jason in Grenada a few months ago. He's a talented sculptor based in his home country of England, and is commissioned to create art installations around the world. But for Jason, his work as an artist is a means to an end. His wonderful sculptures, while art in their own right, always serve Jason's passionate commitment to saving our world.

"My sole focus is the environment. The number one issue is how we can stop destroying our planet," he told me.

Jason creates art in cooperation with environmental groups that help fund their projects. The goal of all his work is to open people's eyes to the environmental disasters we have created, and to force us to consider ways to stop the madness.

When we were in Grenada, Jason was supervising the installation of over 30 life-sized sculptures in an underwater sculpture park. It's a remarkable project. Jason had created most of the original 40 underwater sculptures that were installed in a hurricane-ravaged bay in 2006. Now he was back to add new works that almost doubled the size of the installation.

The Grenada Underwater Sculpture Park was the first of its kind in the world. Jason has since created many more such sites all around the globe. In each case, the intention has been to attract visitors and, in the process, remind them of the damage global warming is doing to coral reefs, ocean-dwelling creatures and the oceans themselves.

I was very fortunate I got to snorkel all around the Grenada park before, during and after the installation of the new sculptures. I also got to spend time on a couple occasions with this visionary

artist.

So, I was intrigued to get an email from Jason about a new project he has just unveiled near his home in Kent, England – an area I have visited frequently and as recently as last spring.

For a change, this multi-figure sculpture is not under water and the interpretation is not left to anyone's imagination. It is a clear and straightforward protest against the terrible damage being done by governments allowing the discharge of sewage into the ocean. It will attract visitors by the hundreds, I am sure, as effective an act of protest as any march on city streets.

The piece is called "Sirens of Sewage". It stands on Whitstable Beach, just north of Canterbury. Jason calls it "a focal point for one of the most persistent and insidious threats facing the UK's coastlines and waterways ... the release of untreated sewage" into these waters.

Now, before we start pointing fingers at our friends in the United Kingdom, let's remember Canadian cities dump billions – yes, billions – of litres of untreated sewage and storm water into lakes, rivers and oceans every year. Don't believe me? Just think about the number of times we hear beaches are closed because of high levels of E. coli. That means untreated sewage. We need to open our eyes to this reality. Maybe



A sculpture, part of the Grenada Underwater Sculpture Park, is lowered into place. Jason deCaires Taylor photo

we need Jason to come to the seven Canadian provinces guilty of this environmental crime, including Ontario.

Jason's life-sized people – all life casts modeled on local residents – carry signs that read, "End Sewage Pollution", "People Over Profit", "Save Our Sea" and the clever "Fishes not Faeces."

This installation is not the only "Sirens" piece by Jason. He is working with environmentalist partners to make similar statements around the globe. One such piece is the "Ocean Siren," a dramatic figure near Australia's Great Barrier Reef. This illuminated sculpture changes colour as the ocean's temperature reaches dangerous levels.

We should all have our eyes open to the threats facing

our world and those of us who travel should be especially conscious of the need for action now. But I admit I find it ironically amusing that Jason's "Sirens of Sewage" sculpture is located on private land because, as he explains, "the project encountered resistance from local authorities."

So, my fellow travellers, open your eyes and then open your mouths and tell those in power we need real action to save our world, and we need it now, and yes, to stop dumping raw sewage into the waterways that we so love.

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.



The Sirens of Sewage sculpture by Jason deCaires Taylor – a powerful statement to inspire public concern.



Jason deCaires Taylor in Grenada. Paul Knowles photo

IN MEMORIAM

Annis



In loving memory of my wonderful husband KEN, gone too soon. One year ago February 22nd, 2023.

