

Vaccines arrive in Lambton

Heather Wright
The Independent

Sporting a red hat and a mask with her name embroidered on it, Valerie Verberg was the first person to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in Lambton.

The 88 year-old lives at Trillium Villa Nursing Home in Sarnia, the first home to receive some of the limited supply of the vaccine delivered Monday.

While Verberg was excited to be first in line, not all of Lambton’s most vulnerable citizens will be protected from COVID-19 this week.

The province sent 500 doses of the Moderna vaccine to Lambton Public Health Monday after laying out a new plan for vaccinating long term care residents only as the province’s drug supply dwindles.

Pfizer has stopped some shipments of its vaccine to Canada as it retools its plant in Europe to increase production. Ontario won’t receive any doses of the Pfizer vaccine this week and a reduced number in the first week of February.

Even before Pfizer announced it would cutback deliveries to Canada, Lambton politicians voiced concern this community lagged behind in getting the vaccine while other communities, with fewer cases per 100,000 of people, had vaccinated long term care residents, personal support workers and some hospital employees.

The rollout of vaccines was developed based on COVID-19 case counts in Ontario in early December. The number of cases exploded in Lambton in mid-December, making the community a COVID hot spot rivaling Windsor and Metro Toronto. But the vaccine rollout went on, leaving Lambton among the last health units to receive the vaccine.

Lambton had been expecting the first vaccines in the first week of February, however with the change in course, the province started giving out a limited supply to the health units which had yet to vaccinate anyone.

SEE VACCINE PG 2

HOCKEY DREAMS



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Michael Robertson of Petrolia practices his moves on ice on the north side of Bridgeview Park. Robertson was running through drills similar to those he would do when he was playing with the Lambton Jr. Stings Minor Bantams. He, like so many other hockey players, has not been able to play organized games since March 2020.

Landowner wants Enniskillen to step up to stop urban sprawl

Heather Wright
The Independent

A Petrolia area farmer wants Enniskillen Township to step into a dispute with the Town of Petrolia and a local developer.

Greg Racher is concerned about the next phase of Countryview Estates in Petrolia. Developer Bob Leaper plans to remove about 17 acres of trees to build new homes. Some trees will be left behind on the property line between the Racher’s farm and the new development.

Another development on Oozloffsky by Floyd Vanderwal also borders on Racher’s land.

Ross White, who speaks for Racher, told Enniskillen council recently that ratepayers in Petrolia who live on the edge of town see Racher’s land as their own and plant trees

or build firepits on his property. He believes this shouldn’t be Racher’s problem alone.

White says Enniskillen should be stepping in to stop the development to prevent urban sprawl which Racher is concerned will affect his cattle farm.

“The Town of Petrolia obviously does not respect Enniskillen,” White says. “It obviously doesn’t respect the individual landowner. And so you’re put in a position where the viability of Greg’s business, that’s been established for 85 years now, comes into question because as this subdivision moves forward, the standoff distance between his livestock operation and these new subdivisions diminishes as the houses get built.

“Within our own township, we would have minor variance issues with houses being built that close to a livestock operation, but

apparently because the Town of Petrolia believes that it’s omnipotent to do whatever it wants, it doesn’t respect Enniskillen’s position and so it will very strictly limit Greg’s potential to expand.”

White says the town has not listened to Racher’s concerns and he believes Enniskillen needs to come to the table to explain how it would not allow homes that close to livestock.

“The biggest issue Greg has is the fact that the town won’t recognize Enniskillen’s sovereignty, and he should not as a landowner, be subject to incur all the costs it’s going to take to guarantee that there’s a buffer zone put between a town and a township,” says White. He adds Racher wants among other things, a six foot chain link fence built by the developer.

SEE FARMER PG 2

The

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Vaccine ‘light at the end of the tunnel’

CON’T FROM PG 1

Public Health’s Manager of Family Health, Kevin Churchill, said in an email there are about 1,000 people in long term care homes in Lambton. Another 550 people live in retirement homes. That leaves more than two-thirds of the elderly in the community unprotected for now.

Public health expect there will be more vaccine on the way to finish vaccinating long term care residents.

“We expect to receive additional doses on a regular basis. We have the capacity to deliver all first doses to this population in a two week time frame, provided we have the vaccine,” says Churchill.

With enough doses now to vaccinate just some long term care residents, Churchill says priority is determined “by risk category of homes in a formula determined by the province that includes factors such as physical design and age of the facilities.” Officials added retirement homes linked to nursing homes are also considered high risk and would receive priority.

But in a news conference Tuesday, Dr. Sudit Ranade said homes currently in outbreak won’t be the first in line for the vaccine.

“What we’re trying to focus on is homes that are older homes... that potentially, by virtue of their design or the way that they’re built or made, they might have a harder time controlling an outbreak,” he says.

“We would love to go in and immunize as many people as we can as quickly as possible. When a home is in outbreak, it’s likely to have a higher proportion of people who would not be able to get the vaccine because they’re acutely ill,” he says.

“One of the things you want to do is be able to immunize as many people as you can when you get there and if you have a high proportion of people who are already acutely ill, those people you would actually say ‘we want to postpone your immunization until you’re feeling better.’ That’s one of the reasons for sort of waiting until an outbreak has passed until you moved in there to immunize.”

The medical officer of health is hopeful the province will provide the rest of the vaccines for Lambton’s vulnerable seniors before the first week of February.

“We’re hoping to get another round of vaccines next week, and that would let us do a substantial portion of what we’re trying to do.” But he says the situation is fluid, with the province and federal government’s trying to bring more vaccine into the country, so Ranade isn’t able to predict anything with certainty.

“Even the fact that we got vaccines now is something that we weren’t quite expecting. We were expecting it to come a little later. So, it’s partially dependent on what vaccines supplies they have, partially dependent on where they’ve already pre-allocated those vaccines.”

Meantime, at Trillium Villa, president John Scotland is relieved the residents there are protected.

“Getting the vaccine, finally into Sarnia-Lambton has been a godsend. We can’t get it soon enough.

“And for many of us, we’re hoping that it is the light at the end of the tunnel.

“It’s not the end of the tunnel. But we’re hoping that’s the light at the end of the tunnel that it will give protection to our residents.”



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Enniskillen farmer Greg Racher wants the township to step in to a dispute over the removal of a bush for new homes in Petrolia.

