

ABANDONED TRUCK FIRE



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Petrolia/North Enniskillen firefighters were on the scene Monday morning after witnesses reported a fire on Plowing Match Road. Firefighters found a four-door pickup truck fully engulfed in flames around 7:15 am. Chief Jay Arns could not say if the truck had been stolen however there was no driver at the scene when firefighters arrived.

Vaccines likely in early February in Lambton

Heather Wright
The Independent

Lambton is ramping up to provide COVID-19 vaccines to the community's most vulnerable people by early February.

And the Medical Officer of Health says Lambton shouldn't jump the cue to get the vaccine any faster.

Over the past two weeks, the number of COVID-19 cases in Lambton has soared, making it one of the top five hot spots for the virus in the province.

That prompted Sarnia-Lambton MPP Bob Bailey to write to the premier asking for an earlier delivery date to the area.

The province used COVID-19 data from early December to determine which communities would get the first vaccines. Toronto, Peel, York and Windsor-Essex were all working

toward vaccinating all long term care residents who are the most vulnerable by Jan. 21.

But Bailey noted the "meteoric rise" of cases and the fact that Bluewater Health is accepting patients from Windsor-Essex to help ease the strain on their medical system as reasons to move up the delivery of the vaccine.

"I have confirmed with Lambton Public Health and Bluewater Health that they are fully prepared to immediately begin delivering vaccines in our community. As such, on behalf of all the residents of Lambton County, I implore the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force into considering including Lambton County in the Phase One vaccine implementation plan."

But Dr. Sudit Ranade, speaking to reporters Jan. 7, didn't think Lambton should be jumping the cue to get the first vaccines.

"Allocation decisions are made at one time, and then the situation always changes later. But once they've made those allocation decisions, it can be challenging to go back and revisit them," he says. "You've made promises to different communities."

"We would hope that if a promise was made to us about when a vaccine would get here, we would hope that promise would be kept."

Ranade says the plan to roll out the vaccine is ready and long term care residents will be first in line. He's hoping enough vaccine will arrive in Lambton that public health and the local hospital won't have to make decisions about which homes will receive the vaccine first.

Minutes of Sarnia Emergency planning show public health is now hopeful the vaccines will arrive in Lambton at the beginning of February.

A 'real and looming threat'

Province declares state of emergency, says Stay Home

Heather Wright
The Independent

Lambton's warden is worried the latest provincial measures will be 'detrimental' to the economy.

But Kevin Marriott adds it was past time to try to put a lid on the growing number of people infected by COVID-19.

Tuesday, Premier Doug Ford declared a state of emergency in Ontario for the next 28 days.

And he's issued a stay-at-home order, which takes effect Thursday. People must stay at home except for essential purposes including going to the grocery store or pharmacy, accessing health care services, for exercise or for essential work.

Starting Thursday, you can't be in a gathering with more than five people, down from 10.

The province advises you to wear a mask outside if you can't socially distance from people you don't live with.

Non-essential stores – everything except grocery stores, pharmacies and restaurants doing take out – must not open until 7 am and close by 8 pm. Before, there were no limits on hours.

If you can work from home, your employer must ensure you do – before it was only a suggestion.

Non-essential construction must stop, however the details of what is essential were not immediately clear.

Premier Ford also announced schools in the high transmission areas of Windsor-Essex, Hamilton, Toronto, Peel and York will remain closed until Feb. 10. Emergency child care will be available until then. Emergency child care will be available for essential workers in the rest of the province until Jan. 22 – ahead of the planned reopening of all schools.

The province has given the OPP, local police and bylaw enforcement officers the power to charge people breaking the stay at home order.

Ford says the moves have to be taken as COVID-19 case and death rates continue to climb in the province with "the real and looming threat of the collapse of the province's hospital system and alarming risks posed to long-term care homes as a result of high COVID-19 transmission rates."

Health modelling released Tuesday shows Ontario could have between 20,000 and 40,000 cases of COVID-19 daily by March if nothing is done. Between 50 and 100 could die each day in Ontario

Dr. Stein Brown of the Dal Lana School of Medicine at University of Toronto, also told reporters the number of deaths in long term care homes could climb from about 1,110 today to 2,600 by Valentines Day.

SEE STAY AT HOME PG 2

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Stay at Home order ‘drastic’ but necessary Ford says

CON’T FROM PG 1

Brown added right now, half of Ontario’s intensive care units are full and would not be able to handle an emergency. That would quickly get worse with a real possibility of 1,000 ICU beds being needed. Right now, hospitals across the province have 400 ICU beds in use and are already cancelling surgeries.

Brown says the province’s situation has gone from precarious to dangerous.

“As this virus spreads, so will the cases and so will the deaths,” Brown told reporters Tuesday.

Brown says cellphone data shows the lockdowns imposed in Metro Toronto and Windsor had little effect.

“We are not seeing any real change since the restrictions took place in the grey zone.”

He points to surveys which show 34 per cent of Ontarians didn’t follow the restrictions and 32 per cent had more than three people in their homes over the holidays. The current provincial guidelines say no one should be entering your home that doesn’t live there.

“The shutdown was not enough, we need more measures,” said Associate Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr. Barbara Yaffe before

the premier announced the state of emergency. “We’re in a dangerous situation.”

Yaffe and Brown both agreed without social supports, such as protection from eviction and paid sick leave days, any new measures will not work.

But the new measures did not contain the paid-sick leave many people have been advocating. Ford said the federal government already has a paid sick leave benefit of up to \$500 a week for two weeks and a caregiver benefit for up to 26 weeks at \$500 a week.

“We aren’t going to duplicate areas of support,” says Ford.

He’s also urging the federal government to make the transition between the benefits and Employment insurance quicker if it is needed.

Labour unions were vocal about their frustration the Conservative government won’t do more for workers.

“We are well past the time for action, Ford’s conservative government must step up, provide leadership and the protections that workers and communities need now,” said the Ontario Federation of Labour Head Patty Coates in a news release.

Ford did say he would place

a pause on residential evictions but the details of those were not immediately clear.

Throughout Ford’s news conference on the new state of emergency he pleaded with the 34 per cent of Ontarians not following the restrictions to step up.

“The dangerous and very dangerous UK strain is found across the province, Ontario had eight new cases today,” says Ford. “If we don’t move fast, hospital ICUs could be overwhelmed by February.

“One third of Ontario is not following public health guidelines...”

“I’m not blaming anyone only one thing is truly at fault, that’s the virus...If you let your guard down it can strike.

“I know the stay at home order is a drastic measure, one we don’t take lightly.

“Everyone must stay home.”

Warden Marriott says in Lambton - with the number of cases rising daily and nine long term care homes in outbreak, - it’s clear people have not been following the public health guidelines.

In fact, Marriott believes the province should have acted earlier. “I don’t get why they didn’t do it

sooner,” he told *The Independent* Tuesday.

“They gave into the pressure of having a normal Christmas I don’t think they should have.

“The numbers were spiking, why the heck does Christmas matter for one year?”

“It doesn’t feel like people were sticking to the suggestions. I guess like a lot of other things, if there are not consequences, people won’t do the right thing.”

But Marriott is also concerned the province’s actions are “heavy handed.

“I think it is going to be an enforcement nightmare,” he says.

“The government feels it is necessary to drive the message home; as long as they can enforce it, it will be effective.”

Marriott knows there are still many people in Lambton who believe the government’s actions are unnecessary - some telling him they don’t believe the virus is real.

But he hopes residents will look at what is happening in Lambton, and recognize the situation is serious and they should do as public health and the province say to help the community get a handle on COVID-19.

“It’s too bad people didn’t listen and take more precautions

sooner,” he says.

“You’re seeing (COVID) coming in areas where it didn’t happen last March. When you’re hearing about cases in grocery store employees, that should tell people it’s much more serious than last March...it’s popping up everywhere.”

Marriott says every department in the county is working to provide support during the pandemic. Politicians, when they look at the 2021 budget, hope to make the financial burden easier by keeping any tax increase below the rate of inflation.

Marriott says that is so important as businesses again face silent cash registers as the province tries to get the virus under control.

“For the economy, it was bad enough shutting down once, this time it will be detrimental,” he says.

“I question whether both levels of government have enough money to tie us over for this,” he adds.

Marriott knows this is difficult for residents, saying his own head was spinning after hearing the news today knowing Lambton, and the rest of Ontario, are right back where we started.

“It feels like last March for sure,” he says. “It’s déjà vu.”

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Lambton nursing home outbreaks worsen with 55 COVID positive

Heather Wright
The Independent

There are now 18 residents of Village on the St. Clair retirement home who have tested positive for COVID-19.

It's the largest outbreak in long term care in Lambton in the second wave. Nine homes are dealing with COVID-19 in their facilities.

An outbreak was first declared in the retirement home in downtown Sarnia Dec. 30. Today, Lambton Public Health is reporting 18 residents and five staff members are ill.

Village on the St. Clair is owned by Steeves and Rozema, the same company which owns Twin Lakes Terrace, which also is in outbreak. Twelve residents in the long term care side of the Terrace are ill, and three staff members – including

one in the retirement home – are also COVID-19 positive.

Twin Lakes has an 84-bed long term care facility, including 24 shared rooms, and 47 suites on the retirement side.

“Residents are being cohorted, meaning that residents in shared rooms are either alone, or are paired with a roommate with the same COVID status,” says John Scotland, the chief executive officer of Steeves and Rozema in an email to *The Independent*. “All residents are currently isolating in their rooms.”

Scotland says both Bluewater Health and Lambton Public Health have been working with them at Twin Lakes Terrace including helping with weekly testing of all staff and residents, infection control, and deploying additional cleaning staff.

At least one of the residents

went to hospital with COVID but Scotland said late Monday they may return to the long term care home.

Lambton’s Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Sudit Ranade, says public health officials are working with long term care homes, but good outcomes are not guaranteed.

Ranade says even with extra help and all the right precautions, COVID-19 outbreaks in long term care homes are difficult to control.

“Once this virus takes hold in a long term care facility or retirement home, we have seen the devastation that it can cause, we have seen the damage that it can do and we have to remember that this is really related to the way in which this virus transmits.

“All of the efforts, personal protective equipment, screening ... are useful to a point. But ultimately, this is a virus that

spreads very much like the common cold and what you are trying to do is prevent the spread of something like the common cold in a very vulnerable setting.”

He says sometimes the known prevention efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19 are not enough.

“These measures are not perfect, they are to help reduce the risk, but ultimately, this is a virus that spreads very efficiently through the population when it’s in certain circumstances like in long term care homes, and of course, closed, confined spaces. So, we are concerned about it.”

Seven other homes, Meadowview Villa and Fiddick’s, both in Petrolia, North Lambton Lodge in Forest and Fairwinds Lodge, Landmark Village, Sumac Lodge, and Trillium Villa, all in Sarnia, are also in outbreak.

Across the province, more than one third of long term care homes are now in outbreak. Fifteen more long term care residents died yesterday. Since September 1,147 residents have died of COVID-19.

The province is reporting 2,903 new cases of the virus with 41 deaths.

In Lambton, another 85 cases were added to the COVID-19 case count Tuesday.

There are 248 people actively ill with the virus, up 24.

There have also been 61 more recoveries.

There are four workplace outbreaks in Lambton with 18 people ill.

At Confederation Central School, public health says there have now been five cases of COVID-19. Great Lakes Secondary School is also still considered to be in outbreak with two cases reported.

Surgeries cancelled in Lambton as ICUs fill up in southwest Ontario

Heather Wright
The Independent

Full ICUs across southwestern Ontario and a surge of COVID-19 in Lambton has prompted Bluewater Health to cancel elective surgeries

Bluewater Health accepted some medical patients from Windsor-Essex this week as the hospital system in that community began to overflow because of the high number of COVID-19 patients needing care.

Windsor-Essex has been struggling with the virus for a month with some of the highest rates of COVID-19 in the province.

Julia Oosterman, director of communications at Bluewater Health, said Sarnia accepted patients from Windsor on Thursday. “Months and months ago, we planned for this day knowing that there was a very good likelihood in January and February, to the two worst months in any way, from a capacity perspective, we would need it,” she says.

Oosterman says the situation in Windsor-Essex was getting difficult for the hospitals to handle. “I think they have been super valiant in their efforts for a while,”

she says. “They have pulled out every stop; they have called for reinforcements and now they are taking the next step of asking for their partners to lend a hand and it simply behooves us to help.

“This isn’t necessarily about where someone lives. This is about saving lives.”

And while Bluewater Health is lending a hand to its neighbours now, it is unclear how long they may be able to provide relief.

COVID-19 cases are soaring in Lambton.

Oosterman says January and February are difficult times normally for hospitals. Right now, Bluewater Health’s 14 bed ICU is full; with some COVID-19 patients and the others recovering from various other illnesses.

Intensive care units from Windsor to London are full. Oosterman says that’s a big concern.

“We have 14 beds and 14 people, only two of them today are COVID. But if you’re already at 100 per cent, like the airplane’s full, and someone else needs to get on the flight ... I’m very cautious to not paint the picture of everything rosy... We are on a precipice.”

The full intensive care

unit, new patients coming in from Windsor, and rising rates of COVID-19 in Lambton could cause problems in about two weeks says Oosterman.

She says hospital management, which has already severely restricted visitors to patients, also cancelled some elective surgeries Monday.

In the first wave of COVID-19, the province halted all elective surgeries, including joint replacements and cancer surgeries, to deal with COVID-19. Oosterman says the hospital is “slowly dialing back some of our procedures.”

For example, a doctor who had access to the hospital operating room five days a week might, starting Monday, only have access to the OR three days a week.

People whose surgeries and procedures are delayed will be getting a call from their doctor’s office. Diagnostic tests – like CT scans – will continue for now.

“We’re keeping as much going as possible,” Oosterman adds.

“We are mindful of the impact these changes have on those we serve and don’t make these decisions lightly,” says Chief of Staff Dr. Mike Haddad in a news

release.

Oosterman says the hospital is trying to prepare what they expect will be a “tsunami” of COVID-19 patients from the community in the coming two weeks.

“It’s about staffing and making sure we have enough staff to potentially ramp up the COVID Unit.”

While the number of

people needing medical attention rises, the hospital is also feeling the effects of COVID-19 on its staff.

Oosterman says last week over 70 people were at home isolating after being in contact with someone who tested positive.

They, like everyone else who comes into contact with a COVID-19 positive person – are expected to self

isolate for 14 days. “In the middle of this war, these are our frontline soldiers, for the most part, they want to be there...they want to make a difference,” says Oosterman, adding having to stay home to isolate is hard on them “mentally and emotionally.”

People whose surgery has been cancelled will get a call from their physician.

– ADVERTORIAL –



Charlotte’s Corner Petrolia Hospital Seeks Patient Experience Partner

As we begin the New Year, Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital (CEEH) of Bluewater Health is recruiting a Patient Experience Partner (PEP). Every patient has a story to tell from their experience at the hospital, and PEPs use their voice to create positive change.

PEPs are volunteers whose function allows patients and families to work together to influence policies and practices, to redesign care and to educate staff about what really creates an exemplary healthcare experience.

The PEP will play a pivotal role at CEEH of Bluewater Health, by bringing a fresh perspective, and giving a voice to the Petrolia community.

To ensure CEEH of Bluewater Health is able to hear the most accurate insights

on patient care, the PEP will be chosen from among those who have received care as a patient or family member at CEEH within the past three years. To be successful, a PEP must have good listening skills, be interested in making a difference within their community, be confident in sharing their own experiences with the hospital, and be willing to work with staff towards common goals.

The PEP’s influence can reach all levels of the hospital. They will attend monthly program council meetings, and will be involved in quality improvement initiatives to represent the patient and family perspective. Their partnership and collaboration is key to strengthening patient and family-centred care at CEEH of Bluewater Health. They may participate in committees, focus groups, training, presentations, as well as policy and program development, where they will be able to influence hospital staff to remember their top priority: their patients and families.



Patient Experience Partners are valued members of the healthcare team. To learn more about PEPs and how you can apply, visit www.bluewaterhealth.ca/patient-experience-partner.

Editorial

An unfortunate state

Ontario is in a state of emergency again because of the COVID-19 pandemic and we are left with the feeling it didn't need to be this way.

The facts are simple. More people in Ontario are getting COVID-19. That means more people need critical health care. Intensive Care Units - which are always stretched to the limit in the winter - are full. There is not one bed available across southwestern Ontario. If you get COVID-19 or have a heart attack or are in a car accident, where will you go?

The provincial government is staring down the barrel of this gun and has declared a State of Emergency and ordered everyone to stay at home and stop the spread before hospitals are overwhelmed.

But, as has been the case throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, everyone staying at home doesn't mean everyone. Obviously, some people must work - including our food producers and processors, the transport business and of course, health care workers. But confusingly, manufacturing can continue operating even though workplace spread of COVID-19 is high and non-essential stores can continue to offer curbside pickup to people who aren't supposed to be going out for non-essential trips.

It's obvious the premier wants to keep the economy moving - he doesn't want to hurt small business - so he's letting them stay open and make money. The problem is, they won't. And they won't be able to collect the government emergency benefit - CERB - because they are working.

A complete lockdown, like we had in March, but with strong financial programs would have given these businesses a fighting chance.

It cannot be easy to govern through a pandemic. Nor can it be easy to have to choose between people's physical health or their ability to earn a living and have good mental health. For us who don't bear the weight of the office, it would seem to us the health of the people is always the most important. The Conservative government has dithered too long, and now the people pay the price economically, mentally and unfortunately - tragically - in the death of our fellow citizens.

Letters to the Editor

The Independent welcomes Letters to the Editor. Our preferred methods to receive letters are via email to news@petrolialambtonindependent.ca (please use Letter in the subject line) or through our website www.petrolialambtonindependent.ca. You can also deliver letters to *The Independent* at 4156 Petrolia Line, Petrolia or drop them in the mail at *The Independent*, Petrolia, ON, N0N 1R0. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit letters for brevity and clarity. All letters need to be signed and must have a phone number for verification.

Our Story



STEVE MCGRAIL PHOTO

For many people, January has always been about SilverStick Hockey. Since this year's event was cancelled, we thought it might be fun to look back at the champions Bantams from Petrolia in 1989-1990. They are in the front, Bob Metcalfe, Scott McGregor, Chris Walker, Steve McGrail, Chris Stinson, Matt Munro, Pat Lyons and Tyler Vaillant. In the back are Barry Young, the manager, Scott Jordan, Keith Graham, Tim Hendra, Brad Nichols, Kevin Logan, Derek Jackson, Mark Dwinnell and Colin Blackwood.

Think of the people as we try to control COVID-19

My husband Barry's friend died this week and I can't get his kids out of my mind.

Marty Wilkins was a hockey lover, salesman and an incredibly proud father to Jake and Jenna. He'd had some health problems before but this time, he had a massive stroke. They knew almost right away he likely wouldn't survive.

As sad as it is that a 51 year-old man dies of a stroke, the image that bothers me the most is that of his two kids at home, unable to be at his side until the very last minutes of his life. It's tragic and painful and unfortunately, it's one of the many maddening affects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are so many people who are enduring their own hurricanes - parents struggling to keep it together to work

and teach school, business owners trying to do everything to stay afloat, grandchildren asking their parents to see a beloved grandpa, a wish that cannot be fulfilled or, people like me, who couldn't hug or hold the hand of my dad in the last nine months of his life.

I can't even begin to imagine the pain and suffering of people who have lost a child, parent or grandparent because they caught the virus. There are well over 5,000 families across Ontario who feel that pain.

While we may not get COVID-19 - we may not even know someone who has it - we are all affected by it.

It's a point that Ontario's public health officials finally drove home Tuesday when they took out their charts and talked about their concerns. Ontario's Associate Chief Medical

Officer of Health, Dr. Barbara Yaffe, acknowledged some people still don't think COVID is real. These dots on the graphs, she said, they are all people. That stopped me for a moment. And it made me wonder, why have so many people stopped trying to follow the rules to stop the spread. Yes we're tired. Yes, there has been pain. But perhaps, if we remember we are doing this for all people - those people we know with and affected by COVID - we would all try a little harder.



Heather Wright

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‘Disgusted and hurt’ after chief’s call about domestic abuse

Heather Wright
The Independent

A Corunna woman says a call with Chatham-Kent’s police chief did nothing to explain why her ex-husband is back on the beat with a gun.

Darcy Lunn plead guilty in a domestic violence case to assault and uttering threats in May. He also plead guilty to three Police Service Act charges in December and was back on the job three days later carrying the same service revolver he used to threaten her and her son.

Lunn was demoted to fourth class constable and will lose about \$30,000 per year gross pay, which the agreed statement of facts says works out to about \$14,764 net pay over the two years of demotion.

His ex-wife - the victim of his abuse - Janine Bechard was disappointed she wasn’t told Lunn would be entering a plea. She had expected to testify at a hearing. She also asked the investigating officer four times to speak to the Chief, Gary Conn, about the incidents but until last week - after she criticized the decision in The Herald - she had not heard from him.

Bechard says the call from Conn did nothing to change her mind about how the Chatham-Kent Police Service deal with officers.

“The very first thing he told me was he was sorry, to me and my son for what we’ve gone through, and that we’re still part of the Chatham-Kent family. I said I would never treat a family member the way that your department has treated me and my son,” she recounts.

“In fact, you left us in the dark. And you let us find out about the horrible person who inflicted harm on us that he actually got the very same gun back in his hands that he threatened us with. So, I said, I’m very disgusted and hurt by your department.”

Bechard adds Conn implied if Lunn would have plead guilty to more substantial charges, the Police Act hearing might have imposed a stiffer penalty. The only other penalty

available would be for Lunn to have resigned or been fired.

Bechard also believes Lunn wasn’t fired because of his family ties to the department. Bechard says his sister is an exemplary officer and his father was the chief of police in Wallaceburg before amalgamation.

The Independent has made repeated, daily, requests for an interview with Chief Conn about Bechard’s allegations. Sgt. Michael Pearce, the manager of professional standards for the department, said the chief was simply too busy to answer media questions.

Pearce says the chief takes the Lunn case seriously, noting he filed a chief’s complaint which triggered the Police Service Act hearing. Conn also hired a third-party lawyer to represent CKPS and hired an independent hearing officer.

Pearce refutes Bechard’s concerns about Lunn’s connections within the department. “I think someone’s family status is irrelevant.

“The Chatham-Kent Police Service condemns domestic violence and it’s particularly troubling when a police officer perpetuates that violence. And certainly his reputation is damaged and our reputation is damaged. But we’re not trying to protect him,” Pearce says.

“The judge in the criminal proceedings and the hearings officer both believe there’s an ability to rehabilitate.”

Justice Deborah Austin in her sentencing, did not talk about returning to police work, but did express counseling was necessary for him to improve his mental health - he suffers from depression - and for rehabilitation in the workplace.

The executive director of the Chatham-Kent Sexual Assault Crisis Centre also voiced concern that the department had not been clear on what steps Lunn may have taken to understand what led to the 10 years of abuse he admitted to in court.

The Agreed Statement of Facts submitted in the Police Act hearing notes Lunn had taken a domestic

violence course but had never apologized to his victims.

Also omitted from the statement of facts were two incidents which would not have painted Lunn in a favourable light - an investigation by Lambton OPP after referees at the Mooretown arena called police because of the uniformed officer’s behaviour and the fact Lunn faced a Police Act hearing in 2015 after a citizen complained about the department’s search methods.

There were never any charges from the OPP investigation and Lunn was cleared in the 2015 Police Act hearing. Pearce says neither is relevant to the 2020 Police Act hearing.

The sergeant also took responsibility for lack of public notification about the hearing. Lunn’s plea should have been open to the public, however the notification did not appear on the service’s website.

Pearce says it was his oversight.

Bechard had been asked to prepare to testify but was not told a plea deal had been arranged to be heard Dec. 15.

It all leaves Bechard with hard feelings even with a call from the chief.

She says she was left with the impression Chief Conn wanted to be sure she knew the Police Act sentence wasn’t his “fault.

“It was a waste of my time, and really made me feel more frustrated and more disappointed in the department.”

The Corunna woman has been buoyed by public support on social media and has been encouraging people to contact the Solicitor General to ask the case be reviewed.

“It’s just outstanding, how many people have reached out and how many women have reached out and, thanked me for coming forward and sharing my story and that it has given them a voice, and that they’re going through difficult times right now in their relationships, and it’s helped them.

“It feels really good to know that I, in some way, whether it’s smaller or large, I’ve made some sort of a difference in their lives.”

Companies urged to use the right labs for COVID tests

Heather Wright
The Independent

Lambton’s Medical Officer of Health is calling on local industries offering COVID-19 testing to employees to make sure the labs they are using are certified to do the job.

Nova Chemicals is one of the local companies testing employees as they return to work. Company spokesperson Julia Iacovella says the final COVID-19 tests are completed on 2,000 workers.

“A return-to-work COVID-19 testing program began on Jan. 3 and will run through the seventh.

“About 2,000 laboratory-analyzed PCR tests will be administered by registered nurses over the four-day period.

“Workers who test positive are being referred to Lambton Public Health for additional testing,” she said in a statement to *The Independent*.

Iacovella says the company – which had two COVID-19 outbreaks before Christmas on the construction sites on Rokeby Line and the Nova Cracker

unit – has been working with the local unions, contractors and the Sarnia Construction Association on the project. Public health, according to Iacovella, has also been involved.

“In addition to our strict protocols aligned with guidance from public health authorities, the screening tests are an effective approach to mitigate the risk of workplace transmission and maintain the health of our workers on site.”

But Dr. Sudit Ranade voiced concerns about private testing like this during a news conference Thursday. He called it cumbersome because some companies are using private labs which are not accredited to do the COVID-19 work.

“When labs that are accredited do their results ... as soon as they’re positive, they have a method and mechanism to upload them into our system, and then we get that result right away. This is a more cumbersome process because the unaccredited labs are not hooked into the system.

“The other piece about not having those labs accredited is that you can’t



FILE PHOTO

Workers at Nova Chemicals Rokeby site were tested for COVID-19 before returning to work.

rely on those results as much and so we actually have to then go and retest all of those people.

“It’s a double burden in terms of public health work on that front, we get the results later and we also have to re-verify them with the second test. So, if you’re going to do it, it’s better off to be done in an accredited lab to avoid all those issues.”

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	1	4		5			3	7
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Here's How It Works: Level: Advanced

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

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St. Clair man gets 11 days in jail after violence in ‘toxic’ relationship

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

A man has plead guilty to assault in what court heard was a “toxic relationship.”

James Barnhardt appeared in court Jan. 5 to resolve the 2019 matters. He received an 11 day sentence from Justice Krista Leszczynski, to be followed by 18 months probation.

Barnhardt, 58, and a woman had been in an on-going relationship but things devolved quickly one evening at a St. Clair home when Barnhardt became upset over people on the woman’s Facebook friends list. When the woman went to leave, Barnhardt began screaming at her before putting her in a chokehold and pulling her hair. He only stopped when the woman’s young son came into the room.

Barnhardt continued the assault the next morning, choking her and pulling her hair while yelling obscenities. She attempted to leave but Barnhardt stopped her. She and her son eventually escaped.

Barnhardt was arrested and released with orders to stay away from the woman. On Aug. 9 police received a call shortly after 3 pm of an intoxicated man in a Hawaiian shirt waving a knife around while walking on Thompson St. in Courtright. Officers arrived to find the woman, who said there were no problems and that he’d been using the knife to fix his sunglasses. Surveillance video from a nearby variety store showed the pair together contrary to his bail conditions.

There was more trouble at the Courtright variety store in October involving the pair. The owner had called police but by the time police arrived both Barnhardt and the woman were gone. A warrant was issued for his arrest.

“I suspect it might be a bit of a toxic relationship,” says defense lawyer Jamie Guggisberg regarding Barnhardt and the woman.

Leszczynski, as she delivered Barnhardt’s sentence, says the fact the violence took place in an intimate relationship is concerning. She was also concerned about how the violence affected the woman’s young son.

“It’s important that you recognize the impact that your behavior may have had on that child,” Leszczynski says.

Barnhardt won’t spend anymore time in jail. His stint in the cells before the sentencing covers the 11 day penalty. He’ll now be on probation for 18 months.

Barnhardt cannot contact or go near the woman, must take counselling for domestic violence and substance abuse, not possess any weapons for five years, and provide a DNA sample.

LASALLE LINE CRASH



PETROLIA FIRE PHOTO

Petrolia/North Enniskillen firefighters were called to Lasalle Line near Black Ash Road late Sunday night. One person in the car was taken to hospital for treatment.

Transfer site fee ‘a way to make it fail’ O’Hara says

Heather Wright
The Independent

The fence is on order but the rest of the details of Petrolia’s transfer station are still up in the air.

The town’s compost site on Maude Street was closed in April 2017 after a Ministry of the Environment inspection found a number of problems, mostly in the keeping of paperwork. Town administrators at the time closed it, saying it would take too much money to reopen.

It became an election issue and since the new council took office in 2018,

the issue has bounced around the council table as they tried to reach a solution.

Monday, staff presented a report which would have finalized all the details. A \$20,000 fence has been ordered and staff suggested 14 dates for the site to be open.

Those dates, and the cost for a weekly pass, irked Councillor Ross O’Hara. In 2020, because of the pandemic, the pass was free. Before that, it was \$20 a year. Staff was suggesting 2021’s pass cost \$50 a year to help cover costs including two summer staff.

“I don’t necessarily agree with the

dates. And I definitely don’t agree with the fee from raising something from \$20 to \$50 for the right to use it...We certainly didn’t do that with the arena’s sports fields, the market, or anything else, we tried to hold the line because of the pandemic. And all I feel is this is a way to make it fail by raising it that much.”

Councillor Marty Souch agreed, saying he hoped it would be open Saturdays and Wednesday and be free, as it used to be.

Council asked staff come back with a report on new dates and a way to lower fees for the transfer station.

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LAMBTON COUNTY PLANNING DRAWING

Spectra Construction is planning a new 63 lot subdivision which will connect Oozloffsky Street. Residents in the area are concerned it will become a speedway for people looking for a short cut through the residential area.

More traffic, less trees concerns neighbours

Heather Wright
The Independent

A plan by Spectra Construction to build 63 homes and connect Oozloffsky Street in Petrolia is drawing concern from neighbours.

The company plans a two phase project which would see 30 single family home lots constructed in the first phase as well as connecting Oozloffsky Street. Currently, the street stops at the field and resumes several hundred meters away near Cardinal Crescent.

Petrolia and Lambton County held two meetings on the project Monday. The first was to rezone a patch of trees so homes could be built there.

The woodlot is 0.6 hectares big, 100 meters long and 60 meters wide. Petrolia’s Official Plan calls it a significant woodlot. County Planner, Rob Nesbitt told council while it is labelled as a significant woodlot, it doesn’t meet the requirements under the county’s official plans. Significant woodlots according to the county are at least two hectares.

Several neighbours voiced concern about the plan to remove trees.

Racher Farms voiced concern changing the woodlot would once again affect its farms in the area. A spokesman for the farm said if Spectra was given approval to make the land residential, it would appeal.

Others said while the woodlot is not big, it is the only natural area in walking distance and many children play there.

“For decades this woodlot has been a playground for children, a peaceful area for adults and no doubt home to many creatures, all with little or no maintenance or expense to anyone,” writes former councillor Liz Welsh in a letter to council.

“No green space is insignificant. There is no reason a compromise can’t be found to maintain this space and still allow for responsible development. This woodlot could be easily taken out of the development plans and still leave many lots for homes, money for the developer and a beautiful green space that would no doubt be a benefit when selling the adjacent properties.”

There are also worries about traffic as the neighbourhood develops. Aside from Spectra’s 63-lot subdivision, a seniors complex being developed by Goldleaf is on the table.

Amanda Shepperd lives in the area and says children love to play in the area . Connecting Oozloffsky will pose problems.

“That right there is a very hot spot for kids and people go flying through there,” she said during the county planning meeting. “With all the extra traffic coming down to go to Oozloffsky, it’s going to be nuts, like someone’s going to get hurt.”

Jennifer Hills also has concerns. “I’m very concerned about the fact that there is no consideration into the traffic impacts that are going to be happening because it’s not just the 63 homes that we’re adding.

“We are adding a thoroughfare to the back part of town where the majority of people travel down Valentina Street right now and then they scoot down Edward, and then they come up Oozloffsky Street. So this is going to be having a huge, huge impact on us.”

Clive Barry, an engineer by trade who lives in the area, urged council to take a look at the traffic problems which might be created with the new development coming to the area in the next few years.

“The connection of Oozloffsky Street from the northern portion to the southern portion will have a significant impact on the changing patterns of traffic in this area,” Barry said.

“I don’t want the impression that I’m looking for a traffic impact study to be burdened upon this particular subdivision. But I think it would be in the town’s interest to have an impact study done, collectively reviewing the impact of traffic movement in the area based on the surrounding subdivisions which are about to occur.”

The public hearings were only one step in the process to have the subdivision plans approved.

Council is recommending the project not move ahead until a species at risk study is completed in the woodlot area.

Spectra has already completed an archeological study which was not required for the planning.



TOWN OF PLYMPTON-WYOMING Job Posting

The Town of Plympton-Wyoming is currently looking to hire a **Director of Fire and Emergency Services / Fire Chief**. This full-time position will provide an exciting and challenging opportunity for a qualified and experienced leader to join the Fire and Emergency Services Department.

The Fire Chief will provide leadership, technical expertise, overall management, and operation of the Plympton-Wyoming Fire and Emergency Services Department, including fire prevention, fire suppression, emergency response, training, fire inspections, Fire Code enforcement and public education in accordance with applicable legislation. The Fire Chief is also responsible for overseeing the emergency management program. The Town of Plympton-Wyoming Fire Service consists of two (2) fire stations with a volunteer force of approximately 60 volunteer fire fighters.

Interested individuals are asked to review the information on the Town of Plympton-Wyoming website (www.plympton-wyoming.com) and are asked to forward their resume and cover letter no later than **4:00 pm on February 15, 2021** to the Carolyn Tripp, Chief Administrative Officer (ctripp@plymptonwyoming.ca)

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Educators urge parents to reach out for mental health help

Pam Wright
Local Journalism Initiative

Teaching students online can be tricky. Not only do educators have to school students in the basics, they must also virtually assess how well a child is doing mentally and physically.

That’s why the leaders of both school boards are urging parents and families to partner with school boards on mental health supports for students.

The Lambton Kent District School Board’s Superintendent of Special Education and Well Being says not being in the classroom poses a challenge.

“As educators we would like to be able to be physically present with our students,” says Angie Barrese. “It’s harder to tell if a child is more tired or lethargic and there’s less eye-to-eye contact with cameras. When we are in the classroom, we are connected with students,” she adds. “You can walk up and have a conversation.”

Originally, the province was expecting elementary students back in class Jan. 11, but increasing numbers of COVID-19 cases across the province led the government to extend online learning in most of Ontario to Jan. 25. High school students were expected to be online until the 25th. Barrese says the government’s extension of online learning coupled with the lockdown makes it harder to be optimistic.

Social media feeds are filled with frustrated parents trying to help kids learn and do their own job all at the same time. “People are frustrated... There was a general sense that we were doing so well,” says Barrese.

The public board, which has 22,000 students, has a team of 10 people ready to provide assistance to the school community. “We want parents to talk to the school about what we can do,” Barrese says. “We want families to be supported and know we are here.”

Both local directors of education

agree the current situation can lead to increased anxiety for students.

Lambton Kent’s Director of Education John Howitt says isolation, along with alarming “real world events,” such as last week’s riot at the US Capitol, can lead to increased anxiety for kids. “We are asking parents to monitor the safety and wellbeing of their children,” Howitt says.

Contacting the school principal is a good place to start and they can access the many supports available through the board’s website.

St. Clair Catholic District School Board Director Deb Crawford is also encouraging parents to be attentive to their children’s needs.

“Our teachers have additional materials to help students,” says Crawford. The board has a self-referral tool. Students and families who access it will be connected to a counsellor within 72 hours.

- The Herald

MP Marilyn Gladu

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Dawn-Euphemia hopes to hold the line on taxes

Heather Wright
The Independent

Dawn-Euphemia wants to hold the line on municipal taxes in a tough year.

But councillors say they also have to keep up with the needs in the community, even during a pandemic.

Staff presented a \$5.4 million draft operations and capital budget to council Monday, with the same amount of spending as last year.