*I often lay awake at night
When the world is fast asleep
And take a walk down memory lane
With tears upon my cheeks.
The years I had with you
Are worth their weight in gold
The joy and laughter that you gave
Are mine to have and hold.
Remembering you is easy
I do it every day
Missing you is a heartache
That never goes away.
I will hold you close within my heart
And there you will remain
To walk with me throughout my life
Until we meet again.*

**So lonely without you
Love your wife Phyllis**

IN MEMORIAM

Webb



**In loving memory of Doris Webb
February 25th, 2023**

*I know a smile that I would like to see.
A hand I would love to hold.
I know a voice I'd like to hear.
A face I loved so much.
There is a corner of my heart that you visit every day.
A special place that's your's alone,
And where you will always be.*

**Miss you "Angel Face"
David and Judy**

THANK YOU

Proudlove

The families of the late Don Proudlove would like to express their gratitude to relatives and friends for their condolences and support at this difficult time.

We are truly grateful to the First Responders who acted so quickly to the emergency call for Don.

Thank you to Andrew and Andrea (Hodges Funeral Home) for their professionalism in coordinating all the details for us.

Rev. Robert Lawson and Gary Mallalieu for their kind, compassionate and emotional support.

Thank you to The Pyramid Centre, Village Catering, Sunset Diner and Lyric Flowers for fulfilling our plans for the day.

To all the families and friends who made donations we are truly grateful.

Viola (Vi) Proudlove and Family

THANK YOU

Wilker

Well our kids (Jason, Todd, Heather and families) pulled the wool over our eyes surprising us on our 50th wedding anniversary.

We wish to thank all our friends and families that came with their well wishes.

When we look back and go over this night we are so blessed to see all the people who have been on our crazy journey.

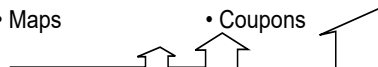
Thank you doesn't seem enough so keep well, laugh often and know that you are special to us.

Rich & Kathy Wilker

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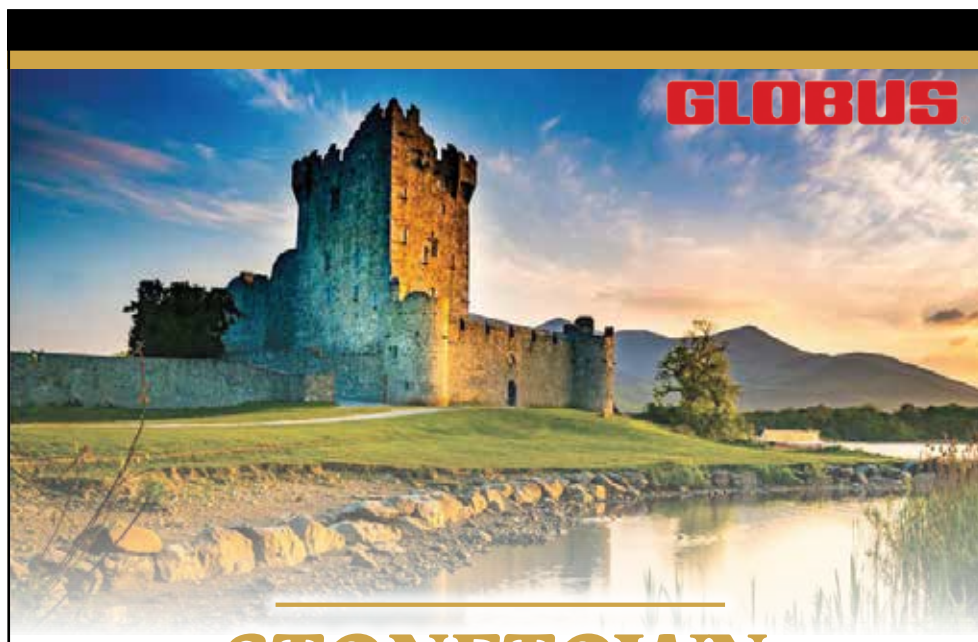
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OBITUARY

Deighton



DEIGHTON, Rudolf James

February 27, 1934 - February 12, 2024

Beloved husband of Beatrix Amalia (nee Scharrenburg Vodegel, predeceased 2022) for 64 years. Father to Alice (Brian), Bridget (Pat) and Rudy (Brenda). Grandfather to Greg (Stacey), Chris (Heather), Brianne (Jordan), Alexis (Paul), Miles, Holly, Dan

and Tessa. Great-grandfather to Ethan, Brinley, Allie, Leah, James and Hannah. Brother to Till (Jan - both predeceased), Victoria (Jan - predeceased), Karel (Betty), Eveline (Jan), Bea (Bert) and Chuck (Janice).

Born 1934 in Bandoeng, Dutch East Indies (now Bandung, Indonesia) to Beata Victoria Kunstt and Charles James Deighton, Rudy recalled an idyllic childhood filled with kite flying and cricket catching until, at the age of eight, the Japanese Empire invaded the colony. As a light-skinned Indo (person of mixed Dutch and Indonesian ancestry), Rudy was forced into hiding for the rest of WWII. During this time, with his father imprisoned and his mother fighting to ensure their children's survival, he learned to play the piano. Having survived the Japanese Occupation, along with the loss of two grandparents as well as other family members to concentration camps, Rudy experienced further hardships as the Indo community was caught up in the sometimes-violent struggle for Indonesian independence. This traumatic period came to a close when his remaining, now reunited family left Java for The Netherlands via ship.

In Holland, Rudy completed his secondary education and continued his musical studies, eventually becoming a musician and instructor at the Koninklijk Conservatorium (Royal Conservatory) of The Hague. During this time, he became close with the adopted daughter of a wartime acquaintance of his mother's. Rudy and Bea were married in Delft in 1958, but it was not long before an advertisement by the Canadian Army seeking European musical talent prompted their emigration to London, Ontario. With baby daughter Alice in tow, the young couple embraced this new start. Besides performing as a member of the Royal Canadian Regiment Band, Rudy played with the London Symphony Orchestra and took jazz piano gigs whenever he had the chance. His fondly remembered highlights included playing the celesta in Richard Strauss' Der Rosenkavalier, as well as accompanying legendary vocalist Peggy Lee on her tour stop in London.

Ready for another change after five years in the army, Rudy and family—now comprising Alice, Bridget, and Rudy, Jr.—made the much closer move to Stratford in 1970. This growing small town would be their home for more than fifty years. Following through on his lifelong fascination with radio, Rudy retrained at the Radio College of Canada (now Yorkville University), which led him to work as an electrical drafting and testing technologist at Reliance Electric. True to his pragmatism and unwavering commitment to his family, Rudy never looked back at this career change with regret, but he did do his best to stay active as a musician, whether playing in classical, concert band, or jazz ensembles—or even, occasionally, providing accordion for Oktoberfest.

Rudy's stroke at the young age of forty-seven marked a turning point, as he required intense support to recover and could no longer use his right hand to play piano. Yet, just as he had carried on through WWII, the fall of the Dutch empire, and his immigration to Canada, Rudy made the best of a difficult situation. An early adopter of personal computers, he actively pursued hobbies in technology and engineering, model trains, military history, and listening in with his shortwave radio. Rudy also stayed connected to his Indo roots, cooking delicious Javanese peanut sauce, barbecuing satay in sub-zero temperatures, and making sure that his growing number of grandchildren were acclimatized to chili via his homemade sambal.

Rudy and Bea enjoyed a long retirement, rich with family, travel, and community involvement—but they made time every day to sit and drink coffee, eat a cookie, and listen to music together. Opa and Oma were tremendously proud of their children and grandchildren, and their loving home was always open and welcoming to friends and family.

Later in life, when it was obvious that Bea's dementia was too difficult to manage, Rudy moved yet again, this time to Vancouver Island under the care of daughter Bridget. Following Bea's death in 2022, Rudy continued to live in Nanaimo for another year. He died peacefully surrounded by family at Nanaimo General Hospital.

A visitation will be held on March 22, 2024 at 11 a.m. and service to follow at 12 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church in Stratford with luncheon afterwards. Interment at Avondale Cemetery following luncheon for those who wish to attend. In lieu of flowers please consider donations to Alzheimer Society Huron-Perth or the Stratford Humane Society through the W.G. Young Funeral Home, 430 Huron St., Stratford ON N5A 5T2. (519) 271-7411 www.wgyoungfuneralhome.com

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