Farmer worries homes will limit his operation

CON’T FROM PG 1

“That buffer will consist of several things, but not the least of which will be a six foot high chain link fence. And that’s going to stop the urban creep and the cost is basically negligible,” says White.

He says without that buffer, the residents will continue to encroach on Racher land and he will end up paying to deal with the trespassers. “That is simply unacceptable because you can’t allow people that trespass on to your viable business, and have no repercussion.”

Enniskillen Mayor Kevin Marriott sympathizes with the position Racher is in but says their best advice from lawyers is this is not an issue the township should be involved in.

“A lot of this problem was created by disrespectful people...So going back to who it affects, it really only affects the Rachers whether it’s the encroachment they’ve had on their crops or the inability to expand their cattle operation...You could say that is detrimental to Enniskillen but it’s isolated to one farmer. So that’s where it’s hard for the township to step in.”

Enniskillen has said it will look at the Rachers six requests. Meantime, a public meeting on the development will be held Thursday night.

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Calls to end for-profit homes

For profit-homes say province needs to inject more cash instead

Heather Wright
The Independent

There are growing calls across the province for the Conservative government to solve the crisis in long term care. And one of the main solutions, advocates and doctors say, is ending the system which allows private companies to make money from long term care.

Long term care homes have been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. About 70 per cent of the people who have died of the virus lived in long term care or retirement homes.

The first wave of the virus left about 1,400 long term care residents dead - including 16 in Lambton.

The spring crisis highlighted the cracks in the system that health care advocates had been talking about for years; there was simply not enough help in the homes to properly care for seniors.

The shortages became acute when the province limited employees to working in one home. Illness among workers also created staffing shortages. In some homes, where the situation deteriorated badly, the Canadian army was called in to help. A scathing report told of seniors left alone, without care or even food or water. In other cases, army officials highlighted care workers who didn't understand infection control or forced residents to the point of choking.

At the time, there were calls for the province to increase funding to provide more care for residents. The Conservatives committed to four hour of patient care - but not until 2023.

In Lambton, the local Health Coalition joined forces with the Ontario Health Coalition Friday calling for the provincial government to act now on that promise.

Family members spoke of seniors left alone for hours, unable to eat on their own, in pain but no one to help them or normally positive happy people asking to die because they were isolated.

Jennifer Penny says her mother, Yvette, had to be placed in Oakwood Retirement Home since she couldn't care for her after back surgery. Shortly after her mother arrived, the home was in outbreak. Penny only found out through an automated call.

"We spent approximately five days trying to reach someone at the home to find out her condition. Nobody would answer the phone or return voice messages or emails. There were times we would get through to the nurse's station and they would pick up the phone and hang it back up."

Penny blames the lack of communication on not enough staff in the for-profit home.

Natalie Mehra, the head of the Ontario Coalition, called on Premier Doug Ford to call in the military to help several homes in the province who are struggling with the virus.

"More than one long term care residents is dying each hour in Ontario, from COVID-19. Our message to premier Ford is if that does not constitute an emergency, what could possibly constitute an emergency," she said.

The health coalition's calls for action were followed by a new group Doctors4LTC Justice. Four hundred doctors, mostly in the Metro Toronto area, had called on the government to take action in long term care homes saying they are in humanitarian crisis.

"To date, the Ontario government's approach to protect LTC residents has been reactionary at best. The lack of transparency and coordinated provincial oversight has resulted in piecemeal interventions that are too late, or sometimes, even non-existent. Proactive implementation of policies to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are desperately needed."

The group says many homes have poor infection control practices, the government has delayed in responding to outbreaks in homes, families are often left wondering whether their loved ones are alive or dead, the staff shortage is worsening and the government doesn't plan to do anything for four to five years.

"We know the ongoing staffing shortages compromise resident care... In many circumstances, residents are also left without basic care, hygiene, food and water. This is a human rights violation."

The group is calling on the provincial government to use all its powers and resources to hire more qualified staff and start an urgent training and recruitment drive, set minimum pay standards in homes, ensure unrestricted entry to home for family members, and begin the process of removing profits from long term care homes. Doctors4LTC Justice says research has shown for-profit homes fair worse in outbreaks.

That's a recommendation John Scotland, the head of Steeves and Rozema and the vice president of the Ontario Long Term Care Association, balks at.

Scotland says the industry has been telling the province for years it needs more funding to provide direct patient care. Their concerns were amplified during the pandemic when staffing levels dipped as workers became ill or had to limit their employment to one home.

The strain showed and Scotland says some of the stories which emerged should not have happened. But he says, there is more to the story than the military being sent in to help seniors in crisis. And he blames the provincial government for not acting quickly.

"What led to it get to this? Why was nothing in place in order to support these homes to prevent them from getting into such a dire situation? And only weeks after they went into crisis, did they finally send them help. And why was it the army that had to come in? That should be the story, of the failing (of government) to provide and plan for this in long term care."

Scotland says private care homes are an important part of the long term care system in Ontario and the province would have to provide \$20 billion to buy it out, and that's before spending any money to improve conditions.

He believes instead the province should be topping up funding for care to the homes, noting the province has strict rules which say money for care does not go to profit.

Scotland adds those who think increasing inspections will improve the level of care are wrong.

"I'm limited how much labour I have, how much care I can provide, based on the funding, you've provided me, and then you inspect and find that I failed, because you failed to provide the necessary resources," he says.


So far, Premier Ford maintains the province has done everything it can to improve the situation in long term care. Instead, it is pushing to have the vaccine given to all long term care home residents to stop COVID-19 outbreaks with all long term care residents getting the first dose by Feb. 5.

BEE SAFE





ALEX KURIAL/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO


Alvin, the Alvinston Bee, is not letting his guard down. The bee leading into Alvinston has been masked up for months to remind residents to be safe.



This Month In Lambton

January 2021



Warden Kevin Marriott
@LambtonWarden

COVID-19 Immunization Planning

Lambton Public Health (LPH) continues to work closely with Bluewater Health and other community stakeholders, including Long-Term Care and Retirement Homes, to actively plan for COVID-19 vaccine distribution in Lambton County.

LPH staff shared a presentation at a special meeting of Lambton County Council on Wednesday, Jan. 20 outlining the local immunization roll-out plan. The local plan is based on the Ontario Vaccination Program, expanded to include specifics and data to assist with the local implementation of the vaccine.

To learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine and the local immunization plan visit [GetTheVaccine.ca](https://www.getthevaccine.ca).

Provincial Restrictions

On Dec. 26, 2020, Ontario moved into a province-wide shutdown. Due to continued rising case numbers across the province, Ontario declared a State of Emergency on Jan. 12, and implemented a Stay-at-Home order, which came into effect on Jan. 14, 2021. These measures are in effect for all of Ontario until at least Feb. 11, 2021.

Learn more about these measures and restrictions at covid19.ontario.ca.

Bundle up with a Book

Are you looking for fun reading challenges to do with the kids this winter? Register for Lambton County Library's Winter Reading Program, Bundle Up With A Book!

Between Mon. Jan. 18 and Fri. Feb. 19, participants are encouraged to record the number of books they read for a chance to win prizes. Register to participate in the program at lclibrary.ca/wrp.


Looking Ahead

9:30 a.m., Feb. 3, 2021 - County Council


9 a.m. & 11 a.m., Feb. 17, 2021 - Committee A.M. & Committee P.M.

Visit lambtononline.ca/meetings for agendas, minutes and live stream links.

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Editorial

Seniors deserve better

The calls for the provincial government to step up and do something to protect Ontario’s most vulnerable residents - the elderly in long term care - are becoming louder.

There have been concerns about the amount of care seniors receive in long term care for decades. The cries became louder in the 1990s when then Premier Mike Harris opened up the industry and more private companies became involved.

But that concern was nowhere near as strong as what we see today. This week, unions, public advocacy groups and families of people in long term care came together to demand Premier Ford step into some of the worst outbreaks in the province and call the military for help. Ford told reporters he was told the military wasn’t needed.

Tuesday, doctors in Metro Toronto angry with seniors receiving inadequate care - some not even getting food or water - drafted a letter calling on the province to act immediately. They want a concerted effort to quickly train new staff and get them into long term care homes. They say workers need a fair wage and hospitals have to be part of the care in long term care to ensure quality. But their first call to action was to take licences from for-profit homes and make the facilities public.

Theoretically, keeping large corporations from making profit off of old sick people seems to be a no brainer. In a perfect world, government would give each Ontario senior everything they need as they reach the end of their life. But let’s face it, this world isn’t perfect and such a massive sea change cannot happen quickly.

Perhaps the more realistic goal to start is adequately funding what is there now and limiting profit. There has to be a will to provide what is actually needed instead of the bare minimum we give seniors now. Even the governing body of the for-profit industry says the province has to invest more in hands on care.

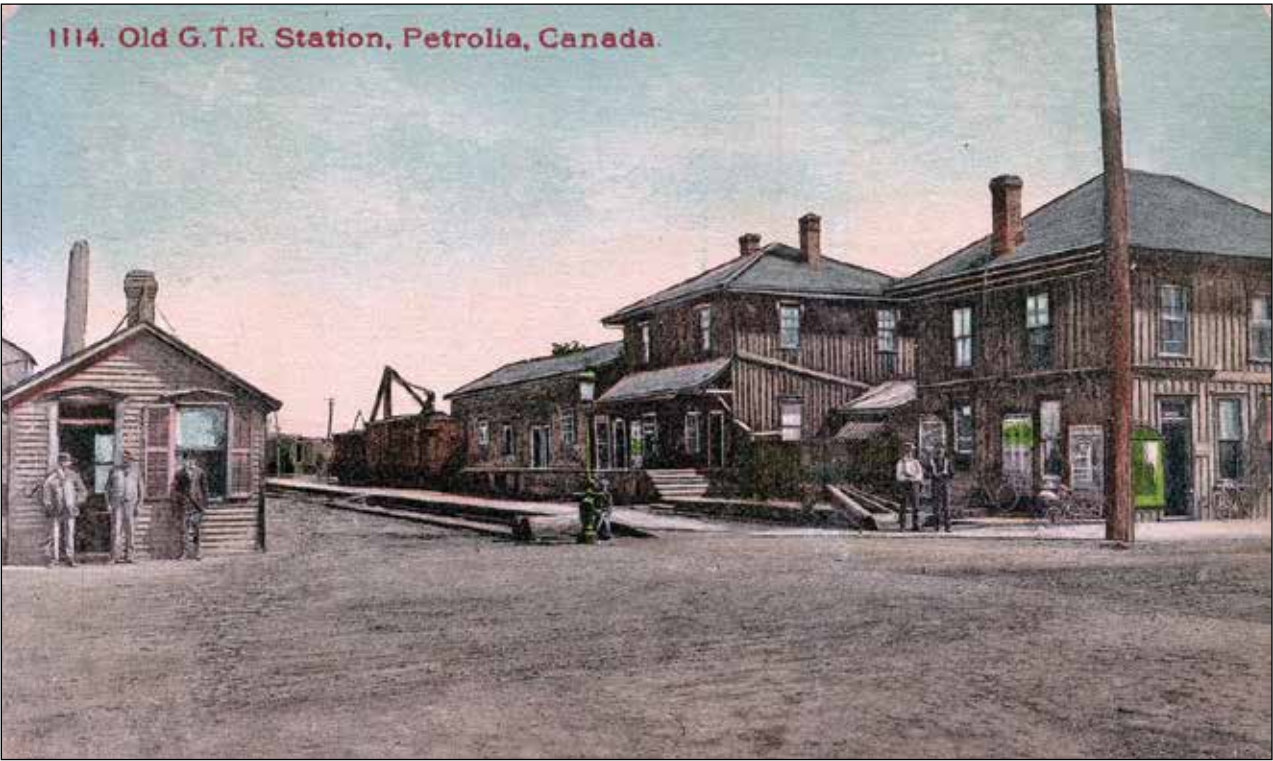
But the government has to feel compelled to spend more on seniors and it is taxpayers who will have to drive them to it. Families, unions, advocates, health care workers and doctors have to continue to demand more, apply more pressure until the province can no longer avoid the obvious.

It will take work, but seniors of this province deserve better than what they have right now.

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



FROM THE DAVE BURWELL POSTCARD COLLECTION

Petrolia’s rail line brought the oil of Central Lambton to the world and the luxuries of the world to Central Lambton. This is an early picture of the GTR Station.

Leave it to government to make a simple thing difficult

Even before COVID-19 turned Ontario upside down, it was clear the elderly were the most vulnerable to this new virus.

I recall watching with horror the scenes particularly out of Italy, which has the most seniors per capita in the world. The news reports of seniors dying alone in their homes because the country was locked down and the hospitals were full is an image I won’t forget.

So a month after a Toronto man came home with the virus after a trip to China in January, public health officials were already aware of its deadly potential and the affect on seniors.

But here we are - a full year after that very first case - and the elderly in our province are still in peril. And it shouldn’t be that way.

From the beginning of the pandemic, public health officials knew drug companies around the world were racing to get a vaccine for COVID-19. By Dec. 7, Ontario announced residents of long term care - the most vulnerable - would be among the first

to receive the vaccines when they were approved. By Dec. 9, Pfizer’s vaccine was approved for use in Ontario and was in the arm of the first health care worker from a long term care home by Dec. 14.

Since then, even with the much lamented slow down of delivery of vaccines, Ontario has received 411,650 doses. As of Monday, an estimated 18,000 of the province’s 72,000 long term care residents still had not been vaccinated.

Chatham-Kent was one of 14 communities left waiting while the province prioritized seniors, health care workers and essential care givers in other areas of the province, shipping thousands of vials to larger communities.

When it became apparent the supply would be slowing down and public health scientists pointed out vaccinating all long term care residents by Jan. 31 versus Feb. 15 would prevent a projected 600 COVID-19 cases and 115 deaths by Mar. 31, the province finally shipped those health unit limited amounts of vaccine.

In Chatham-Kent, the vaccine arrived Monday. By 2:12 pm, the first person was vaccinated. In all, 400 people in long term care homes rolled up their sleeves Monday, just hours after it arrived at the public health unit.

This didn’t have to be this way. Instead of a complicated roll out, the province simply should have shipped the right amount of vaccine for the elderly to the public health units and said ‘get it done.’ All of the long term care residents could have been vaccinated by Jan. 1.

Instead, 575 people in long term care have died already in 2021. The province made this unnecessarily difficult and it didn’t have to be that way.



Heather Wright

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Opinion

High Park Farms reiterates COVID-19 safety measures

EDITOR:

At High Park Farms we take the health and safety of our workers very seriously.

The article “Workers worry as COVID-19 outbreak declared at High Park” dated Jan. 21 contained inaccurate and invalid information.

Contrary to the article, we have very strict COVID-19 protocols in place, and escalating actions are taken if they are not being followed by any worker.

We have had multiple visits from the Ministry of Labour, that have been successfully conducted without ever being issued an order.

We further contracted Workplace Safety and Prevention Services to provide us with a COVID-19 Preparedness Audit in which the results stated that we have a ‘strong Health and Safety culture’ as it relates to COVID-19.

Despite our best efforts, meeting all ministry standards and implementing a Workplace Preparedness Model, a worker contracted COVID-19 outside of work and it spread within their household. But because of the stringent protocols we have put in place, there has not been any transmission within our facility to date.

At High Park Farms we embrace diversity and inclusion and we do not discriminate. We believe that everyone

has a right to earn a living wage.

As such, we do have many workers and contract workers of whom English is a second language.

In order to ensure that all workers can work safely, properly and have a positive experience in our workplace we provide training, signage and communication in multiple languages, including the COVID-19 screening questionnaire.

We also do not discriminate workers based on their place of residence.

We operate in alignment with applicable legislation including but not limited to the Canadian Human Rights Code, Occupational Health and Safety Act, Employment Standards Act and the Agricultural Employee Protection Act.

At High Park Farms, we recommend compliance with COVID-19 protocols both at work and outside of work.

We do not require or expect employees to drive other employees’ during work hours or outside of work hours.

While we cannot control what people do outside of our workplace, we do not condone any action that contravene the provincial recommendations, such as removing face masks while in close proximity to other workers.

Ontarians rely on media sources to bring them accurate information,

particularly during a health crisis of this magnitude.

It is disappointing that *The Independent* failed to fact check sources and then publish erroneous information about our company and the people who work hard to protect the health and safety of our employees and our community.

Kirsty Burns
General Manager High Park Farms

EDITOR’S NOTE: *The Independent* stands by its story.

It is incorrect to state we failed to fact check. The newspaper went to the Ministry of Labour to verify the outbreak.

The newspaper also contacted High Park Farms three times prior to publishing the article to answer concerns raised by employees. Two hours before deadline, company officials sent emailed answers which were extensively quoted including the facts the Ministry of Labour had never laid a charge at the greenhouse, the company used a provincially approved screening tool and the company provides screening daily to all employees providing the balance required.

The Independent did say however there were 12 people living in the on site bunkhouse. There are 11.

Former mayor questions cost of transfer site

EDITOR’S NOTE: *This is an open letter shared with The Independent.*

Hope all is well with you and yours, wishing you a Happy New Year.

I’m writing to get some clarification on why council feels it necessary to move the compost transfer site from Progress Drive to the end of Maude Street on town property, at a extensive cost to the ratepayers.

The result of this move doesn’t change anything from the prior location but adds cost, liability, responsibility, staff time and reporting, not to mention possible fines.

The WM (Waste Management) site is already approved and seems to work quite well.

So my question is, how will this new site, at an added cost, benefit the people of Petrolia?

Another point that should be emphasized, to the people, is that this is NOT a new compost site, just a

transfer station.

Further the approximately 200 households that utilize the transfer station is less than 10 per cent of the total households in Petrolia.

It seems to me that council is spending money on a poorly designed and thought out project for a select few people.

Please keep in mind that when tax dollars are spent wisely it benefits everyone.

Awaiting your reply.

John McCharles
Petrolia, ON

Happy New year to you and your family as well.

Thank you for your comments and questions, I will try and answer them the best I can.

As you are aware as a former mayor, this is a council decision and they are aware of the pros and cons. This issue

has been discussed for some time.

It was my understanding that the residents were not utilizing the WM site and the hope is that the residents will use the transfer station in greater numbers.

You are correct, it is not a compost site it is a transfer station, and we will continue to try and educate the public.

There are some one-time additional costs, however thanks to staff we are already under budget by approximately \$20,000 dollars.

Council will have the opportunity to evaluate the project after the fall season is over and decide if they want to continue or make any changes.

It is always my concern to spend municipal dollars, to the best of my ability, that will benefit everyone.

Thanks.

R. Brad Loosley
Mayor, Town of Petrolia

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Murder trial delayed again

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

The murder trial in the killing of a father of three in Warwick nearly three years ago is once again postponed. Tina George, 36, faces a second-degree murder charge in the death of Jesse Storr, 29. Storr was found in a house on Egremont Rd. in Warwick the afternoon of Apr. 29, 2018. Despite receiving medical treatment he later died. George was arrested the same day and granted bail in May. Her trial was originally set to start summer 2020, but in December was postponed to Apr. 6, 2021. On Jan. 25 in Sarnia Superior Court, the case was adjourned a third time, and won't start for almost a full calendar year. "I'm not convinced we're going to be back to doing jury trials by then," says Justice Russell Raikes. Earlier in the month the Ontario Superior Court announced that jury trials would be suspended until May 3 at the earliest,

nearly a month after George's trial was supposed to begin. Superior Court courtrooms are also currently limited to 10 person attendance. "For the sake of having a degree of certainty, we're better off putting it to December 6," says Raikes. Crown attorney David Rows and George's defense lawyer Richard Braiden both agreed with the move. Braiden noted his client is waiving her 11(b) Charter right – known as the Jordan Decision – which states a trial in a Canadian Superior Court must start within 30 months of charges being laid. George's trial will begin more than 3.5 years after Storr's killing.



Jesse Storr

- The Independent

In for long haul to get a grip on COVID-19

Heather Wright
The Independent

Lambton's medical officer of health says it could take longer to control COVID-19 with this lockdown than it did in the spring. The number of cases of COVID-19 reported in Lambton dipped in the last week. Tuesday, there were just six new cases identified in Lambton today according to public health. One hundred and twenty-three people are ill – that's down 36 and another 44 people have recovered from COVID-19. Ontario reported 1,740 new COVID-19 cases today and 63 new deaths – 24 of those in long term care homes. There were 30,717 tests completed, with 36,405 still waiting for results. It was the third time in January the number of new cases dipped below 2,000 per day prompting some public health officials to say the restrictions in place now may be working. Dr. Sudit Ranade cautions that a dip in the number of cases in Lambton doesn't signal things are better yet. "In order to say that, something is actually changing in terms of the dynamics of transmission in the population, you need more time," says Ranade. "You need to actually see a trend on

it; you need to see it getting lower for days and days and days at a time, and to see many, many days of cases below 10 instead of just a day here and there." There have now been 1,730 cases since the outbreak began, over 1,200 since Dec. 18. Ranade says while we may see some affects of the Boxing Day lockdown, he believes it will take longer to get a hold on the spread of COVID-19 now, compared to the spring. "There was more circulating disease at the time that lockdowns were instituted so it takes longer to get through that and tamp down the diseases in the community." He adds people are tired of COVID-19 restrictions and may have decided to do their own thing, which will continue the spread of the virus. And Ranade says, this time around, the rules aren't nearly as restrictive. "In the early days of this lockdown, and maybe even now, there are substantially more things that are allowed to continue than were allowed in the first back in March. "Those three things combined together I think, make it such that we need a longer amount of time with a lockdown to experience the same result that we experienced the first time."

DRESSED FOR THE COLD



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Contractors at the new plaza which will house a gas bar and McDonalds in Petrolia were dressed for the cold as they worked high a top the steel structure Thursday.

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THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ENNISKILLEN REQUEST FOR QUOTATIONS GRASS CUTTING

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www.enniskillen.ca





A new subdivision with 125 homes is in the works for the Camlachie area.

More homes planned in Camlachie

Heather Wright
The Independent

There may soon be more houses popping up in the Camlachie area. Plympton-Wyoming council got a look at the second phase of the Errol Woods subdivision. Planner Rob Nesbitt, in a report to council, says the draft plan of subdivision proposes 125 lots for single detached homes. The first phase to the north of the proposed development had 69 lots for single family homes. It’s almost complete. The developer, Paul VanBree, has only been building in the area since November. The next phase will include about two acres set aside for a storm water management facility which the developer would

like to be park land. That was a contentious issue for council since developers are normally required to provide parkland. CAO Carolyn Tripp says the issue will be resolved when the plan returns to council. There were also some concerns about added traffic on Lakeshore and Fleming Roads. Planners suggested one of the conditions of approval for Errol Woods phase two would be an eastbound left turn lane on Lakeshore to accommodate it. Council received the report Monday. “The subdivision agreement still needs to be finalized and approved by council. All requirements including details about the parkland will be included in the subdivision agreement,” says Tripp. It’s not clear when that will be.

Three more COVID-19 deaths in a week

Heather Wright
The Independent

Thirty-six people have now died with COVID-19 in Lambton. Statistics from Lambton Public Health Tuesday showed a resident at Vision Retirement Home died. There are 29 residents and six staff who were COVID-19 positive there – the largest outbreak in Lambton right now. Vision Nursing and Retirement Home’s website says it is one of the long term care homes which will get the vaccine in the first roll out. Public Health did not say which homes are the first in line for the limited supply received Monday. Trillium Villa in Sarnia also received some of the first vaccines in Lambton. Officials are hopeful the vaccine will help reduce some of the illness seen in long term care, where there have been multiple outbreaks in the second wave of the pandemic. Right now, there are also outbreaks at Village on the St. Clair, were 27 residents and 12 staff tested positive. Three people

have died there. Twin Lakes Terrace is also still in outbreak with 17 residents and five staff at the long term care home testing positive for the virus. One person has passed away there. The outbreak at Fiddicks Nursing and Retirement Home in Petrolia was cleared over the weekend. Two staff members were ill but no residents were infected. Meantime; the outbreak at Bluewater Health’s general medicine unit is also growing, with another staff member testing COVID-19 positive. The hospital’s unit went into outbreak Friday with one patient confirmed COVID-19 positive and some possible staff exposures. Tuesday, public health reported there are now two patients and six staff members ill. The outbreak is not impacting most of the functions of the hospital. Meantime, the outbreak at High Park Farms continues. The cannabis greenhouse went into outbreak last week after six employees tested positive. Lambton Public Health says eight people have are now COVID-19 positive there.



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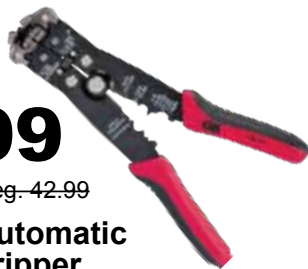


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SHINNY WITH A MASK?



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

A cold snap in Lambton turned ponds into instant ice rinks across the region and where there is ice, there are skaters. Here, a group plays some shinny on the pond at the AW Campbell Conservation Area in Alvinston Sunday. The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority in a news release Tuesday reminded residents to make sure the ice is safe before skating. It also reminded people that when visiting conservation areas “they must comply with social distancing practices and other recommendations by local health authorities and the provincial and federal government. Mask use outdoors is now highly recommended,” officials said.

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Brittany & Nic
Big Brother
Casey
Proud Grandparents
Dee & Randy Patterson
Elaine Oliver & Dave Ramsay



Taxes up 2.5 per cent in Warwick

Heather Wright
The Independent

Taxpayers in Warwick will shell out about 2.5 per cent more for municipal taxes this year.

Council passed the \$11.2 operating budget and the \$10.33 million capital budget Jan. 21 during a special meeting via teleconference.

The increase means about \$11 more for every \$100,000 assessment.

The tax increase will bring in \$62,500 extra in revenue. In a news release CAO/ Clerk Amanda Gubbels says the increase is driven by rising costs in operations, particularly insurance costs.

The operation budget increases as the township hires staff to work on Warwick’s

asset management plan – a document required by the province when applying for provincial grants.

It also includes another \$14,000 for policing costs. The OPP asked for the extra support because it had not budgeted for the rent on the office in Corunna.

The big ticket item in the capital budget is \$4.75 million set aside to build the new community hall on the Watford arena. It also includes \$2 million for arena upgrades.

There will be two major road projects, Warwick Drive and Hickory Creek Line – four bridge and culvert improvement projects and the township will build a new shalt shed and wash bay for public works in the future.

Just over \$1 million has been set aside for that this year.

PW woman avoids jail time for stolen property

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

A Plympton-Wyoming woman will be under strict probation rules for the next three years after getting caught up in the illegal activity of fellow household members.

Kim Brennan, 49, appeared by video in Sarnia court Jan. 12 to plead guilty to two counts of possession of stolen property.

She received a conditional discharge with a three year probation term. If she obeys the terms, Brennan will avoid jail.

Brennan’s troubles began in May 2019 when numerous areas in southern Ontario – including Lambton, Sarnia, Chatham-Kent, London, and Strathroy-Caradoc – began to experience a series of thefts and mischief at local car washes. Surveillance footage showed two people consistently at these scenes; Brennan and a man.

In the early morning hours of May 10, Brennan and the man damaged two car washes in Forest before going to the Best’s Car Wash on Ontario St. in Grand Bend. The man took a vacuum worth \$4,900 and busted a coin box with a pry bar.

A few days later, suspects broke into the storage area of the Home Depot on Quinn Dr. in Sarnia and attached a trailer full of lumber to a U-Haul vehicle.

The U-Haul took off with trailer, lumber and all.

It was later spotted at a Douglas Line home and when Lambton OPP arrived a man was offloading it into a garage.

The man ran inside the home and barricaded the door, but police recovered 116 pieces of lumber worth more than \$5,000.

OPP returned two days later with a warrant and arrested four occupants of the house,

including Brennan. The vacuum from the car wash was discovered during a search.

Brennan acknowledged she knew stolen property was being brought to her home, but wasn’t the main culprit behind the thefts. “Ms. Brennan is far less morally culpable than the others who are involved in this,” says her lawyer Ryan Fritze.

Those others were Brennan’s daughter and her friends, who were all living at Brennan’s house. Fritze says Brennan’s “always had difficulty with saying no to people, in particular her daughter.”

Counselling sessions for healthy relationships were ordered as part of Brennan’s probation to help her avoid similar issues in the future.

“I’m working very hard at separating myself from that entire subculture... My goal is to get my life back on track,” says Brennan. “I had an excellent life up until I was 46 and then it seemed to derail. So I’m just working on getting it back there.”

Justice Krista Leszczynski says Brennan should have known better than to participate in illegal activity with her daughter’s friends, but agreed her role was limited. “There’s no indication that you were involved in the theft of those items,” says Leszczynski. “Your role was limited only to the possession of them. You came into that possession as a result of the people who were residing with you.”

Leszczynski accepted the joint position allowing Brennan to avoid incarceration. Brennan’s other probation terms include bans from the Best’s Car Wash and Sarnia Home Depot, not to go near or communicate with anyone else involved in the incidents, counselling, and to obey a curfew.

- The Independent

Conversion therapy petition raises concerns

Heather Wright
The Independent

A petition asking the federal government to abandon a bill to ban conversion therapy presented by Sarnia-Lambton MP Marilyn Gladu is raising concerns.

The Liberal government is trying to ban the practice which has in the past been forced on people who came out as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual or two spirited.

The MP submitted the 169-name petition to the House of Commons Dec. 9. It says the bill before the house prevents people from getting counselling, advice or prayer about their “sexual confusion” and asks the government to narrow the definition of the conversion therapy or withdraw the bill.

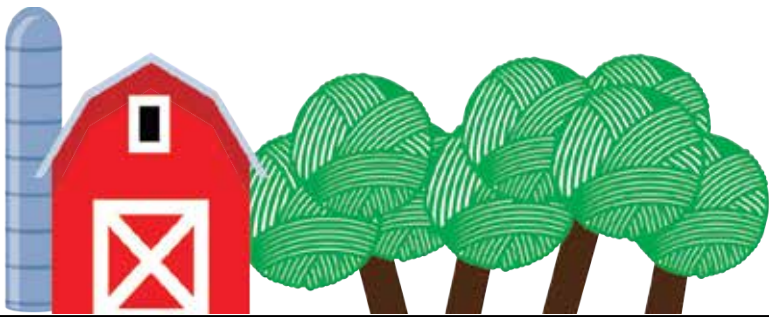
In response to inquires from *The Sarnia Journal*, Gladu said the majority of church-

es in her riding supported the petition. However several churches, including Grace United in Sarnia, said it had not been asked about the petition.

It’s unclear which churches actually put their name to the petition since it was a paper document and was not accessible online.

Officials from the MPs office told *The Independent* the petition was brought to the MP by constituents. “It is my duty as Member of Parliament to present any petition brought to me by my constituents regardless of my personal views,” she wrote in an email adding she receives hundreds of emails and letters from church members from across the riding, although it was not clear it was on this issue.

The government responded to the petition Monday and it is up to the petitioners to act.



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LAMBTON MUTUAL
INSURANCE COMPANY

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF

LAMBTON MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY

The Annual Meeting of the Policyholders of LAMBTON MUTUAL
INSURANCE COMPANY will be held by way of a virtual meeting
on

Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.
TO:

1. Receive, consider and approve the Annual Statements and Auditors’ Report for the year ended December 31, 2020.
2. Elect two directors for a three-year term in accordance with Company By-laws.
3. Appoint auditors.
4. Transact such further business as may rightly come before the meeting.

Please email watford@lambtonmutual.com if you wish to attend and request your link to the virtual meeting.

NOTE: The Annual Statements for the Company for the year ending December 31, 2020 may be viewed on the Company’s website at www.lambtonmutual.com. A Member may obtain a copy of the Annual Statements by sending a written notice to the Company’s head office at least 14 days before the Meeting.

St. Clair Township takes over road, bridge at Island Mooring

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

St. Clair Township is the new owner of Island Ave. in Port Lambton after purchasing the private road and accompanying bridge for \$10,000. The road connects Old River Road on the mainland with the more than a dozen homes on Riverside Dr. that make up Island

Mooring. Island Ave. includes an approximately 10 metre long bridge, was the township’s driving focus in completing the sale. “The fact that these assets are privately owned creates considerable risk in the fact that the owner is not aware of their responsibilities to complete regular maintenance and inspections to meet regulatory requirements,”

says Brian Black, director of public works. Black added the current owner was unable to keep up with the high costs of maintaining a bridge, and it would be wise for the township to take over responsibility. “There is a concern that if the bridge were to deteriorate to the point that it must be closed for safety reasons it would result in

Island Mooring residents being physically isolated from the rest of the township,” Black says. Councillor Pat Brown asked about the bridge’s existing condition and estimated lifespan. Black said based on inspection the bridge should have another five years before any major work is necessary. Deputy Mayor Steve Miller didn’t want to wait any longer to

complete the deal. “We’ve been at this for a number of years back and forth... I think we should just take this thing over, get it in the township’s name where it should have been in the first place, and get it over and done with.” “The longer we delay taking it over, the more work we’re going to have to do to it, and the more expensive it’s going to be,” says Miller.

No tower, no fast internet after eight months in Wilkesport

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

After council approved a communications tower for Wilkesport in May, residents were looking forward to enjoying high speed internet by the fall. But now more than eight months later, work still hasn’t begun on the site. “I’ve had a number of phone calls in regard to that,” says Mayor Steve Arnold at the township’s latest council meeting. “People were anticipating it would be active for the school year, and of course this is now January and they haven’t turned a

shovel full of dirt.” “They remain very adamant that they’re going to be installing this, but I don’t know what the delay is,” says CAO Jeff Baranek. Back at St. Clair’s May 19 council meeting approval was given to Xplornet Communications to install a 45 metre tall lattice tower at the community centre field on Baby Rd. Xplornet said the new tower would include LTE wireless equipment that would increase internet speeds for the community to 50 Mbps. At the time Jay Lewis, from the Real Estate and Municipal

Affairs office at Forbes Bros. – the telecommunications construction company responsible for installing the tower – said “installation of Xplornet’s proposed tower is quick and straightforward.” Lewis added “construction typically takes three to five weeks in various phases and would be operational this summer.” At the end of January however the 10 metre by 10 metre plot had just four posts in the ground marking its existence. Arnold is particularly upset at the lack of progress since children have been forced into extended online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I find it just disgusting that everybody was in a big sweat, and now all of a sudden the kids are waiting and they can’t get any access,” Arnold says. Director of Community Services Kendall Lindsay says he received an email from the construction company saying they planned to lay foundation the first week of February. Arnold instructed staff to keep a close eye on the project, indicating at a certain point the township may have to consider moving on if no work is performed.



Four lone posts are all that indicate the site of a communications tower that was supposed to be completed for the residents of Wilkesport last summer.

- The Independent

Workshop explains massive changes to planning, heritage rules

Pam Wright
Local Journalism Initiative

A free workshop to help ordinary Ontarians make sense of new government rules with regard to planning development and heritage designations will be held this Saturday. It’s an opportunity, says Architectural Conservancy Ontario president Kae Elgie, for citizens concerned about development in their communities to quickly understand the “rules of the game.” Just how much these rules have changed is the subject of the workshop to be held virtually Saturday, Jan. 30 at 11 a.m. Since Doug Ford was elected in 2018, there have been multiple

amendments to the Planning Act and heritage conservation leaders want the public to know what they are up against. Critics of the Ford government are worried that developers — particularly in urban areas — are being allowed to sidestep rules and proceed with developments that wouldn’t have been approved before the legislative changes. Many have expressed concern about prospective development in Ontario’s Golden Horseshoe and the Greenbelt near Toronto. “We are doing this so people are informed and not caught unawares,” Elgie says. “This isn’t something that most of us come up against every day of our lives.” The workshop will examine how

properties are developed. According to Elgie, the Ford government has incorporated a number of changes to the public input process, including the shortening time lines giving less opportunity for public input. “Changes to decision times, consultation mechanisms and appeal processes can greatly impact the ability of citizens to comment on and contribute to development processes in their community,” Elgie says. Those who are interested in how municipalities develop, as well as those who are concerned about heritage conservation should attend, she adds. The Dawn Mills native, who now makes her home in Kitchener, hopes the workshop will keep

people from being “blind sided.” Intervening in the process and appealing decisions can also be expensive, Elgie says, adding people need to know what to do to protect their neighbourhoods. Speakers include Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing staffers Kathryn Mills and Danielle DeMarsh and Toronto-Halton Hills-Milton Municipal Planner Anne Fisher. Dr. Robert Shipley, former director of the University of Waterloo Heritage Resources Centre, will act as moderator. Participants are asked to pre-register by emailing alex@acontario.ca before Jan. 28.



Sunnyside is one of Petrolia’s most recognizable buildings. A workshop Saturday will explain how rules around heritage designation have changed.

- The Herald

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HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Noah Needham checks on the eggs in his family’s chicken coop in early December. The Plympton-Wyoming family won’t have to get rid of their backyard chickens just yet.

PW chickens get pandemic reprieve

Heather Wright
The Independent

The Needhams won’t have to get rid of their chicken coop - at least not yet.

In December, the Plympton-Wyoming family has asked council to allow them to continue keeping the hens in their backyard at their home.

Jon Needham says the chickens became a family project during the spring, when they were told to stay home during the pandemic. They raised the hens from chicks in their house and then built a coop, complete with lights, in their backyard which abuts a field and a wooded area.

But one of the neighbours complained and in October a bylaw enforcement officer from Lambton County came to the house saying the chickens would have to go.

In Plympton-Wyoming, a bylaw prohibits livestock including chickens in residential areas, but it’s not unusual to find a backyard coop in the Needham’s neighbourhood.

The local feed dealer has told the Needhams she thinks there could be upwards of 2,200 chickens in backyards across Plympton-Wyoming based on the amount of feed she sells.

The residents are largely left alone unless a neighbour complains. Which is exactly what hap-

pened to the Needhams.

Jon Needham appealed to council to allow the practice to continue and to amend the town’s bylaw allowing other closet chicken families to raise their hens in peace.

And he told council the birds had become good therapy for his son, Noah, who is autistic.

Council heard the Needham’s concerns in December and Monday, Planner Sarah Baldwin prepared a report which suggested backyard chickens could be allowed with some conditions if council approved.

But before the report could be read, Councillor Netty McEwen suggested changing the bylaw would require a public meeting which wasn’t practical during the pandemic. She suggested, and council agreed, to put off the issue until “after the pandemic is over.” It’s not clear when that might be. The Needhams can keep their chickens until the matter returns to council.

Needham is concerned council won’t agree to include chickens as backyard animals in their bylaws in the future.

If that happens, he’ll ask for a special exemption for Noah to keep the coop under the Ontarians with Disability Act.

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Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston - Employment Opportunity

The Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston is seeking an experienced and effective team member to fill a vacancy in the Finance Department. Reporting to the Treasurer, the Treasury Assistant will perform a variety of duties associated with the administration of financial accounting and data processing functions of the Municipality in the areas of budgeting, accounting, tax, water/sewer billing, facilities billing, and payroll. Preferred candidates will excel at reconciling and have a demonstrated working knowledge of municipal finance.

The successful applicant will have:

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Resume and accompanying covering letter will be accepted until 12:00 pm on Friday, February 5, 2021 by email to: jdenkers@brookealvinston.com or delivered to the municipal office at the address noted below.

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3236 River Street, PO Box 28
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Attention: Janet Denkers, Clerk Administrator



We thank all applicants who apply. Only those selected for an interview will be contacted. Accessibility accommodations are available for all stages of the recruitment process. Applicant's need to make their needs known in advance. Information collected will be handled in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.



FORM 6
SALE OF LAND BY PUBLIC TENDER
Municipal Act, 2001
Ontario Regulation 181/03, Municipal Tax Sale Rules

SALE OF LAND BY PUBLIC TENDER

The Corporation of the Township of Dawn-Euphemia

Take Notice that tenders are invited for the purchase of the land described below and will be received until 3:00 p.m. local time on February 18, 2021, at the Dawn-Euphemia Municipal Office, 4591 Lambton Line, RR#4 Dresden ON N0P 1M0.

The tenders will then be opened in public on the same day as possible after 3:00 p.m. at the Dawn-Euphemia Municipal Office, 4591 Lambton Line, Dresden.

Description of Lands:

Roll No. 38 06 009 030 05000 0000; Aughrim Line; Part of PIN 43369-0094 (R); Part of Lot 33, Concession 6, designated as Parts 1 and 3 on Reference Plan 25R10287, in the Geographic Township of Euphemia, in the Township of Dawn-Euphemia; in the county of Lambton; File No. 09-01

Minimum tender Amount: \$ 13,578.74

Tenders must be submitted in the prescribed form and must be accompanied by a deposit in the form of a money order or of a bank draft or cheque certified by a bank or trust corporation payable to the municipality and representing at least 20 per cent of the tender amount.

Except as follows, the municipality makes no representation regarding the title to or any other matters relating to the land to be sold. Responsibility for ascertaining these matters rests with the potential purchasers.

This sale is governed by the Municipal Act, 2001 and the municipal Tax Sales Rules made under that Act. The successful purchaser will be required to pay the amount tendered plus accumulated taxes and any taxes that may be applicable, such as a land transfer tax and HST.

The municipality has no obligation to provide vacant possession to the successful purchaser.

A copy of the prescribed form of tender is available on the website of the Government of Ontario Central Forms Repository under the listing for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

For further information regarding this sale and a copy of the prescribed form of tender, contact:

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Sports

Sting players rated for 2021 NHL draft

The Independent

Four members of the Sarnia Sting are rated for the NHL draft.

Goaltender Ben Gaudreau is the highest rated member of the Sarnia Sting on the NHL Central Scouting "Players to Watch" list released late last week.

The seventh overall choice in the 2019 OHL Priority Selection is given a B grade meaning he has the potential to be a second or third round selection.

The North Bay-area product went 10-13-2 in the

COVID-shortened 2019-20 season with a goals-against average of 4.34 and a save percentage of .890.

Americans Ty Voit and Ryan Mast along with Nolan Dann are all rated as C prospects meaning they are projected as mid to late round picks.

Voit was 15th in OHL rookie scoring last season with eight goals and 28 points in 49 games while Mast contributed a goal and 10 assists in 58 games from the blue line.

Dann had 26 goals and 49 points in 56 regular season



and playoff games with the OJHL's Georgetown Raiders. He only suited up for one game with the Sting last year.

The 2021 NHL Draft is scheduled for late July although reports indicate there has been talk of moving it to Dec. 2021 or Jan. 2022.

McGregor at Team Canada camp

The Independent

Tyler McGregor was among 14 players who took part in a recent 11 day training camp in Calgary for Canada's national para hockey team.

Thirteen other players were invited but not able to attend because of COVID protocols.

"It's crazy how much you truly come to miss being in a competitive environment with your teammates, especially after 10 months without that opportunity," said the Forest product in a training camp blog posted on the Hockey Canada website.

He said the 10 month absence felt like 10 years to him.

The Lambton Jr. Sting alumni and his teammates are preparing for the IPC World Championships tentatively scheduled for the Czech Republic in May. He and Team Canada are also hopeful they can compete for gold at the Winter Paralympics in Beijing, China in March 2022.

Previously, the squad had won a bronze medal at the 2014 Winter Paralympics in Sochi, Russia and a silver at the same event in South Korea in 2018.

McGregor has been a member of the Canadian national team since 2012.

RYAN'S HOUSE OPENS



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A new temporary residential withdrawal management home in Sarnia will be known as Ryan's House. The provincial government recently provided one year of funding for the seven bed unit. It's been named after Ryan Hicks who died from a fentanyl overdose in 2015. His mother, