

Woodstock Ingersoll Echo

VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 12

APRIL 12, 2024

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Family opens up about tragic death of Oxford bus driver

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

It has been more than 10 months since East Zorra-Tavistock resident David Stewart died in a collision with an OPP cruiser driven by Det. Const. Steven Tourangeau.

The police officer also lost his life as a result of the collision, which took place on May 29 at the intersection of Oxford roads 33 and 59, which have since seen traffic-safety improvements.

The probe was done by the London Police Service and led by Det. Insp. Alex Krysgman, who said they have no intention of releasing the findings, but they did share some details with the Stewart family. The family wants the public to know what happened.

Wendy Stewart – David's wife – her four daughters and a grandson agreed to sit down with the Gazette to talk about the day of the accident, the subsequent police investigation and the results. Those details have not been released to the public but were given verbally to the family, which recorded the meeting. The family said Krysgman gave his permission, and the audio was shared with the Gazette.

The story now turns to the investigation, handled by the London Police Service, after OPP Commissioner Thomas Carrique asked them to assist. Krysgman was the officer in charge and was assisted by Dave Brazier, an Ontario Provincial Police Highway Safety Division Sergeant, and this is what they told the family.

"This has been a long time coming. I apologize for that," Krysgman said in the audio recording. "We took the approach of no stone left unturned to try and get to the bottom of this. It's taken some time."

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(LEE GRIFFI PHOTO)

STEWART FAMILY SPEAKS

For the first time since a tragic accident that took the life of their husband, father and grandfather, the Stewart family has decided to tell their story. Sitting in front is Wendy. In the back row from left to right are daughters Elizabeth, Heather, Patricia, Melissa and grandson Owen. A photo of David Stewart can be seen in the background.

Ingersoll council says yes to provincial cannabis program

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The town is one of the few in Oxford County without a weed store, but that may change soon as members of council voted on Monday evening to allow the legalized sale of cannabis products.

Ingersoll would have no say in the approval process, which is completed by the provincial government, nor would they be able to decide on where a cannabis store would be located.

Councillor Kristy Van Kooten-Bossence was a member of a previous council who said no to opting in. She said her reason for voting against the motion again was simple. "It could

go in across from our Fusion Youth Centre. These people who brought this forward to us may very well say they aren't going to do it, but we've all seen in different communities where it's not just one shop that will open, it's an influx and there is no way we can control that they can't go anywhere near the centre." She added she doesn't want young people in the community to see a cannabis store when they are going to a youth centre. "If the provincial government were to put regulations in place that a youth centre would be seen the same as a school, then I would absolutely say let's opt-in," she added.

Councillor Khadijah Haliru took a more evidence-based approach to her decision to say yes to the motion based on

CONTINUED TO PAGE 5

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Looking to volunteer? Look at the Woodstock Police Auxiliary

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Auxiliary Unit is a group of local volunteers who work with our officers to ensure the safety and well-being of the community. They volunteer at various events throughout the year

and assist officers with patrolling the community. We are grateful for the thousands of hours this dedicated team volunteers to WPS and the community each year.

Responsibilities of the Auxiliary Unit include providing support for major events such as parades and chari-

ty walks/runs, Police Week displays, crime prevention programs, searches for missing people, and other community events.

An applicant must be a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident and at least 18 years of age, be in good mental and physical health, have a secondary

school diploma or equivalent, be able to volunteer for shifts at different times of the day, possess a current CPR and First Aid certification, and a valid "G" Ontario Driver's Licence with a good driving record. Anyone interested can email Woodstock Police at auxiliaryrecruiting@woodstockpolice.ca.



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Woodingford Lodge sites recruiting volunteers

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Are you looking for a way to make a difference in your community while fostering personal connections with people? Become a volunteer at Woodingford Lodge!

Woodingford Lodge is looking for volunteers who are interested in helping with activities, supporting services at the home, or using their special skills and talents to develop new programs.

Volunteer opportunities include everything from visits, café help, front lobby support and help at mealtimes, to supporting recreation events, spiritu-

al programs, palliative care, gardening, pet therapy, music programs, “travel and treasures,” or a program or activity you propose. Other possibilities include making keepsake videos, researching family trees, or anything ideas you can come up with.

As a volunteer, your personal involvement helps keep residents connected to their community. This is also a great opportunity for secondary students looking to complete their volunteer community hours.

Apply today by filling out an on-line application form at <https://forms.oxfordcounty.ca/General/Woodingford-Lodge-Volunteer-Application-Form>.



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Volunteer Week at Woodingford Lodge

Thank you to the wonderful volunteers at Woodingford Lodge who make a real difference in our community. Woodingford volunteers enjoy personal connections that leave lasting impacts on our residents.

Volunteers help keep residents connected to their community: consider sharing your skills and interests! Volunteer areas include recreation, pet therapy, feeding assistant, visiting and more.

Woodingford is also a fantastic place for secondary students looking to complete their community hours and co-op placements. Apply today at www.oxfordcounty.ca/woodingfordvolunteer.



OxfordCounty
Growing stronger together
Woodingford Lodge

Fashion Show South Gate Centre

Spring has sprung and it's time to update your wardrobe for the sunny days ahead. Giant Tiger sponsored a Fashion Show on April 6 at South Gate Cener. Attendees got to check out the latest in casual and evening wear to add to their wardrobe. Inspiration and community togetherness were goals of this event. This years show was sold out above capacity and extra tables and chairs had to brought in. South Gate Centre, lo-

cated in Woodstock, offers programs, classes, and activities for individuals over the age of 50. It promotes wellness by providing access to fitness classes, cards, billiards, darts, a craft group, library, fitness room, woodshop, bingo, dancing, and more. Membership allows participation in non-registered programs and provides discounts on registered programs at the Centre and local shops.

(RON YUZARK PHOTO)



Sheila Picknell, event coordinator, and Aman Sidhu, make-up and hair stylist, created and organized this event



Volunteers who had the event running smoothly were Sally Day, Vicky Roi, Bev Rajani, Deb Swiech and Karen McIntyre



Modelling the latest in casual wear



Some of those in attendance were Janine Newton-Jibb, Nancy LaPlante, Diane Clark, Joann Pinter, Jill Rawson, Carol Egan, and Jean Hilton

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Woodstock Ingersoll Echo

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Funded by the Government of Canada
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada



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Woodstock Ingersoll Echo

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6. Newspapers strengthen communities
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8. Newspapers should be locally-owned and operated

Ingersoll council says yes to provincial cannabis program

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

data that is available. "Most places will tell you they've seen wise choices by business owners. They've seen caution and I don't think anyone looking to do a business like that will bring it in across from the youth centre. We have to look at what we have, where we are, and what data we have in front of us." She added her cousin from Toronto was going through a medical treatment and when visiting Ingersoll was looking to purchase a product to help him sleep. "We had to go online to try and find some for him and we couldn't find any here. We had to go to Dorchester, so I think it is important to understand that it's not one size fits all."

Deputy Mayor Lindsay Wilson was also opposed to the decision because council wouldn't be able to have any say on where a weed store would be located. "I want to be able to say yes and I hear the community wants this. I got that feedback quite clearly, but I think through online sales the same or next-day delivery or in Thamesford, it's not like it isn't accessible to residents." She added the inability of council to have a say in a store's location is the only reason she is against the move.

Another councillor with a yea vote was Rick Eus who said cannabis has been legalized for five years in Canada and he understood the concern about the number of shops popping up in some municipalities. "I think Tillsonburg has what, seven or eight of them. It's a free market society. Some will succeed, some will not. If they are willing to put the

money in and invest that's fine, it's their chance because it's a business."

Mayor Brian Petrie said they are in a wait-and-see situation until the town can get more information from the province on the process to allow a store to open. "One of the important things to note is the municipality is not notified when there is an application made and I don't believe the public is either without checking the (AGCO) website. It can be difficult to keep track of what's happening." Petrie added it isn't easy for a potential weed store owner to know what's going on either based on the current licensing system.

Kiwanis Club granted free usage of town equipment for Harvest Market

The club asked for and was given access to picnic tables, tables, and chairs for the upcoming Kiwanis Ingersoll Harvest Market. The event is set for August 24 from 9:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Mayor Petrie said council is pleased to help the club host the third annual event taking place in Centennial Park. "It's a great partnership between the town and Kiwanis where they put on a great event at very little cost to the municipality. Last year they came back after the fact and asked for those costs to be waived which council did. We are being proactive to help make sure they can get their planning underway."

According to the club, last year's event attracted over 3500 people.

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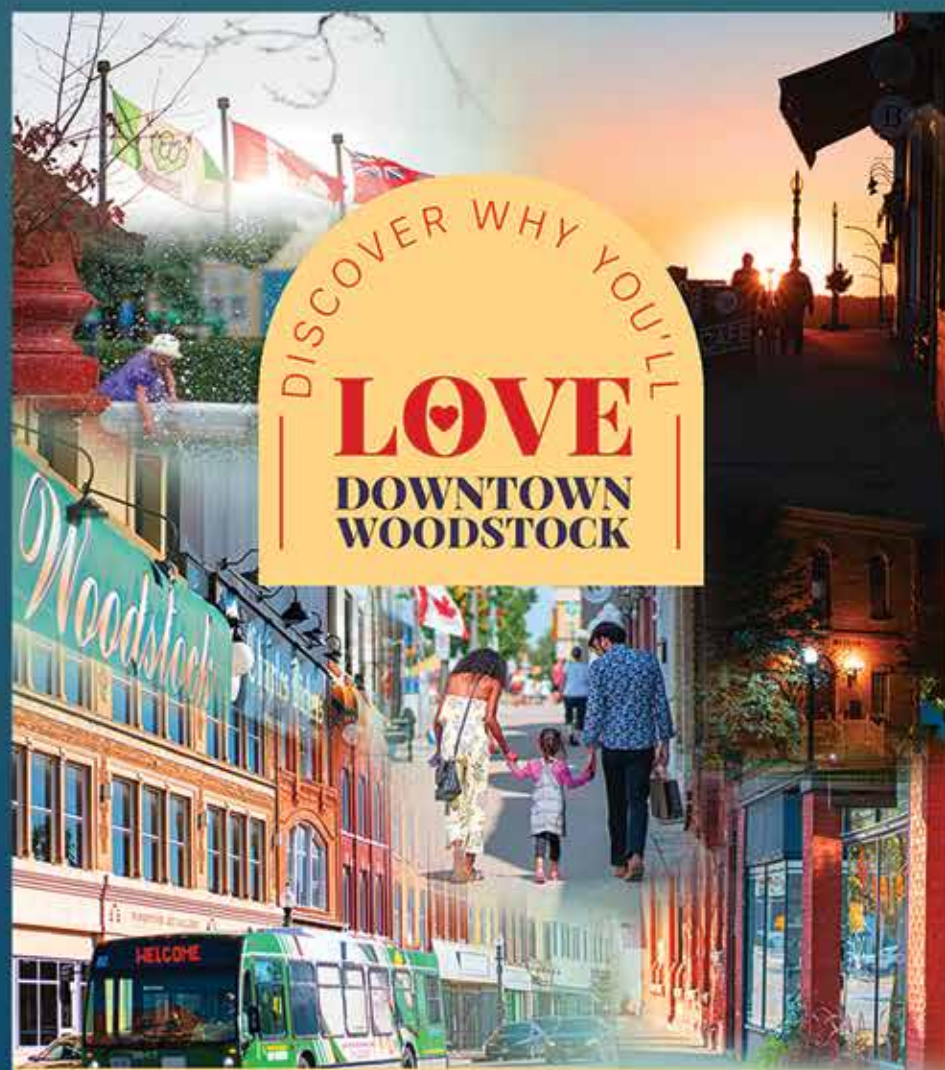
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Short-term closures coming on Oxford Road 59 bridge



(OXFORD COUNTY PHOTO)

Construction on the Vansittart Street bridge in Woodstock is on schedule said the county.

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Motorists can expect two 15-minute closures on the bridge on Friday, April 12.

The closures are expected to take place between the peak morning and afternoon commutes to minimize disruption. Motorists are encouraged to use alternate routes to avoid delays.

Later in the project, the contractor will lower the jacks, requiring a second day with two 15-minute closures. Please watch for updates at www.oxfordcounty.ca/59bridge and on our social media channels for the date these additional

closures will take place.

In a release, the county said construction is on schedule. "Over the past six weeks, the contractor, Woodstock's Siena Construction, has completed several steps to prepare for bridge jacking and the stage 1 deck concrete pour, including installing access platforms and pedestrian hoarding beneath the bridge to protect the trail and its users. Concrete removals are also ongoing as the contractor works to remove the existing sidewalk, curb, asphalt, and decking on the west side of the bridge." The total budget is \$6.3 million.

The project is expected to be completed in December of this year, weather permitting

County kicks off public consultation as green bin program on the horizon



LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Oxford County is looking for public feedback on changes to the curbside collection program, including the potential launch of a green bin program to collect organic waste like food scraps and paper towels.

Residents can share feedback through the online survey open now until April 30 at www.oxfordcounty.ca/speakup. Residents who fill out the survey have a chance to win a backyard green cone or a set of 20 bag tags, with separate draws taking place for each of Oxford's eight area municipalities.

Feedback can also be submitted through an online comment card or at the virtual public information meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 24 at 6:30 p.m.

Frank Gross is the county's manager of transportation and waste management and said the green bin program would involve the curbside collection of separated organics, primarily kitchen or food waste. He added by law the county has no choice. "Under provincial legislation municipalities over a certain size are required to implement the program by 2025 and meet organic waste targets set by the province."

Another substantial change coming to the curbside is the implementation of a new recycling program, one funded by manufacturers and not local taxpayers. "Municipalities have already started transitioning to the producer responsibility model. The producers are responsible for the collection of recyclable materials and end-of-life management of packaging products. By January 2026, all of Ontario will have transitioned to

the new program."

Oxford residents will see their recycling picked up at the curb, but the service will be performed by an independent contractor while garbage collection will remain the responsibility of the county. Producers will provide more information at some point in 2025 advising what the collection cycle will be in each municipality. "The producers include manufacturers of product packaging along with distributors and retailers. For example, Amazon as an importer of products would be responsible for the collection of packaging material they use to ship merchandise," added Gross.

Other changes could include how often garbage is collected, waste collection in urban versus rural areas, limits on how many garbage bags can be set out at the curb, and the use of clear garbage bags to ensure recyclable or organic material is not thrown out with garbage.

Oxford Warden Marcus Ryan said assessing the curbside waste collection program now allows the county to address several legislative, environmental, and program efficiency requirements. "It also presents the opportunity to ask residents how potential changes might serve and impact them. If you want to see an organics or green bin program in Oxford County, now is the time to share your thoughts as County Council considers the goals and design of the residential curbside collection program."

An audit of curbside garbage in Oxford County in 2021 found that more than half of residential waste by weight was made up of organic material that could be diverted from landfills and used for other purposes, such as renewable natural gas or compost.

Echo

Woodstock Ingersoll Echo is a bi-weekly newspaper available both in print format and online (theecho.ca)

Published every other Friday, our next editions are:

Friday, April 26, 2024

Friday, May 10, 2024

Friday, May 24, 2024

info@theecho.ca

The Oxford Hooking Artisans



Welcoming attendees were Nancy Ulrich, Janine Werby and Barb Box

Celebrating 50 years as a branch of the Ontario Hooking Craft Guild, members and guests met Saturday, April 6 at the Maranatha Christian Reformed Church in Woodstock. The Guild meets every second and fourth Thursday of the month. In the summer they occasionally get together at Southside Park. Rug hooking is a fascinating craft that combines both artistry and practicality. It has roots in

New England, USA, and the Maritime Provinces in Canada. Initially, it emerged out of sheer necessity. People repurposed old burlap bags and other farming materials by tearing up strips of used clothing and fabric. These strips were then pulled through the burlap bags to create functional mats. Over time, rug hooking transformed from a practical craft into a true art form. Artists began experiment-



Presenting the 50-Year Certificate were Sandra Thornton (Woodstock President), Suzann Cheddeck (President of the Ontario Hooking Craft Guild), and Jan Hook (Area 8 Representative)

ing with various materials beyond burlap, incorporating wool, cotton, and other textiles. The process involves pulling loops of yarn or fabric through a sturdy woven base (such as burlap, linen, or rug warp) using a crochet-type hook. The resulting rugs can be intricate, colorful, and visually captivating. What started as a humble solution for warmth and comfort has blossomed into a creative outlet that cele-

brates both tradition and innovation. Rug hooking enthusiasts now use all types of materials to weave their artistic expressions into beautiful rugs and tapestries. Rug hooking is a meditative craft that adds joy, community, creativity, and comfort to people's lives. It's a way to create beauty every day, whether you're a seasoned artist or just starting out.

(RON YUZARK PHOTO)

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Woodstock Easter Egg Hunt

The Easter egg hunt is a delightful tradition. Children used their own Easter basket and embarked on an egg-citing adventure. Here's how it worked:

Collect 10 colored plastic eggs. Once they've found them all, they headed over

to the exchange point. There, they traded in their plastic eggs for a scrumptious chocolate bunny and a bottle of bubbles. It was a sweet way to celebrate Easter and enjoy some treats.

(RON YUZARK PHOTO)



There were plenty of eggs to gather at the event



The unicorn princess and the Easter bunny brought joy to the kids who participated.



Volunteers were ready to hand out chocolate bunnies and bottles of bubbles



Among the hunters were Alyssa Donker, Michael and Ellouise



Your Health Is Your Wealth



Founders and organizers Shannon Woolley and Kristen Stewart



Karly Thomas RDH, RPN and Tori of MINT Preventative Dental Hygiene and Medispa



Dance In Style was represented by Wilma Molinaro and Danica

Long time friends Shannon Wooley (Mortgage Broker Dominion Lending Centre) and Kristen Stewart (General Manager Goodlife Fitness) realized that poor financial decisions often came to people with poor health. They conceived an event that would bring these two worlds together and lead to peoples better financial outcomes. In its second year, on April 6th at the Oxford Auditorium, Woodstock, over 50 vendors presented ideas and solutions to attendees. "Your health is your wealth" is a proverbial saying that emphasizes the importance of one's health as the most valuable asset. It suggests that being in good health is more valuable and ben-

eficial than possessing material wealth. While material wealth can provide comforts and opportunities, good health is fundamental to enjoying and making the most out of life. Without good health, one may not be able to fully enjoy the benefits of wealth or pursue their goals and aspirations. Additionally, maintaining good health often requires time, effort, and sometimes financial resources, making it a valuable investment in itself. In essence, this phrase reminds us that prioritizing and taking care of our physical and mental well-being should be a primary focus, as it contributes significantly to overall happiness and quality of life. (RON YUZARK PHOTO)

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DASO looking for participants for PEACE program

EMILY STEWART

Echo Correspondent

Domestic Abuse Services Oxford (DASO) needs participation in order to run their spring session of the Program for Children and Youth Experiencing Violence: Prevention Education Advocacy Counselling and Empowerment (PEACE) program.

The PEACE program, run in conjunction with Ingamo Homes, is for children who have been impacted by intimate partner violence and their mothers. Amanda Deadman, family support worker with DASO, said there are group facilitators working with children to help them understand their feelings in a way that best suits their age and stage. Some activities include safety stations with steps to creating a safety plan, erupting a volcano to show how anger affects loved ones, and Internet safety education.

“Because we are focused on sharing thoughts and feelings, this helps children label each feeling, build self-esteem, and learn to openly communicate in a healthy way,” said Deadman. “The PEACE Program tells children that the abuse is never their fault, that they are not alone, and they have the right to be safe.”

It allows for activities to be done with the mother and child together, and other activities separately.

“Because of this, mothers and children can form closer relationships, trust, and a sense of safety with one another,” said Deadman. “This is extremely important, especially after experiencing and/or witnessing abuse in the home as this allows for growth and the learned ability to cope through different feelings and situations.”

DASO aims to run a spring and a fall/winter session of the PEACE program each year for eight weeks each. The last session, which



Domestic Abuse Services Oxford (DASO) had their first Soup Stock fundraiser in seven years, raising more than \$10,000. The event was held on March 28 at the Reeves Community Complex Goff Hall.

(SOPHIE FOSTER PHOTOS)

began in October 2023, was successful. The next session was supposed to start on April 2, but Deadman said there have been no referrals for it.

She also said that the organization’s compiling a waitlist and possibly looking at running a summer session. Otherwise, the next PEACE Program session will run in October.

The return of Soup Stock on March 28 was successful according to Sophie Foster, fundraising coordinator. There were more than 300 tickets sold, nine participants, and five community judges.

The event raised more than \$10,000 for DASO programming as attendees enjoyed soups prepared by DASO, Boston Pizza, Charles Dickens Pub, Finkle Street Tap and Grill, Ironworks Kitchen, Brickhouse Brewpub, Craigowan, Whisk and Roll, and Local



Roots Café. The judges awarded DASO with the Golden Ladle Trophy and the People’s Choice Award went to Craigowan.