It used reserves to cover some costs and money from the federal and provincial governments to cover shortfalls from COVID-19.

Mayor Al Broad says council wants to keep the costs as low as possible but he’s concerned about using all the

special funding right away.

“We did use money out of reserves and other COVID government money, which leaves us with zero dollars there,” says Broad.

“I’m afraid that COVID isn’t done yet for 2021. I think we need to put some money into a COVID reserve.”

Broad says revenues are still likely to decline this year. “We’ve got the community center still in the budget generating full revenue and if this COVID keeps up ...there is \$15,000 that we’re going to be short.”


And council is also concerned about keeping the roads in good shape. Dawn-Euphemia has been trying to increase the gravel budget over the last few years.

“We’re way below 2006 levels. And our roads are starting to show a lack of the maintenance and gravel on them. And we need to look at bringing that back in line. So that’s \$50,000.”

And the community is facing an increasing police bill to help pay for the cost of renting a detachment office in Corunna. Broad expects that would cost between \$7,000 and \$10,000 this year.

The township also needs to replace its treasurer, who is retiring. Currently Scott Gawley works part time. Broad says they will have to hire a full time treasurer and it will be an extra \$44,000.

Staff will make the changes for council to review likely next month.



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- Talk to them in a calm, supportive manner about your concerns for their safety
- Remain non-judgemental
- Discuss how you can increase their safety
- Refer them to their local Domestic Violence Shelter

SIGNS OF ABUSE:

- Apologetic and/or makes excuses for abuser's behaviour
- Checks up on them often, even while at work
- Isolation, not allowed to see friends or family (or only with abuser's permission)
- Hurtful language/put downs
- Tries to cover bruises

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Sports

Two local weightlifters make mark at Pan Am U15

Barry Wright
The Independent

The youngest competitor in his 81 kilo weight class at the Pan Am Under 15 Weightlifting Championships cracked the top five at the virtual event held just before the holidays.

Thirteen year old Declan Watson of Errol Village Public School in Camlachie had a 70 kilo snatch and an 88 kilo clean and jerk for a 158 kilo total and

a fifth place finish.

He had five successful lifts out of six. His coach, Larry Robinson, says Watson made a 90 kilo clean and jerk once the event was over.

“Definitely a motivated athlete,” he said.

Meantime, Wyoming’s Marlowe Robinson finished third in the second tier final in the 55 kilo class.

The 15 year old from LCCVI made all six of her attempts and

had a total score of 107 kilos.

Her best lifts were 48 and 59 kilos respectively.

“Canada had too many athletes in Marlowe’s weight class, so she got moved to the second tier competition,” said Coach Robinson.

Only two athletes from each country were allowed to compete at the upper level.



Marlowe Robinson

Corunna thrower heading to US on track scholarship

Barry Wright
The Independent

A two-time Lambton Kent and SWOSSA champion discus thrower is heading for Central Arkansas University on a track and field scholarship.

Corunna’s Max Laur, a final year student at St. Pat’s and a member of

the Sarnia Athletics Southwest Track & Field Club, is ranked in the top ten in discus, shot put and hammer throw in his age group by Athletics Canada.

“Max is an amazing kid,” says Sarnia Athletics Southwest Track & Field Club and St. Pat’s Throws Coach Maggie Mullen.

“He is my hardest working athlete, committed to his training both

throwing and in the weight room. He is a well accomplished Olympic lifter as well,” said Mullen.

“He has been a leader with our high school team as well as our club team since his first years with me.

“His family and I could not be more proud of him for achieving this goal he set for himself.”

Former Petrolia Jet, Marty Wilkins, passes away

Barry Wright
The Independent

Tributes have been pouring in on social media following the death of Marty Wilkins at age 51.

One of the real personalities of junior hockey in the area suffered a stroke this week and died in hospital on Monday in London.

Wilkins, who had strong ties to both the Petrolia Jets and Mooretown Flags,

also coached in both the Sarnia and Point Edward Minor Hockey systems following a college career at Sir Sanford Fleming in Peterborough.

Wilkins spent the bulk of his work career in sales and marketing including a significant stint as sales manager for the OHL’s Sarnia Sting.

He proudly spent his time at the Mooretown arena over the past several years, cheering on his son, Jake, who backstopped the Jr. C Flags in their

2019-2020 season.

Wilkins also spent a lot of time in school gymnasiums watching his daughter, Jenna, play basketball at Northern.

A memorial drive-by will be held at the Smith Funeral Home at 1576 London Line in Sarnia between noon and 12:30 pm on Friday, Jan. 15.

A celebration of Wilkins’ life will be held at a later date.

Hiker uses phone app to make it safely out of Pinery

The Independent

Smart phone technology helped Lambton OPP find a lost hiker in Pinery Provincial Park.

OPP were called to the park in Lambton Shores Jan. 7 around 5 pm, just as it was getting dark.

A lone hiker was turned around in the

38 kilometers of trails in the 25 square kilometer park and could not find her way out.

Members of the OPP Communications Center in London sent officers out to the area, then suggested the hiker download an app called What3Words on her cell.

The communications centre, using

the app, sent her three words.

The hiker then provided the three words she saw on her screen to the communications center and that helped pinpoint her location to within three square meters.

The officers on the ground were able to quickly locate the hiker.

Measures to reduce COVID-19



Stay informed, be prepared, and follow public health advice



Discuss individual risk tolerance



Continue to practice good hygiene



Stay home and away from others if you're feeling ill



Keep practising physical distancing



Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects



Stay home if you have a High of a serious illness



Wear a mask or face covering



Limit non-essential travel

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Attempted coin theft leaves man high and dry

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

A would-be laundromat thief found himself high and dry after his planned coin heist backfired.

Devon Worley, 30, entered the Down Town Coin Laundry in Sarnia just before closing the night of Nov. 22, 2019. Worley hid in the corner behind a washing machine and waited until 10:30 pm when the automatic doors locked and the lights went out. He then turned his attention to the coin vending machine.

Worley spent the rest of the night attempting to force his way into the machine. He used a torch and screwdriver among other tools, but failed at each attempt.

Worley left in the morning when the doors unlocked for the day. He got nothing out of the vending machine, but caused more than \$7,000 in

damage through his attempts.

Worley was on video surveillance the entire time, and easily identified by police.

During his Jan. 5 court appearance Worley also plead guilty to a bail breach which arose from a curfew violation in early April 2020. Court heard there had been a fight with a woman after his 10 pm curfew.

Justice Krista Leszczynski says since Worley has a long criminal record, jail time is necessary.

“Having considered your conduct on both of these occasions... as well as your criminal record which contains prior convictions for similar offenses, it’s clear in my view that a custodial sentence is necessary,” she says.

Leszczynski imposed a 12 day sentence, which Worley has already served via pre-sentence custody.

She told him this is a favorable outcome, and warned he wouldn’t be

so lucky in the future.

“It’s important that you understand it’s on the lighter side of the range, given your record,” she says.

“One of the primary aggravating features with respect to the mischief charge is the significant damage you did to the property of that local business... If you continue to commit these types of offenses you’ll certainly be serving lengthier periods of incarceration,” says Leszczynski.

Worley now enters an 18 month probation period. He is banned from the laundry and must pay the business \$7,091 in restitution.

He must also take counselling for substance abuse. “I hope you do... take that seriously,” Leszczynski said. “I would hope that would... benefit you Mr. Worley – and prevent you from seeing yourself back before the court again.”

-The Independent

Knife-wielding man gets three months for attack

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

A Sarnia man received jail time after a scary knife wielding scene at the Inn of the Good Shepherd.

Zachary Essery, 25, received a 90-day sentence. Justice Anne McFadyen imposed the punishment Dec. 21 after hearing details of the October incident.

Essery showed up at the Inn the morning of Oct. 23 to use the phone. He was informed COVID restrictions limited the number of people allowed in the building and was told to wait outside.

This angered Essery, who began to

knock over trash cans, attempt to open vehicles, and find alternate ways into the Inn.

An employee eventually came outside and told Essery to clean up the mess he made and leave. Essery instead pulled out a knife and swung it at the man. He missed and was again told to leave. Essery responded by pulling out a second knife and told the employee he’d cut his face off, torture him slowly and then kill him.

Essery kept thrusting the pair of knives at the man. A brief struggle ensued when the employee engaged Essery, but nobody was injured. Essery ran away and sliced the tire of a van

before police arrived and arrested him.

“I am sorry for what I did. It won’t happen again,” he says. Essery also plead guilty to stealing \$100 worth of men’s fragrance from a drug store two weeks earlier.

Essery was sentenced to three months in jail. He’s already served that time. He’s now on probation for 18 months. Essery can’t contact or go anywhere near the man he attacked or the man whose tire he slashed since both men say they continue to fear for their safety.

Essery must also pay restitution, and has a 10 year weapons ban.

- The Independent

Drugs seized after crash on Confederation Line

The Independent

Lambton OPP seized fentanyl at an accident on Confederation Line.

OPP say on Jan. 9, they were called to the Plympton-Wyoming area around 3:30 pm in the afternoon where two

vehicles had collided.

Witnesses pointed out one of the drivers, and police soon suspected the driver was impaired.

Police brought the man to the Petrolia detachment and performed a drug recognition evaluation.

They also found fentanyl in the search

Cody Cook, 32, of Sarnia has been charged with operation of a vehicle while impaired with drugs and possession. He’s scheduled to appear in court Feb. 10.

Trespassers stuck in the mud retrieved and arrested

The Independent

Getting stuck in the mud on Gum Bed Line was more than an inconvenience for one man.

Lambton OPP were called to Gum Bed Line Jan. 4 after getting a complaint about a trespasser stuck in the

mud on Gum Bed Line in Oil Springs.

Police arrived and found the vehicle in the mud. It had improper plates, so they searched to see if it was a stolen vehicle.

Police also found methamphetamine when they searched one of the occupants of the car. The other had

a warrant out for arrest in another jurisdiction.

Kyle Lockyer, 31, of Dawn-Euphemia has been charged with possession of a controlled drug. He’ll be in court March 10.

Driver ‘knew it was safe’ to blow through red light, guilty of drunk driving

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

A Sarnia woman is off the road and lighter in the pocket after pleading guilty to drunk driving.

Lindsay Beer, 29, accepted the sentence of a \$1,500 fine and one-year driving ban from Justice Anne McFadyen in court Dec. 21. She can apply for the ignition interlock program after three months.

It was the morning of Sept. 28 when Beer blew through a red light

at the Exmouth St. and Indian Rd. intersection. An officer spotted her and followed her north over the 402 overpass on Indian Rd. until she stopped.

The officer told Beer why he pulled her over. She said she didn’t slow down or stop for the red light because she “knew it was safe for her to go.”

The officer disagreed, and gave her a breath test after smelling alcohol. She said she hadn’t been drinking, but failed the test and was arrested.

Beer later blew a .123 reading at the

police station.

“It was a very big mistake. It’s very out of character and I’m so sorry,” Beer says.

Justice Anne McFadyen told Beer it wasn’t just herself she put at risk.


“The matter is of a serious nature,” she says.

“I’m sure that you’ve had time to reflect upon what could have happened not only to you, but to other users of the roadway on that particular morning,” McFadyen says.

- The Independent

Classifieds

Celebration



Happy **80th** Birthday

Ada Sisson

Janaury 15th

Please note best wishes by cards or phone calls would be great due to Covid.

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Solution

Answers to this week's

Sudoku

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

Notice

ADVERTISING POLICY - The publisher of this newspaper, *The Independent of Petrolia and Central Lambton*, reserves the right to clarify or refuse any advertisement based on its sole discretion. The publisher reserves the right to reject, discontinue or omit any advertisement without notice or penalty to either party. Liability for errors or non-insertion is limited to the amount paid for the cost of space occupied by the error. Claims of errors must be made prior to the next publication date.

Wanted to Buy

WANTED TO BUY - **ANYTHING OLD** including signs, bottles, canning jars, jewelry, tins, paper items, pottery, old lighters, old razors, rustic pieces, etc. Single items to entire estates. **CALL CHAD 519-639-9102.**

Classified Deadline:
Monday @ 12 noon

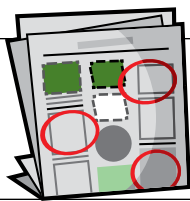


NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Jam • Manwich • Soda Crackers • Small Soups • All Canned Veggies • Canned Potatoes • Side Kicks • Canned Fruit Large And Small • Mixed Canned Meats • Instant Potatoes • Dry Pastas • Rice • Canned Pasta • Cake, Cookie And Muffin Mixes • Cookies • Pancake Mix & Syrup • Baking Supplies • Jello Mix • Mr Noodles • Juice Crystals • Household Cleaning Supplies • Laundry Pods / Detergent Etc • Lunch Snack, Snack Foods

Any items not listed are accepted, if you use it in your home our clients will use it in theirs

Classified Deadline:
Monday @ 12 noon



Classifieds

Word Classifieds: \$10 plus tax for up to 40 words
Call 226-738-0728 the office from 9a-5p Mon-Fri
or email: office@petrolialambtonindependent.ca

Obituary



SHEA
Lloyd

SHEA, Lloyd - Died peacefully with his family by his side at his home in Wyoming on **Tuesday, January 5, 2021**. Lloyd Russel Shea, was in his **85th year**. Lloyd was the loving husband for 56 years to Marie (nee Dodge). He will be missed by his children Melanie (Pete) VanKessel and Daniel (Gabriela) Shea. He was a proud grandpa to Tylor (Robyn) VanKessel, Diamond (Derek), Colin (Jen) VanKessel, Kelsey (Joris) Kuipers, Patrick Medd, and Jack Medd and GGPa to Shea, Dodge, and Rex VanKessel, Lillian, Harper, Henley, Rayna, and Demi Terpstra, Colten VanKessel, and Krista Kuipers. Lloyd is survived by his sister Muriel (the late Bill) Harrison and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his parents Ray (1981) and Reta (1949) Shea, and his brothers Don (Dettes) Shea (2005) and Jack (the late Marion) Shea (2002). Lloyd farmed all his life and was also a Royal Canadian Legion member in Wyoming and Watford. **Due to covid-19 restrictions a private service will be held. Interment will be in Wyoming Cemetery.** As expressions of sympathy, memorial donations may be made to the Royal Canadian Legion Br. 388 Building Fund or Bluewater Health Foundation (Palliative Care) and can be arranged by contacting the Needham-Jay Funeral Home at (519)882-0100.

In Memory

In memory of
Dr. David Wan
January 7, 1996
25 Years ago
*It broke our hearts to lose you.
You didn't go alone,
For part of us went with you.
You left treasured memories.
As long as life and memory last,
We will remember you.*
.....
Never Forgotten

Card of Thanks

THANK YOU

Sincere thanks to relatives, friends and neighbors of the Late Lloyd Shea who sent flowers, cards, food to our homes and made donations to Royal Canadian Legion Branch # 388 and Blue Water Health Foundation (Palliative Care). Also many thanks to VON, Care Partners, A Plus Homecare Inc. and grandchildren who helped looked after their Grandpa, so he could stay at home. A special Thank you to Steven and staff at Needham Jay for their help and caring ways. Last but not least to Rev. Jo-Anne Symington and Joan Spalding for fulfilling his last wishes.

Marie, Melanie, Dan & families

Notice

BLUEWATER ANGLERS - Cancellation Notice - It is with regret that we have cancelled the 2021 Ice Fishing Derby scheduled for February 13th has been cancelled due to Covid. We will hopefully re-schedule for next year.



COVID-19 SOCIAL DISTANCING

**MAINTAIN A DISTANCE
OF AT LEAST 6 FEET
(2 METERS) FROM
OTHERS & remember to
WEAR YOUR MASK!**



Church DIRECTORY

Christ Anglican Church

414 Oil Street, Petrolia

Happy New Year!
**We are closed due to the
provincial lock-down.**

Rev. Michelle Collins-Wongkee
Church Office 519-882-1430
christchurchpetrolia@gmail.com

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

416 Queen Street, Petrolia
(Behind the Post Office)

**In this time of Social distancing
we invite you to join a virtual
congregation and watch the Sunday
morning worship at St. Andrew's.
10am Service - Live**

www.standrews-petrolia.ca

St. Paul's United Church

4169 Petrolia Line at Centre Street

**In-person services have been
suspended until the end of the
provincial lock-down.**

10:30am Service

Rev. Carey Wagner
Church Office: 519-882-1390
stpaulsunitedpetrolia.net

First Baptist Church

418 Greenfield Street, Petrolia

**SERVICE SUSPENDED
until further notice
in compliance with Ontario Corona
Virus meeting guidelines**

Pastor: Alex Craig

Church Office 519-882-2480
email: fbcpetrolia@gmail.com
www.firstbaptistpetrolia.ca

Find us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/First-Baptist-Church-Petrolia

Wyoming United Church

730 Second Street, Wyoming

**In-person services suspended until end
of provincial lock-down. Join us for on-
line worship in January.**

Church Office 519-845-3963
Find us on Facebook

Death Notices

January 2 - January 8, 2021

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2

BAYNE, Barbara
Age 95, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

SUNDAY, JANUARY 3

SAMMON, James
Age 75, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

BALDWIN, Gladys
Age 88, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

CODLING, Marion
Age 97, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

MONDAY, JANUARY 4

POIRIER, Therese
Age 92, of Sarnia
McKenzie & Blundy Funeral Home

PIGGOTT, Marion
Age 95, of Brigden/Petrolia
Steadman Brothers Funeral Chapel

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5

ROY, Ronald
Age 85, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

SHEA, Lloyd
Age 85, of Wyoming
Needham-Jay Funeral Home

SWAN, Elda
Age 94, of Petrolia
Needham-Jay Funeral Home

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7

ESSER, Edie
Age 85, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

WHITE, Barbara
Age 87, of Sarnia
McKenzie & Blundy Funeral Home

FRIDAY, JANUARY 8

LANE, John David
Age 87, of Sarnia
D.J. Robb Funeral Home

KOTANEN, Alfred
Age 90, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

This information is provided as a community service.
For detailed information, please refer to the funeral
home website listing.

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Activists attack local farmers

Heather Wright
The Independent

At least two local farmers are defending themselves against online attacks from animal rights activist.

Over the past couple of weeks, Lambton Meats in Alvinston and J&E Meats in Croton have been fending off verbal attacks from international animal rights activists.

Doug Waller of Lambton Meats says the amount of negative comments on his Facebook page kept his wife, who handles their social media, constantly busy. There were 100 to 150 comments at a time.

“Most of the comments are coming from people in the UK, or Australia, who have never set foot in our store to begin with, they just hop on the bandwagon with these vegans,” he told *The Independent*. Some posted grotesque pictures of animals they said came from a slaughter house. Waller says it is unlikely that any of those pictures were in Ontario abattoirs where the standards are very high.

Waller says it has been a difficult situation to deal with, but he respects people’s right to free speech.

“Everybody is entitled to their opinion, like the vegans and all that, but it shouldn’t be at the cost of someone’s livelihood.”

The animal rights activist not only attacked the meat industry, they wrote negative reviews, which Waller says could deter new customers.

“I’m hoping that our readers who do frequent our establishment, look at the comments and just understand it for what it is, just people that don’t even



PHOTO VIA FACEBOOK

Two local farmers were dealing with online hate from animal activist who posted comments and photos like this.

live here. And just have no respect for other people’s beliefs.”

Emma Butler of J&E Meats also was dealing with the same problems at the same time. She took to Instagram to tell her followers not to engage the activists. “Some people were going crazy saying some things that were very out to lunch and vulgar,” says Butler.

“If you see those type of comments on our page, please don’t engage them, don’t say anything or engage them... just keep on scrolling.”

Butler says she’s increased security on her social media to block certain words hoping to keep further activists at bay.

Jail time after 40 charges

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

A woman who has over 40 criminal convictions is being urged to finally turn things around – after she spends time in jail for her latest crimes.

Carly Timms, 32, has become a familiar face in Sarnia Court over the past several years. She made multiple appearances in 2020, including a short stint in jail on a cocaine charge. Timms closed out the year in similar fashion, appearing Dec. 22 pleading guilty to fentanyl possession and a bail breach.

Timms was on probation following her early release on a 10 month sentence when Sarnia Police’s Vice Unit executed a search warrant on an Exmouth St. house Nov. 12. Timms was found in a locked bathroom with 3.2 grams of fentanyl worth \$1,600 and \$370 cash, along with burnt tin foil indicating recent drug use.

Several other people known to police were arrested during the raid. Crown attorney Brian Higgins says the fact Timms was involved in the incident so soon after being released from jail is particularly troubling. “Within a month she’s in this house with all these individuals who are heavily entrenched in the drug subculture,” he says.

Higgins called for a six month sentence for Timms, citing her lengthy criminal record. “She’s been involved in the criminal justice system consistently for many years. Notwithstanding that serious

conviction related to trafficking offenses in 2016... but moreover the conviction for cocaine in August 2020. She continues to involve herself with serious drugs, and has not extricated herself from the drug subculture in Sarnia,” says Higgins.

“It doesn’t appear that she’s taking her rehabilitative prospects seriously. It’s not just the substance of fentanyl, but the quantity of fentanyl that’s very concerning,” Higgins says.

Defense attorney Danielle D’Alonzo says her client has struggled with addiction since she was a teenager. In 2016, Timms got clean, but relapsed using fentanyl after a traumatic incident.

“It’s certainly not the best way to deal with it, but it’s how she’s been dealing with her pain,” D’Alonzo says.

Justice Deborah Austin – who sentenced Timms on the cocaine charge earlier in the year – was frustrated to see Timms again. “The nature of the substance that you were involved with is of very significant concern, and an aggravating factor for this court because of the nature and quantity... of a substance that has swept our community in an extremely troubling way. It’s dangerous to you, and to others,” she says.

Austin sentenced her to five months in jail. Timms has three months remaining after pre-sentence custody. She remains on the 12 month probation order Austin imposed in August.

- The Independent

Stop the Spread COVID-19 can be deadly. Stay home. Stay strong. Save lives.