“This is the first time in seven years that we’ve been able to host this fundraiser, and we were very excited to run it again for our 50th anniversary,” said Foster. “We’re hoping to bring it back as an annual event.”

The organization also plans to bring a fall edition of Soup Stock in 2024. Foster added that fundraising events like Soup Stock are necessary for DASO because the City of Woodstock and Oxford County declared intimate partner violence as an epidemic, but the amount of government funding the organization receives has not gone up since the mid-1990s.

“These types of events help us raise the much-needed funds for us to continue the services we offer,” she said. “Not only does

the staff at DASO provide services and programs to those affected by intimate partner violence, but we also provide outreach and awareness in our community, hoping to build prevention with a greater understanding and awareness of the issue.”

In addition to the PEACE program, DASO offers outreach programs, a 24/7 crisis line, safety planning, psychoeducational groups, mental health support, parenting resources, navigation of the legal system, and services to help eliminate barriers in accessing housing, healthcare, employment, and finances.

Mothers and their children who reside in Oxford County who have been impacted by intimate partner violence and want to register for the PEACE program can either call or text 519-788-5086 or send an email to amanda@daso.ca. More information can be found by calling the crisis line at 519-539-4811.

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Cheesy Cow Company celebrates one year of selling specialty cheeses

EMILY STEWART

Echo Correspondent

The Cheesy Cow Company has plenty of “gouda” reasons to smile this May.

The cheese and meat shop will be hosting events for their one-year businesses anniversary from May 2 to 4 inside their store on 525 Dundas Street. Wes Mazur, the head cheese monger of Cheesy Cow Company said that the shop had their soft launch on May 2, 2023.

The 104.7 Heart FM Community Cruiser will be on-site on May 2 and Adam Waxman of Dine Magazine will be speaking to Mazur about the past year. Customers can pop in during the one-year anniversary event for cheese samples, sales, in-store specials, balloons, face painting, live music and prizes.

“We have really grown in one year, especially from a support local point of view,” Mazur said. Cheesy Cow Company started selling around 30 locally, nationally and internationally sourced cheeses when they first opened their doors. Now, the shop has nearly 150 different types of cheeses, as well as meats from a local butcher, hot sauces, frozen pizzas, and pantry essentials such as crackers. The shop was shortlisted for an Ontario Made Award last summer for carrying 100 On-



SAY CHEESE!

Sarah and Wes Mazur are celebrating the first business anniversary of their boutique meat and cheese shop, the Cheesy Cow Company.

tario-made products.

Mazur said the biggest lesson from the past year is learning that customers are the top priority. More than half of the

customers who pop into the shop are first-time visitors.

“They happen to be coming back Downtown Woodstock for the first time

in a long time, if they've been living in the area for a while or they're visitors from town and passing through, which is quite amazing,” he said.

“You would assume that people have heard about you or know that you're there, so that's actually quite exciting to us and something that we've really learned as well from other downtown businesses and neighbours just how the culture is downtown, how the foot traffic ebbs and flows and it's been a great experience.”

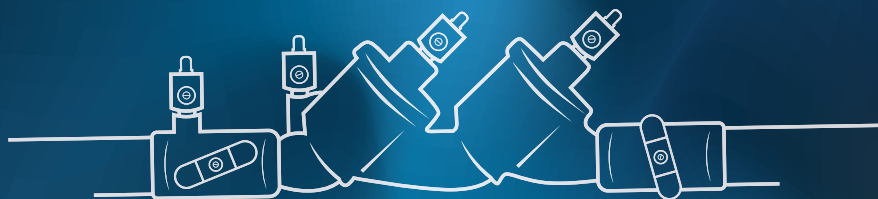
Mazur is grateful for the support over the past year from customers, business neighbours, the Downtown Woodstock BIA and Tourism Oxford. “Without customers, we're nothing and nothing makes us happier than folks coming in not just the first time, but coming the second, third, fourth, fifth and beyond with big smiles on their faces from enjoying delicious food.”

The owner also encourages customers to visit other businesses in the area before and after visiting the Cheesy Cow Company. “We want people to enjoy Downtown Woodstock and certainly come and say hi to us,” he said. “Trade a cheesy pun on our anniversary, maybe enjoy our samples, but please check out our business neighbours, too.”

Visit www.cheesycow.ca for more information and to purchase products.

(WES MAZUR PHOTOS)

Learn about Oxford County's Backflow Prevention Program



Industrial, institutional and some multi-residential properties in Ingersoll will be receiving information about Oxford County's new Backflow Prevention Program. Watch for information about completing a cross-connection control survey and annual backflow device testing in your mailbox.

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Beachville Museum Speaker Series So They Came



On the Museum front porch on a warm spring evening were Dr. Elaine Becker, Susan Clark (Historical Society Chair), and Sidney Williams (Museum Curator)

So They Came: Young Men Farmers was a fascinating historical account that sheds light on the brave young men who embarked on a new life in Canada. The presentation by historian Dr. Elaine Becker took place in the museum's Program Room, April 9. Attendees participated in a question period and enjoyed light refreshments generously provided by the Historical Society. The event was free to attend, but donations to support programming efforts were appreciated. **Background:** After World War I, the Salvation Army initiated a program to train young men (aged 14-19) as farmers. These aspiring farmers were then sponsored for migration to Canada. **Arrival:** In 1924, the first group of these young men arrived in Woodstock, specifically at Burnside Lodge. The lodge provided them with accommo-

datation until they secured employment. **Vital Role:** These cohorts of laborers played a pivotal role in assisting local farmers with their harvests. Their hard work and dedication contributed significantly to the agricultural community. **Settlement:** While some ventured to other areas in Southwestern Ontario, the majority chose to settle on farms in small Oxford communities such as Salford, Embro, and Curries. **Anecdotes and Photographs:** The intriguing history behind this immigration initiative comes alive through anecdotes and photographs that capture the experiences of these young men.

For those interested, the book titled "So They Came: Young Men Farmers" by Dr. Elaine Becker is available for sale, providing further insights into this remarkable chapter of Canadian history.

(RON YUZARK PHOTO)

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Johnny Gonzalez Photography

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Family opens up about tragic death of Oxford bus driver

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

He added through the course of the investigation some checks and balances had to be signed off on before its completion and said he wanted to ensure the family had the trust of the investigators involved. The pair told the family they brought in an extensive and experienced team to find out what happened. A report of over 800 pages was written but police will not release it.

"The officer missed the stop sign. This is a cliché. It is what it is. He missed the stop sign. The question became for us is why. Six witnesses gave statements. The analysis gathered by experts trumps what witnesses would provide to us. The data from the technical perspective, I think, is black and white. It doesn't have a perspective. More weight is given to the data and the forensic evidence," said Krygsman.

He added police spent a significant amount of time to see if the sun was a factor in the collision. He went to the scene the next morning at the same time the collision occurred.

"I think it's safe to say while the sun was bright, there was a stop-sign warning ahead. Was the sun a factor in this where he couldn't see what was coming? Based on the analysis, the officer involved could have seen (the signs) but didn't and that's the mystery."

Three cell phones were recovered from the scene. One was Stewart's and the other two came from Tourangeau's car.

"None of the cell phones provided any indication whatsoever that they were being looked at, holding the phone going down the road."

Krygsman added neither driver suffered any type of medical episode nor were there any findings in toxicology screens.

The speed limits in the area at that time were 80 km/hr and police say Tourangeau was travelling 110 km/hr five seconds before the collision.

"At the point of impact, (he) was travel-

ling 87. The bus was traveling north between 89 and 92 km/hr."

Krygsman admitted there was no way Stewart could have seen the car approaching the intersection until impact.

"The data shows that at the last second the officer applied the brakes hard and tried to avoid the collision, apparently by a hard left turn, but it was too late. Why the officer didn't stop, we'll never know."

Krygsman said the officer was originally from Tecumseh, Ont. and was working with the OPP Perth County crime unit. His wife wasn't sure if he knew the roads he was travelling.

"She was certain he was unfamiliar with the area but couldn't say for sure. It was his first day on a new assignment. He was heading to the GTA on a special assignment. Could he have been preoccupied? Maybe. But this is my personal speculation," added Krygsman.

Carrique did say the only thing they found was the officer's phone showed he had Google Maps up with directions to where his meeting was being held in Toronto.

Krygsman added Tourangeau would be facing prosecution if he survived the collision.

"He would be charged with careless driving causing death and that would be the appropriate charge in my view. I don't believe this reaches the threshold of a criminal, dangerous driving causing death, or criminal negligence causing death."

What isn't clear is if the officer would have been charged criminally or under the Highway Traffic Act. Criminal charges can be laid but only if a driver's behaviour is particularly reckless.

Despite the family asking police to make it public, the collision report will not be released to the media or the public.

"I did check with our legal department and the rules under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Act (FOI) prevent us from sort of just releasing without limit reports and things like that (because of) the risk of inadvertently or maybe on purpose releasing private information," said Krygsman.

He did say a copy could be requested from the OPP under the FOI.

Wendy recalled the painful morning when everything began as usual with her husband leaving home. But the day proved to be anything but normal. She left at 8 a.m. on her route to Hickson Public School and saw emergency crews rush by not knowing anything had happened.

"There was a message that came across my phone from Langs (Bus Lines) that Dave's bus was under a 45-minute delay. I didn't think anything of it and saw the ambulance head back towards the hospital. As I headed out the back door, the Ornge chopper went across too."

Wendy said everything was normal until word came over the radio on the bus that Road 59 was closed at Line 33 because of an accident. Her grandson Owen was outside waiting for his grandpa to pick him up to head to Woodstock Huron Park School, the run David did before he picked up kids to take to Hickson.

"I did my run, and I don't agree that (Langs) sent me out. On the way to Hickson, my phone kept ringing and when I listened to my voicemail, it was the cop that was sitting in my driveway. She said she was at my house so all the way back I'm thinking what just happened?"

Wendy's normal route would have her drive down 59 past the accident scene, but police had closed the area off well before that. She believes the bus company knew her husband was in a collision but let her drive her route as normal.

"We heard Langs was out there shortly after the police. They had to know what had happened when they put his bus on a delay."

Wendy no longer works for Langs.

When Wendy came home and saw the cruiser, she knew there was something amiss. She backed her bus in and afterward was told the news her husband lost his life in the collision.

"I started shaking and I knew something had happened to Dave. I got out of the bus and said this isn't good. You're standing in my driveway. She said Wendy, let's go in the house and then she told me Dave was involved in the accident and two people were killed."

Wendy's first thought was the hope there weren't any kids on the bus and, thankfully, that was the case. That's when she found out her husband had passed away.

"There's not a day that doesn't go by when I don't think about him," she added.

The couple's oldest daughter, Elizabeth, said she knew something was wrong when her mother called her at work, which was completely out of the ordinary.

"I am a teacher, so they would text me and say call me when you have a break. I had seen a post on CTV there was an accident on 59 and I texted (both my parents). I texted dad and it didn't go through."

Steven Tourangeau is listed on the Honour Roll at the Police and Peace Officers' Memorial Ribbon Society in Ottawa as a fallen officer. The website states he died in a motor vehicle accident. Among the criteria is the deceased officer must have acted in good faith in doing everything that could have been reasonably expected. The family said it doesn't sit well with them.

Wendy said the tight-knit family has decided to keep living their lives.

"We are going to try and pull our lives together and try to move on. What else can we do? Nothing is ever going to bring him back."

The Gazette reached out to the London Police Service for an interview. They declined our request.

Fanshawe's Oxford campus introduces VR to nursing program

EMILY STEWART

Echo Correspondent

Practical nursing students of the Fanshawe College Woodstock/Oxford Regional campus are using virtual reality (VR) technology in their studies.

Sarandan Heuston, Practical Nursing and Personal Support Worker Professor at Fanshawe's Oxford Campus, said the VR component was introduced officially for the Winter 2024 semester. Students receive two hours of VR simulations as part of the clinical component of the curriculum using UBI software.

Heuston said most of the feedback has been positive and many students are glad to have the VE experience before the next simulation. "We do a skills review, then we

have them do the VR scenarios, then we take them to into a real scenario with a simulated patient," she said. They've appreciated that aspect and that's feedback before going into the actual simulation."

However, other students had technical difficulties, and some had concerns about motion sickness, but they were accommodated and still had a virtual component without the headset. "They're not VR in the headsets but there are different live scenarios that we do on the Internet," she explained. "So, it's still taking them through the virtual scenario, it's just without the headsets."

The practical nursing students did not have placements during the COVID-19 Pandemic, so Fanshawe had to look for other options. The incorporation of VR technology helped fill the void. "There was this huge

crisis with placements during COVID and we switched a lot of our stuff to online and the problem was we didn't have the software to run these types of things. We were kind of all like 'What do we do next?'" Hueston said.

She added thankfully, and because of COVID, the school was able to come up with all different types of software. "It showed us that students need to get fully immersed in that experience and although we can't really give them the fine motor skills necessarily in VR - that's the one thing that's lacking - it's still putting them in and it's as realistic or as high-def quality as possible to be in a clinical setting. It's not a replacement, but it works well with clinical and it's just a good way to apply their skills."

In addition to the practical nursing program, Fanshawe's Oxford campus is looking



(ERIC COLLINS PHOTO)

Practical Nursing students at Fanshawe College's Woodstock/Oxford campus got to use virtual reality in their clinicals this past semester.

to add VR to the lab component of the Personal Support Worker program for the fall semester. The campus is also hoping to train faculty to incorporate VR into their teaching.

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Navy Vets lose controversial series with Firebirds

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Provincial Junior Hockey League denied a Woodstock protest last week setting the stage for Friday night's 5-2 New Hamburg win and a Doherty Division title.

The Firebirds came out of the gate flying, outshooting the Navy Vets 22-8, and outscoring them 4-1 in the first period. Owen Sculthorp opened the scoring for New Hamburg just over four minutes into the game, but Ethan Szabo tied it up six and a half minutes later. Then the Owens took over with Owen Bruder scoring once and Owen Fischer adding a pair.

After a scoreless second the teams traded third-period markers with Szabo scoring his ninth of the playoffs for the Navy Vets. Jake Thompson added an empty-net goal for the Firebirds who now turn their attention to the Grimsby Peach Kings, winners of the Bloomfield Division, in the Southern Conference final of the post-season.

Game four in the Doherty final ended in controversy as the Navy Vets appeared to score twice in double overtime that would have made the series 3-2 in favour of New Hamburg. The first was waved off as Firebirds goalie Graeme Noye, who played in Woodstock last season, knocked the net off its moorings. The video of the second goal shows the puck hitting the top of the mesh but was not seen by any of the four officials on the ice. The team did file an official protest with the league, but the PJHL has nothing in their rules that could admit video evidence to change a call on the ice.

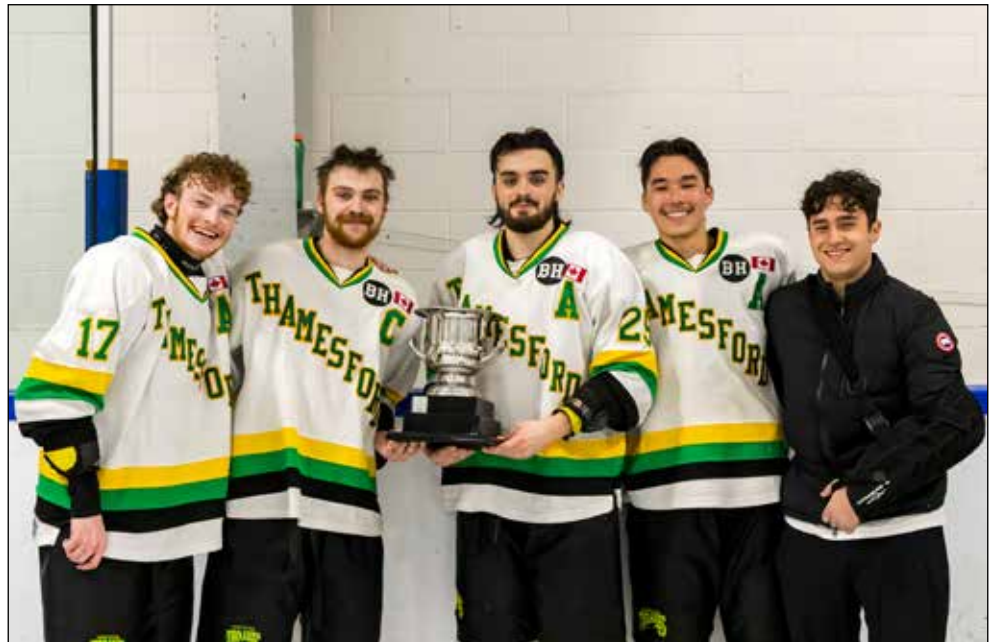
Navy Vets coach Darren Young wouldn't take anything away from the Firebirds but added a game four win would have made it a completely different series. "They're a great hockey team. At the end of the day, they still won three games whether we want to talk about the fourth or not. They have a chance to win the whole thing in

my opinion. There is that feeling of being slighted a bit. It was tough on our guys to really get back into it. It's going two-two or three-to-one. That's a big difference." He added he isn't going to blame the referees as they do miss calls. "There's no point in dwelling on it. We can't change it."

The Navy Vets completed the regular season with a 31-8-3-0 record, good for second place in the Doherty Division. Young said despite the disappointing end to the season he is taking away plenty of positives. "Just looking at the regular season record, and I think it's the first time we've been in the division final since 1997. Obviously, that's a big accomplishment and a step forward for our group." Among the individual honours for the team was Davin Gray won the division scoring title with 16 goals and 47 assists for 63 points, and Tyler Bouck who statistically was the top goalie with a 2.45 goals against average, 19 wins, 5 shutouts (a team record), and a .927 save percentage. Ethan Szabo also led the division in playoff scoring with 9 goals and 10 assists in 15 games.

Woodstock could have a very solid returning lineup as just three players are ineligible due to age. The top three scorers, Gray, Szabo, and Nolan Brett could all be back in a Navy Vets uniform in the fall.

The team has one of the best facilities in the PJHL at Southside Arena and one of the highest attendance numbers. Young said the support from the community has been incredible. "It's huge. It's a great feature to attract players and it helps the in-game atmosphere. The player's performance is a big part of that. The further you go and the better the team the more support we're going to get." He added the organization, behind the scenes, does a great job of running social media and with game day operations. "It's a great atmosphere for people to go to on Friday night. It's entertaining,



(DORIS WEIR PHOTO)



(DORIS WEIR PHOTO)

fun, and the hockey's good."

Young, a Woodstock native, spent three seasons with the GOJHL's St. Marys Lincolns before heading to Huntsville in the OJHL and then Niagara Falls back in the GOJHL. He completed his hockey career at two Division III schools in New York, Morrisville, and Buffalo State.

Trojans take on Canadiens in West final

Thamesford and Lakeshore start their battle for West Division supremacy to-

night (Thursday) in Belle River. The Canadiens won the coin toss and as a result, earned home-ice advantage for the series. On its way to the final Lakeshore has allowed just 20 goals against in 15 playoff games. During the regular season they finished with a record of 37 wins against just 5 losses and allowed only 70 goals in 42 games.

Thamesford disposed of Mt. Brydges in five games to earn their way to the West final.

Thamesford Trojans vs. Lakeshore Canadiens

Game 1	Thu., April 11, 7:30 p.m.	Thamesford at Belle River
Game 2	Fri., April 12, 7:30 p.m.	Belle River at Thamesford
Game 3	Sun., April 14, 6:00 p.m.	Thamesford at Belle River,
Game 4	Tue., April 16, 7:30 p.m.	Belle River at Thamesford
Game 5	Thu., April 18, 7:30 p.m.	Thamesford at Belle River
Game 6	Fri., April 19, 7:30 p.m.	Belle River at Thamesford
Game 7	Sun., April 21, 6:00 p.m.	Thamesford at Belle River

Oldest of the Old Buoy's



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

On the ice: (blue sweaters) left to right; Dick Holm, Don Izzard, Don Guthrie, Ted Vleuten, Wayne Boddy, Roger Morissette, Bil Carrothers, Jim Hill, Rick Doyle, Roy London, Murray Reissner and Doug Allen. (white sweaters) l to r; Perry Hughes, Jim Dent, Gene McLaren, Dennis Kerr, Bruce Pritchard, Ted Gervais, Steve Turnbull, Al Capling

Off the ice: left to right; Mike Cullen, Carmen Raymond, Harry Roberts, Dave Peden, Terry Martel

DON HALL

Echo Contributor

These 25 smiling faces are the over 75-year-old members of the Woodstock Old Buoy's Hockey League who have just completed another successful season.

This, is thanks to the idea and determination of two 60-plus-year-old hockey-playing buddies who 17 years ago decided they weren't quite ready to hang 'em up just yet. They had a vision of being able to play the game they love, in a friendly and safe environment, into their seventies and beyond but at that age their options in their hometown of Woodstock were limited. So they did something about it.

Bill Carrothers, now 81 and Roger Morissette, 79 (blue sweaters, front row) started the league at the beginning of the 2007-2008 hockey season with two teams made up of guys 55 years of age and older. The following season, as word spread, there was enough interest to expand the league to four teams and in 2010-2011 two more teams were added for a total of six teams of 12 players and a goalie which continues to this day after just completing its 17th season.

Every off-season the six guys who now comprise the league organizers, including Bill and Roger, meet and set up six new teams to compete in a full schedule of about 50 games. Building on the "old buoy's" theme players end up on either the Battleships, Frigates, Submarines, Carriers, Destroyers or Minesweepers. The schedule starts the first week of October and each of the teams plays a game at 9:00, 10:00 or 11:00 a.m. every Monday and Thursday morning during October through March.

As one would expect, life can get in

the way of a busy Old Buoy hockey player and although each team has 12 skaters there are times when a team needs bolstering from the spare list. It is generally made up of eligible players over the age of 60 waiting to get into a full-time position in the league. One of the league organizers manages the spare list to be sure everyone on the list gets a chance to play and with the yearly turnover a few younger players from the spare list join each year ensuring the league will live on long after the original members are gone.

Having fun in a non-competitive environment is the official Mission of the league but you'll hear "staying active, getting exercise and sharing stories and laughs" as the secondary motive for lacing them up as these "mature" hockey players, currently ranging in age from 62 to 81 years (the minimum age to get into the league is now 60 years) don't compete for first place or a trophy. There is no official scorekeeping, no scoring statistics, and no individual awards. There are a few rules, mostly related to ensuring players are safe considering you can have an 80-year-old facing off against a 62-year-old, but there are no referees to enforce the rules or call penalties, off-sides and icing.

It is not uncommon to overhear two "Old Bouy's" sitting on the bench waiting for their next shift, talking about how fortunate they are to have the kind of environment where they can continue to play this game they love into their 70s, and beyond.

Parent daughter and siblings hockey



The U13 Woodstock Wildcats ended their season with a friendly shinny game on April 7 at the Embro Arena. The game was a non stop mash-up of players, parents and siblings. The Wildcats, played in the Western Ontario Girls Hockey League. Besides their regular

season games, they also participated in three tournaments: October 2023, West Northumberland Halloween Havoc, December 2023, Woodstock Wildcats 1st Annual 'Roar' HL Tournament and March 2023, Hamilton Hawkeye Tournament.

(RON YUZARK PHOTO)

Woodstock Police Briefs

Brampton teen busted

An 18-year-old is facing a stunt driving charge for erratic driving in a school zone around dismissal time.

On Thursday, April 4 at about 2:35 p.m., members of Woodstock Police Service Community Response Unit were in the area of Cromwell Street and observed a very loud black Ford Mustang aggressively fishtailing out of a parking lot following school dismissal. The vehicle then pulled up next to another black Ford Mustang and appeared to be preparing to race.

Officers conducted a traffic stop and as a result, the 18-year-old driver from Brampton is facing a 30-day license suspension, 14-day vehicle impound, and charges of stunt driving and no muffler.

Fight leads to assault charges

Woodstock Police have charged three people who were involved in a fight in

late March.

At 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 26 police responded to a 9-1-1 call reporting an assault in progress in the area of Devonshire Avenue and Vansittart Avenue.

The investigation revealed a 20-year-old individual had reportedly kicked several vehicles in a parking lot. A 50-year-old witness confronted the suspect and their 19-year-old friend with a wrench, which led to a physical altercation. The witness was transported to hospital for treatment of serious, but non-life-threatening injuries.

As a result, the 20-year-old resident of Woodstock is faces charges of five counts of mischief under \$5000, one count of assault, one count of assault on a peace officer, and one count of obstructing a peace officer.

The 19-year-old and 50-year-old, both residents of Woodstock, are each facing a charge of assault with a weapon.

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Potential changes to curbside waste collection

have your say

Oxford County is considering changes to its waste collection program, including a source-separated organics program for food waste (green bin), adjustments to collection frequency, garbage bag limits and more.

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- Take a short survey by April 30. You could win a backyard green cone or 20 bag tags.
- Join the online public information session, April 24 at 6:30 p.m.

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Oxford farmers win prestigious breeding award



Hank and Nancy Hazeleger (centre) were joined by their family recently to receive the Holsten Canada Master Breeder Award. From left to right are son Darren and wife Kendra, Kevin and daughter Claire, son Marty, son Gary and Alyssa.

LEE GRIFFI

Echo Correspondent

Hank and Nancy-Lee Hazeleger are recent recipients of the Master Breeder Award.

The recognition is the most prolific accolade awarded by Holstein Canada. Each year since 1929 the organization has recognized breeders among its membership for their efforts. Holstein Canada said the award “is the pinnacle of success for any member. Since its inception, over 1,000 Master Breeder shields have been bestowed to Holstein Canada members. These “Master” breeders are recognized for having the best ratio for breeding cows that possess the complete package—high production and outstanding conformation, with high proficiency in reproduction, health, and longevity.”

The Echo was able to talk to Hank after receiving the honour and the Holstein trade is all he knows after taking over the farm just south of Embro from his father in 1981. Hazeleger said the business has seen tremendous improvements in his twenty-plus years. “Once you’re thrown into it you learn the business part of it,

more so than when I was younger once I took it over. When you put it into the context of winning this award, learning about breeding is never-ending because genetics change all the time, the technology changes, the science changes, and the kind of cow you’re looking for changes over time too.”

He added the family was excited to receive the award and it provided a verification they have been doing the right things over the years. “We feel like we have done a pretty good job at breeding cattle and looking after them because it’s not just about the breeding, it’s about taking good care, feeding them right, and making them productive. It’s the ultimate award in the Holstein industry.”

Hazeleger said breeding cows has become an incredible science in so many ways over the years. “The DNA testing and sexing of semen has been a technology that has made a huge difference in the sector. There are a lot more Heifer calves and that’s why people have gone to breeding a lot of their cattle for beef now. They are crossing over their bottom-end cows with a beef bull to get more money for cross-bred bull calves.”

Hazeleger and his wife have just completed the succession process and their son, Marty, has taken over the reins at Hanalee Holsteins. “He has taken over the business side, but we are all involved and still working. It’s not like we’re ready to quite retire yet. Nancy and I are going to be 65 this year but still pretty active. We do chores morning and night, so it isn’t over yet.” Marty has been involved for the past 10 years and makes most of the breeding decisions. “I’m sure it’s in good hands.”



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FARM EDITION 2024

Spring's seasonal awakening brings energy, anticipation at Berrylicious Fruit Farm

JEFF TRIBE

Echo Contributor

The developing 400-tree apple orchard at the Berrylicious Fruit Farm south of Woodstock features a blend of tried and true heritage fruit, along with newer varieties including gala and honey crisp.

And in a nutshell - or berry basket - that provides a metaphor for the upcoming 2024 season: an abundance of the familiar pick-your-own and pre-picked blueberries, raspberries and elderberries the family fruit farm has become known for, along with the opportunity to try new initiatives.

Owner/operators Don and Wendy Colcuc's sons Daniel and Benjamin have graduated from university explains Wendy. And while both have full-time jobs, they also have ongoing interest in the operation.

"They are bringing new ideas and new energy," she credited.

Ultimately, upon maturation of the trees, the apples are anticipated as a pick-your-own option dovetailing with fall pumpkin harvest, doubling up the value of the short drive to the 425533 Substation Road property.

"We think having the two crops available together at the same time will be a draw for people to come out to the farm," Wendy said.

High-tunnel raspberries are a second initiative being tested for the 2024 season, incorporating an annual variety sourced from British Columbia. A 'tunnel' of protective plastic on a metal frame allows ad-



Don Colcuc pruning blueberry bushes in preparation for the upcoming season.

equate cross ventilation while protecting berries from excessive rainfall says Don, allowing them to be grown more sustainably, utilizing reduced inputs.

They are scheduled to ripen in August, adding an element to the Berrylicious fresh fruit harvest schedule. Two rows have been added to the western side of the current raspberry patch, in effect an extended test plot evaluating their performance and popularity.

"We like to try things out on a small scale before we go big," Wendy explained.

Other 2024 initiatives include a children's play zone adjacent to a reimagined on-farm retail area featuring seasonal-

ly fresh, frozen berries, preserves plus baked options from Berrylicious and other carefully-selected area producers, an elderberry/apple/lemonade soda created in conjunction with The County Bountiful Artisanal Soda Co. based in Napanee, and consideration to add a third seasonal farmer's market to existing attendance at Woodstock and London's Covent Garden.

Warm weather early this year was of more than of passing interest to those who depend on Mother Nature's grace for their livelihood. Their blueberries broke dormancy early in March said Wendy.

"We can't put them back to sleep but we are thankful for this cold weather which has slowed down their development."

There is still consideration for advancing the arrival of pollinator bees, typically scheduled for the first week of May.

"We may have to move that up."

Climatic unpredictability may also skew traditional harvest dates. Raspberries historically ripen early in July with blueberries reaching plump juiciness around July 5th, followed by elderberries in mid-August.

"The berry season may shift somewhat this year, but time will tell," says Wendy.

Those looking for precise harvest dates and information on popular opportunities including spontaneous 'picnics in the patch' or Marian's Country Tea are invited to visit the Berrylicious Fruit Farm website: <https://www.berryliciousfruit.ca>.

As the first week of April closed, like its blueberry bushes, Berrylicious Fruit Farm was well on its way out of seasonal



Wendy Colcuc fronts the high tunnel raspberry patch, one of Berrylicious Fruit Farm's new initiatives.

dormancy. The hiring process for 35 local student harvest employees included nine returnees, traffic is picking up at the year-round Friday noon to 5 p.m. on-farm retail outlet, and raspberry pruning was completed with roughly one-third of blueberry pruning remaining.

"Our goal is to finish pruning by the end of April," said Wendy.

The farm doesn't yet have the population or pace it will in the summer, family members, employees and customers mingling in a busily shared celebration of fresh, seasonal bounty. But rather than the calm before the storm, spring at Berrylicious could instead be described as quiet anticipation accompanying the earth's preparation for the season to come.

"It's energizing to see nature at its best on the farm in the springtime," said Wendy.

"Everything starts to awaken," Don added in conclusion.



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FARM EDITION 2024

Terra Nova Dairy, a 280 cow dairy facility in the Heart of Oxford

GARY WEST

Echo Correspondent

It was the early 1990's when a dairyman from Holland, who was only 24 years old at the time, decided to make a trip over the ocean to Canada and work on dairy farms in Southwestern Ontario.

Peter Overdevest did eventually head back home, brought his parents back, and purchased the Raymer dairy farm on the 16th line of East Zorra township in Oxford County.

As with most dairy farms many changes have been made over the years. The Overdevest's Terra Nova herd of Holsteins is now milked in a robotic system.

Their five robots take the work and labour out of milking cows that were

in a tie stall setting in September of 1992 when they first immigrated to milk cows in Canada.

Peter says it was a far cry from the 23 cows they milked in a small parlour in Holland along with 200 sheep and growing potatoes.

His wife Jodi, who was raised with horses near Hillsburgh, worked on dairy farms milking cows while going to school in her teenage years. She says with a smile, she was never going to marry a dairy farmer, but in later years, has grown to love their dairy farming life.

Not only has farming been their life but in November of 2022, the couple started a new adventure known as Terra Nova Nordic Cafe and Spa Services located two kilometres south of nearby Hickson.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 25



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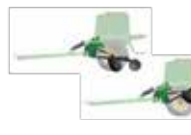
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FARM EDITION 2024

Farmer Wellness Initiative Focuses on Helping Farmers in Need

LEE GRIFFI

Echo Correspondent

A telehealth line that makes mental wellness support available to all Ontario farmers and farm families is now live. It is part of the Farmer Wellness Initiative (FWI) which addresses growing mental health concerns in the agricultural sector by offering more accessible mental health and wellness support to farm families across the province.

“The mental health crisis in the agricultural community has been well documented in recent years and the Farmer Wellness Initiative fills a critical gap for farmers and their families across Ontario,” says Peggy Brekveld, farmer, and President of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA). “Bottom line – if you’re part of a farm family in Ontario and need mental health support for any reason, this telehealth line is available to you.”

OFA has partnered with the Canadian Mental Health Association’s Ontario Division and LifeWorks to develop and launch this initiative. It is the first step of a multi-year, provincewide program that provides free counselling services virtually, in-person or on the phone by professional counsellors with agricultural backgrounds and training. The confidential helpline is accessible 24 hours a day, 365 days a year in English and French, as well as up to 30 other languages, and the new FWI website explains how to use the free service.

Tracey Arts is the OFA’s Zone Director representing members in Oxford and Elgin counties and a dairy farmer. She says what she really likes about the program is that it is unique and geared towards farmers. “We don’t have to spend that half hour, fifteen minutes, describing the day in the life of a farmer. That would take away from us going and asking for help. Let’s be honest. We are proud people, and we don’t normally ask for help. We don’t ask for help when we should.” Arts adds that farming has many aspects that are out of their control such as weather which only adds to the stress. “Stuff breaks down. Parts are hard to get because the supply chain isn’t there right now. When you are working on a short timeline to get the crops off, it is that added stress.”

Arts encourages famers in the area not to wait until the stress reaches an extreme level. “You have to feel the

need to talk to someone, and that is what this is for. You don’t have to wait until it gets to a breaking point. It doesn’t have to get to an extreme and it doesn’t have to be farm related. It can be for anything, not just farming issues.”

Arts wants to make it very clear that any communication with the initiative is confidential, but she says so far it is working. “It is being well-used, people are calling in, we do know that, but there are no specifics because of the confidentiality involved.” She adds its available on demand since farming is a 365 days a year job so anyone can call at any time.

To raise awareness, OFA has launched the Farmer Wellness Initiative – Fields to Forks campaign with different Bell Media outlets across the province that includes TV, radio, print and online ads. A mental health focused one-minute film, specific to FWI, will be widely shared across social media platforms. FWI also had a booth alongside CMHA Ontario at Canada’s Outdoor Farm Show in Woodstock and materials and giveaways were available at the International Plowing Match in Kemptville earlier this week.

“We want to make as many farmers and their families as possible aware of this new service and that help is available if someone needs it, regardless of their farm organization membership or affiliation,” says Bruce Buttar, OFA director and Chair of the Farmer Wellness Initiative Advisory Committee. “We’ve been developing many resources to help break the silence around mental health, including the new FWI website that helps people identify when they might need help and what happens once they pick up the phone to make that first call.”

Other advisory committee members represent the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, L’Union des Cultivateurs Franco-Ontariens, National Farmers’ Union, Canadian Mental Health Association – Ontario, University of Guelph, and the Rural Ontario Institute.

The mental health helpline for farmers can be reached at 1-866-267-6255. Additional resources are available on the Farmer Wellness Initiative website at <https://farmerwellnessinitiative.ca/>. Paid for in part by the governments of Canada and Ontario and through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a five-year, federal-provincial-territorial initiative.



Oxford Rural Entrepreneurs Networking Events



ruraloxford.ca/networking

FARM EDITION 2024

Peel Region dairy farmers move to Oxford



From Left to right- Curtis, Carol and Bruce of Glenholme Jerseys Inc., who have recently moved from the Bolton Area of Peel Region to the 18th line in East Zorra-Tavistock, and expanded their family's dairy operation.

GARY WEST

Echo Correspondent

Oxford County is known as the Dairy Capital of Canada. When dairy farm families are looking for locations to move to from other farming areas, Oxford County is one that dairy farmers look to.

The Glenholme Jersey Farm has recently moved their herd of show-winning Jerseys to a modern dairy farm southwest of New Hamburg.

They were able to purchase a dairy operation from Martin and Erica Van Rooyen on the 18th line of East Zorra-Tavistock.

They bring with them decades of dairy experience from their Century Farm near Bolton where in 1932 great grandfather Stewart Mellow began farming with his herd of Jersey cows.

Now his great grandson, Curtis Ruta, with other family members are now managing and milking not only their herd of registered Jerseys, but also the Holsteins that were purchased with the farm in early 2023. They are now milking 109 cows in their double-eight milking parlour. Their cows housed in free

stalls, are fed a totally mixed ration of forages, grains and concentrates, balanced for maximum production and good health.

25-year-old Curtis has always shown a keen interest

in milking and exhibiting heifers and cows with his mother and uncle at various local fairs including the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto.

While showing dairy calves in the 4-H program he had always hoped he could follow in his family's footsteps to be a dairy farmer.

With their 170 acre farm of prime Oxford County soil, they hope to grow alfalfa and corn to feed their herd of registered cows and heifers.

Since making the move from Peel they are pleased with their production of 5% butterfat and high protein content for their mixed Holstein and Jersey herd.

They are proud to offer their genetics in a TAG sale this weekend where they will offer for sale 38 animals off the top of their well established herd of registered Jerseys.

More information, contact Ben at cru-ta1932@gmail.com or by phone at 647-201-7538.



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FARM EDITION 2024

Oxford County's Dan Yeoman wins Corn Yield Challenge

GARY WEST

Echo Correspondent

It is a sure sign of spring when farmers start picking up their corn seed for another cropping season.

The crew at Trouw Nutrition in Tavistock held their annual spring BBQ in the Pride Seed storage area, behind the Yantzi Feed and Seed building in Tavistock.

Beside treating their customers to lunch, while loading up their seed, recognition is also given to the 2023 winner if the Trouw-Pride Seed Yield Challenge.

This year the winning yield challenge plaque went to Dan Yeoman and father Ken for their top yielding Pride corn (A6694G2) at 276 dry bushels per acre in his test plot.

Dan and his family operate Kenberdale Farms Ltd. in East Zorra-Tavistock, north of Woodstock on County Road 59. They have won the award multiple times in past competitions.

He and father Ken have raised turkeys



Left-Right- Jim Witzel, Trouw Nutrition crop specialist, Yield Challenge winner Dan Yeoman with children Aiden and Emma, and Zenon Bender, Trouw-Pride Seeds sales consultant.

for 30 years on their 450 acre farm where they grow a rotation of corn, soybeans and wheat.

Dan says having an ample supply of turkey manure goes a long way in harvesting a top yielding corn crop.

If children Aiden and Emma decide to farm in the future they would be the fifth generation on their family farm to do so.



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FARM EDITION 2024

Terra Nova Dairy, a 280 cow facility in the heart of Oxford



From left to right- Peter, Mitch and Jodi Overdevest pictured last week with their 280 milking cows in their modern robotic milking facility on the 16th line of East Zorra-Tavistock in Oxford County.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

Jodi says business took off faster than they ever thought possible, and plans are already in the works for an expansion this year. They have entertained guests from as far away as Kentucky and Michigan, but the bulk of business is from London, Hamilton, Guelph, Toronto, Kitchener-Wa-

terloo and many from the immediate Oxford and Perth County areas.

She says the Nordic-Thermal experience has become very popular with visitors.

Besides the dairy farm and Spa, Peter is also busy as the newly elected member to the Dairy Farmers of On-

tario (D.F.O.) board of directors, taking over from Plattsville area dairy farmer Murray Sherk, who represented region 8 for 12 years.

The region includes 530 milk producers from Oxford and Waterloo counties.

As a graduate from the 2016 Ad-

vanced Agricultural Leadership Program, Peter feels privileged to be able to help lead the dairy industry and hopes his family will continue producing Grade A milk for many years into the future.



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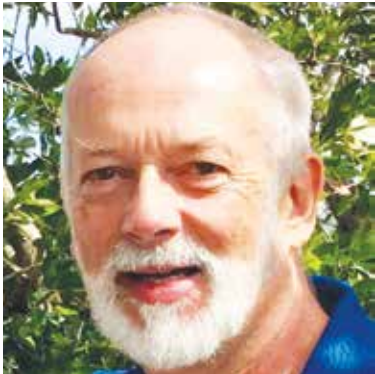
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Travel column – Oh, the places we'll go! An unexpected artistic treasure trove in the Nation's Capital



PAUL KNOWLES

Times Contributor

I couldn't believe my own eyes. I had walked into a large exhibition hall in an art gallery I had never heard of.

Admission was free – open the door and you're in. And I found myself alone, surrounded by the works of many of the best artists Canada has ever known.

There were wonderful paintings by every member of the famed Group of Seven. And, as art lovers will know, the group actually numbered 10, thus demonstrating that art is not necessarily rational.

There were fine examples of Canadian impressionist art and terrific abstracts.

And there was an inspiring display of A.Y. Jackson artifacts, paintings and sketches, including multiple pullout drawers containing examples of his pencil sketches, works that led to some of the masterpieces of this prolific, original member of the Group of Seven.

I was in the Ottawa Art Gallery, an imposing, multi-storey building that somehow manages to be ignored by most visitors to

Canada's capital city.

Actually, I understand this. As the nation's capital, Ottawa is replete with cultural attractions. Visitors with an eye for art will flock to the admittedly wonderful National Gallery of Canada. While in Ottawa, I got a chance to chat with Liliane Lê, vice president of public affairs and marketing at the national gallery, and she told me of many exciting things that are happening or are about to happen at that attraction. But's that another article.

Visitors come to Ottawa with a long to-do list: The Museum of History in Gatineau, The National War Museum, Parliament Hill, Rideau Hall House and Gardens, the Canada Science and Technology Museum, the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum, and much, much more.

But honestly, most of those to-do lists will not include the Ottawa Art Gallery because most visitors are not even aware of its existence. It lives in the reputational shadow of the national gallery.

I stumbled on it by accident. I was attending the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada's annual conference and stayed at a hotel new to me – Le Germain – only a block or two from Parliament Hill, the Shaw Centre (which hosted the conference), the Byward Market and all the other interesting sites around downtown Ottawa.

Le Germain was terrific. I would highly recommend it as your headquarters for your exploration of Ottawa.

As soon as I arrived at the hotel, I noticed, right next door, a

clearly marked entrance to the Ottawa Art Gallery. I assumed, quite mistakenly, this was a cute little facility offering exhibition space to local artists. But when I took the time to check it out, I realized how wrong I had been.

There are five floors with exhibitions, though only a very limited number on the lower floor, which houses a café.

The floor labelled 1 because it opens from the front entrance, one floor up from the back door I had discovered, has a big exhibition space that does, indeed, feature work by local artists. But this is not to be dismissed. Many of the works are excellent art by talented people.

I climbed the stairs to the second floor and entered a room called the Firestone Gallery. Here is where the wonder really set in. Here I was alone with Lawren Harris and A.J. Casson, Emily Carr and Paul-Émile Borduas. Wonderful works by artists of international significance but with a distinctly Canadian point of view.

Jack Firestone was an Austrian immigrant to Canada in the 1930s, a man who fell in love with his adopted country and its culture. A successful businessperson, academic, author and advisor to political leaders, he began to collect art in the 1950s when, let's be honest, a Lawrence Harris painting could be acquired for a tiny fraction of today's multi-million-dollar price tag. But the Firestones went all out. They collected 1,600 paintings and, in 1972, donated the entire collection to the Ontario Heritage Foundation with one



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

A 2016 work by Ottawa artist Valerie Ryan, "Out of Curiosity."

proviso. The paintings had to be made available for the public to enjoy.

The Heritage Foundation decided to pass that challenge on and gave the paintings to the City of Ottawa, which made the Ottawa Art Gallery stewards of the collection. A smart move in my opinion because today you and I can see these wonderful works of art free of charge.

One floor up was a temporary exhibit of the striking work by Ottawa artist Norman Takeuchi, spanning his work from 1961 to 2022. I did not know his work before my visit. I am very glad to have encountered this visionary creator.

I finished my tour of the Ottawa Art Gallery by returning

to the Firestone Gallery, where I spent another half hour, once again alone, drinking in the delight of being up close and appreciative of such great work.

And then, as I was about to descend the elaborate staircase to return to the first floor, I read the panel that explained the staircase – like the paintings – had actually been moved to the art gallery from the Firestone mansion.

A perfect pathway to important Canadian paintings.

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.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

The A.Y. Jackson corner at the Ottawa Art Gallery includes Jackson paintings, drawers full of his sketches and his snowshoes and palette box.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

A wall full of paintings by Group of Seven member A.J. Casson.

Purple Hill's Grand Old Country Opry Show

The Taylor Family, long-standing members of the community since 1853, welcomed attendees on April 7 to their farm. Located just 3 kilometres north of Highway 2 on Purple Hill Road, the Purple Hill Country Opry is a local landmark. Hosts Anna and George Taylor ensured this year was memorable. Their Opry shows run on the first Sunday of each month at 2 p.m. Attendees enjoyed performances by great Canadian talents ranging from Country Music Hall of Famers and top recording artists to Juno Award winners and rising stars. The house band, known as the Boys of Purple Hill are one of On-

tario's premier country showbands. Following the show a roast beef dinner was served creating lasting country music memories. Anita Parise headlined Sunday's show, enchanting the audience with beloved country songs and bluegrass classics like Oh Brother Where Art Thou and Down to the River to Pray. The lineup also featured country artists Cara Smith, Stewart Irvine, Donnie Bentum, Brent Jones, and Leo Stock. Visit their website at www.purplehillcountrymusicahall.ca for listings and dates of other upcoming events.

(RON YUZARK PHOTO)



Hosts and owners George and Anna Taylor



Country Music Fans of all stripes taking in the "Boys of Purple Hill" band



New inductee into the Purple Hills Hall of Fame, local recording producer Bruni Jones of Quiet Earth

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



Dear Arborist,

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Dear Rather Frustrated,

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healing process. An exception to this may be an Oak tree; some experts believe sealing the fresh cuts will protect against Oak Wilt, but this is not necessarily a proven fact. If your tree is any other species other than Oak, there is no cause for concern.

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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



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Weekend Quiz

1. Dinosaurs lived in what time period?
2. What is the largest species of deer?
3. What town do the Flintstones live in?
4. What has a gravitational pull so strong even light cannot escape it?
5. How many sides does the home plate have in baseball?
6. What do you call a group of lions?
7. Who released the 1987 song "Never Gonna Give You Up"?
8. What is the most common letter in Scrabble?
9. Who won the Oscar for best actress in 2024?
10. Which country is nicknamed the land of a thousand lakes?

This week's answers are found on pg. 30

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Sunday Service 10:30 AM
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Rev. Jeffrey Smith

www.stdavidswoodstock.com

Route to the Past: Archie Barrow of the 168th

SCOTT GILLIES

Contributor

He was just 18; more of a boy than the man he was about to become in the course of the next sixteen months. Living with the family at 201 King Street West, Archie was the youngest of eight children born to Charles and Mary Barrow. His parents had emigrated from England several years before but like most expatriates they no doubt staunchly held firm in their loyalty to King George V.

With older brothers working in town, Archie was probably itching for a bit of adventure by the time he reached the age of majority when he could enlist. He was likely overflowing with enthusiasm when he signed up with "B" Company of the 168th Battalion, Oxford Own, on January 20, 1916.

Doubtless, mother Mary was fretful and none too pleased with Archie's decision. Her one son Donald had a good job working at the Kirwin House Hotel on Oxford Street, and his brother Fred had steady employment with the Morrow Screw & Nut Company which commanded the corners of Catherine, Thames and Carnegie streets, but she had enough worries with her husband not being in the best of health. The fact was Charles had been ailing for nearly 3 years. He had worked as a coat maker with the tailoring firm of Thompson and Smith and later Smith and Kerr at the corner of King and Charles Streets. Mary had reason to fret. Within three months of Archie's enlistment she was a widow.

By 1916 Allied casualties were such that Canadian troops were needed as reinforcements for the standing army on the Front. Once they got overseas in October of that year, the 168th was split up and the boys of Oxford County were sent to fill the ranks of other regiments. Archie, like many others, was sent to the eastern Ontario regiment, the 21st Battalion, in early February of 1917. This particular unit was already known for hav-

ing faced fierce fighting up to that point; nothing would change in the ensuing two years. The 21st was one of the most bloodied battalions of the Canadian Expeditionary Force during the First World War, especially as Canadian troops earned the reputation for being some of the best soldiers in the Allied armies.

In April of 1917, Canadian forces were amassing under the direction of Generals Julian Byng and Arthur Currie in preparation for an all-out assault on Vimy Ridge. Other Allied forces had tried to capture this German stronghold, and all had failed. This time, it was up to the Canadians. Rather than another blundering suicidal charge up the hill, the Canadians spent weeks carefully planning and rehearsing their assault.

On sunny Sunday April 8th, young Canadian Lieutenant Frank Smith from Norfolk County wrote to his father that he was one of thousands of Canadian soldiers resting in a field preparing for the next day and what they felt would be the most important day in Canadian history.

That next day, April 9, 1917, did indeed turn out to be the watershed moment for the Canadian Expeditionary Force. At 05:30 all four of the Canadian divisions launched their attack. It was the first time that they had all fought together as one army. Within half an hour they had captured their first objective, and within four days total victory was theirs. Henceforth they earned and deserved the reputation of being the elite storm troopers that struck fear in the hearts of the Germans. April 9th however would turn out to be Private Archibald Barrow's last day of earthly existence. He along with 10,600 other Canadians were killed or wounded in this battle.

Back home, his widowed mother received news that her boy had paid the supreme price but little more could be revealed by the authorities. It would take another seven months before she received monies from Archie's es-

tate. His military will left all of his worldly possessions to his mother Mary. In November of 1917 she was notified that she would receive \$180.00 as part of the War Services Gratuity to Dependents of Deceased Soldiers.

We may never know where, when or how young Archibald Barrow was killed. We do know that he was the first member of the 168th, the first lad from Ingersoll to be killed in action. Did he live to know that victory was close at hand?

Today, you cannot visit Archie's grave. He, along with 52 other Canadian soldiers were hurriedly entombed in a mass grave that has since become known as Zivy Crater – a lasting reminder of the pockmarked landscape of No Man's Land that was the Hell on Earth Archie and others strove to defend.

Not all those buried were identifiable; 48 of them were – all from different backgrounds and places of birth, different occupations and ethnicities but on this day, Vimy Ridge Day, all were Canadians who fought together as one and who now lie buried as one.

Lest we forget.



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COMING EVENTS

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YOUNG AT HEART

Last Thursday of every month, (Next: April 25th);
12:00 p.m.

Huron Park Baptist Church, 199 Berwick St, Woodstock

Luncheon for seniors and music by Jane Valenta
Call the office for more details 519-421-4722

LADIES EVENT – ENJOY A MEXICAN FIESTA
Friday, April 19th; 7:00 p.m.

Huron Park Baptist Church, 199 Berwick St, Woodstock

With our own Alysse Stavropoulos who is on furlough at this time

OUR FRIDAY NIGHT DANCES ARE MOVING
TO SATURDAY NIGHT

Every Saturday starting April 1st; 7 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Woodstock Moose Lodge, 690 Sutherland Drive, Woodstock

KARAOKE

Friday Nights; 7 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Woodstock Moose Lodge, 690 Sutherland Drive, Woodstock

Once a month car show

ANNUAL CLASSIC CAR SHOW

May 18, June 29, July 27, Aug 24 and Sept 21

Woodstock Moose Lodge, 690 Sutherland Drive, Woodstock

Once a month car show

MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH

Sunday, May 12th; 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Woodstock Moose Lodge, 690 Sutherland Drive, Woodstock

Bring Mom for a Mother's Day brunch at the Moose!
\$7.50 per person.

REIMAGINE YOUR FUTURE:

Monday, April 15th from 6 – 8:30 p.m.

250 Ingersoll St. S., Ingersoll

At this evening workshop, offered at Ingersoll Services for Seniors, a Creative Grief Coach will guide you to imagine a fulfilling future after loss. Together, we'll move from information to creation to revelation. You will tap into your innate creativity to illustrate your reimagined future. You may wish to write, draw, collage, or use a combination of

these techniques or others. A collection of creative materials will be available. Your creative expression is about the process, not the outcome – you don't need artistic skills. The workshop will be run by trained facilitators in a safe, confidential, small group environment. Cost is \$30 members; \$35 non-members. Call 519-485-3869 to register.

ABBA TRIBUTE SHOW:

Sunday, April 14th; 2:00 p.m.

Mt Elgin Community Centre, 333204 Plank Line, Mount Elgin

Tickets are \$35.00 and include a light meal following the show. For tickets call Joanne - 519-485-1988, Dawne - 519-421-6836 or the church office 519-425-2091

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION EVENTS:

642 Dundas Street, Woodstock

WING NIGHT - April 17th; 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Call the Canteen at 519-539-3401 after 3pm.

SOUP N' SANDWICH - April 18th;

11:30 a.m. -12:45 p.m.

SHUFFLEBOARD - Every Thursday afternoon

SUMMER DART LEAGUE - Starts April 25th

CADETS - Mondays

OUR ROAST BEEF DINNER - April 26th

with Mashed Potatoes & Carrots for \$18.00

SILENT AUCTION - April 13th

MEAT DRAW - April 27th

EVENING ENTERTAINMENT SATURDAYS

April 13th Mike Thorpe 7-11pm

April 20th 2 of a Kind 2-4pm

April 27th Back to Back 7-11pm

INGERSOLL CHORAL SOCIETY

EVENING OF SONG

Friday, May 3rd; 7:00 p.m.

Ingersoll Christian Reformed Church, 429 King St. W., Ingersoll

Ingersoll Choral Society presents an evening of song

in support of IDCI's Music Department. This fun show will include special guest performers from IDCI's student body. Free will donation.

FATHER'S DAY JAMBOREE

Sunday, June 16th; 12:00 p.m. Noon to 4:00 p.m.

Woodstock Moose Lodge, 690 Sutherland Drive Woodstock

Father's Day Jamboree Fundraiser with Gerald Davidson & Country. \$12.00 @ the door. This will be a family event.

24TH ANNUAL WIENERFEST

Saturday, June 22nd & Sunday, June 23rd;

9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Woodstock Fairgrounds - 875 Nellis St., Woodstock

Voted by Expedia. ca as the top 6th festival in Canada to visit. Now a two day event! Also Canadian Dachshund Rusty Ru Ru will be there, as well as a Dog pool, sponsored by Doggo Den Training, for people who want to try out the sport!! On Saturday, we will be having a concert featuring Country Singer Shelly Rastin. On Saturday there will be a large outdoor/indoor shopping market. In between shopping, talk to health professionals about how to train your dog, get your dogs nails trimmed, learn about your dogs health, what type of food they should eat. Talk to the professionals at Pathways and Woof Pet Wellness about treating your dogs IVDD and what are the alternatives. Try out some fun stuff with your dog, lure course, agility course, dock diving, learn how to do tricks with your dogs. Getting to hot outside, go into the building and cool off. Later come out, grab some food, your dogs can cool off in the dog pool, meet professionals to talk about concerns with your dog at the IAMS care center. We will have a meet and greet with Canadian Hero, Rusty Ru Ru, the Canadian Dachshund. Also at the festival will be Canadian Food Network star, Tiffany Pratt, with her dachshund Poppy. Don't forget the fun games, costume contest, yogurt licking contest, bobbing for wieners games, and of course the WIENER RACES!!!! Don't leave yet!!! Join us for a fun music interlude with Shelly Rastin, at 4:30 p.m. Come back on Sunday for some more fun, where we celebrate the Sumer Olympics, by having our own Paw Olympics. You can join the small country, medium country or Large Dog Country. There will be approximately 12 games for your dog to compete in and try to win the Bonze, Sliver, Gold medal for your Dog Country. Contact Linda Sonnenburg at info@wienerfest.ca for info and volunteer opportunities.

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John Deere 1020 Gas Loader Tractor, 1967 Waterloo Model, lots of new parts. \$9500 OBO
Call Kris 519-463-5583

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. The Mesozoic Era
2. Moose
3. Bedrock
4. A Black Hole
5. Five
6. A pride
7. Rick Astley
8. E
9. Emma Stone (Poor Things)
10. Finland

SUDOKU

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

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Contribute to your local community newspaper! Send articles, sports or event recaps, and photos to

info@theecho.ca

KidS Du holding another active fundraiser in June



© Bill Thompson

Participants and family members are at the starting line of the 2023 event.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Are you looking for something fun for your kids to do? KidS Du is coming up on June 9 in Southside Park, Woodstock. In its 7th season, KidS Du is a run-bike-run for kids aged 3 to 13 with a focus on having FUN! It's a non-competitive way for kids to try a multisport event in a safe en-

vironment while challenging themselves to complete the event with the support of their family and friends.

The distances for the run and bike courses are designed to be age-appropriate with lots of volunteers to cheer and guide them along. To participate, the athlete needs a

pair of running shoes, a good-fitting helmet and a bike. The bike can have 2, 3 or 4 wheels and includes balance bikes. But be sure that the bike is in good repair.

One parent of the 3 to 5-year-olds must accompany their athlete throughout the course.

Online registration is currently open with a deadline of May 22 to guarantee a t-shirt and personalized bib. Registration will remain open until June 5.

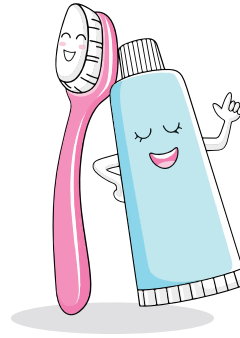
KidS Du Race Director and Woodstock Triathlon Club Coach, Dave Jenkin said it is a kids-only event without pressure to win. "It's all about being active, being outside, participating in a multisport activity and having lots of fun while doing it." He added he is encouraged by the number of families who return year after year. "We have a great group of sponsors, some of whom have been with us since the beginning such as Woodstock Lions Club, TMMC, Craven Dentistry, Arnel Optometry and Heart FM. And each year we grow our sponsor list. Even many of our volunteers keep coming back. We're grateful for all the support that we receive from both our volunteers and sponsors."

KidS Du will continue with their community spirit in 2024 by donating new winter boots to Operation Sharing – Coats for Kids. Last year KidS Du was able to donate over \$1200 in new boots to them as well as \$1000 to Ingamo Homes to help with their children's programs.

Come join the fun on June 9! Sign up your kids! Become a volunteer! Be a sponsor!

For full details and to register online, visit www.woodstocktriathlonclub.ca.

HAVE AN EVENT COMING UP?
Let us know!
Contact: info@theecho.ca or call 519-655-2341



Healthy Smiles Ontario

A government-funded program designed for families in need of support.

Q Who can apply for non-emergency care?

A You can apply for your children if they are: 17 years of age and under, live in Ontario, come from a household with an income equal to or less than the levels in the table below.

Before you start

- Before you begin the online application, you'll need:
- 1 Your child(ren)'s date(s) of birth.
 - 2 A valid Ontario address your Social Insurance Number (SIN) or Temporary Taxation Number (TTN).
 - 3 To have filed your taxes in the previous year.

Did you know?

Southwestern Public Health connects families to the Healthy Smiles Ontario program through school dental screenings.

Income eligibility requirements

# of dependent children in your household	Family net income (as of July 1, 2023)
1 child	\$26,551 or lower
2 children	\$28,560 or lower
3 children	\$30,568 or lower
4 children	\$32,577 or lower
5 children	\$34,586 or lower
6 children	\$36,595 or lower
7 children	\$38,603 or lower
8 children	\$40,612 or lower
9 children	\$42,621 or lower
10 or more	\$44,630 or lower

Add \$2,009 for each additional dependent child to determine the income level at which your family would qualify for Healthy Smiles Ontario.

Riddles

What do the Montreal Canadiens and the Titanic have in common?
They both look good until they hit the ice.

How do you get 50 Canadians out of a swimming pool?
You say, "please get out of the swimming pool."

What does Canada produce that no other country in the world produces?
Canadians.

What did the snow say to the Rocky Mountains?
I've got you covered.

What was the skeleton doing at the hockey game?
Driving the zam-boney.

Why shouldn't curlers tell jokes on the ice?
Because it might crack up

What has antlers and sucks blood?
A moose-quito

Why is maple syrup always so sad?
Because it's sappy.

How do you get a Canadian to apologize?
Step on their foot.

Why are Canadian students so smart?
They get lots of ehs.

Why do hockey players like baking cakes?
Because they're great at icing.

Sudoku

Sudoku

by PeterS 2024

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

Solutions on page 30

Basic (12)

Featured Pet



TAMMY

This is Tammy Wang-Mountbatten, she is a 9 month old British Blue Kitty born in Richmond Hill Ont. Tammy lives in town and also works from home as a security guard in Woodstock. Tammy loves food and is a total food snob. Her favourite dish is Friskies shredded Turkey Dinner but she also loves Patte and begging for bites of Meatloaf and Potatoes. Tammy protects the neighbourhood by watching out the window from her security station and monitors birds and squirrels as well as stops any bugs from getting too close to the house (or palace as she likes to call it). Tammy claims to be part of the British Royal Family but it hasn't been proven yet. Tammy aspires to be a member of the British Royal Guard someday and protect Buckingham Palace.

Nominate your pet to be a Featured Pet by emailing info@theecho.ca

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SPRINGTIME

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

- Flowers
- Sunshine
- Blossom
- Robin
- Sunny
- Butterfly
- Sprouting
- Thawing
- Renew
- Insects
- Growing
- Umbrella

Thamesford News



LION'S CLUB AWARD

(DORIS WEIR PHOTO)

Jim received the International President's Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of Distinguished Achievements in Fulfilling the Mission of Lions International. Signed by Dr Patti Hill, International President. The reason was for all the work making cabinet meetings and conventions available to Zoom participants who are unable to attend and for providing sound equipment for the same events.

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LOCAL MATTERS.



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Remember when **Facebook** bought a case of Girl Guide cookies to support your daughter?



Remember when **Google** provided free pizza to your child's soccer team when they won the championship?

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at Woodstock Fairgrounds

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All year round

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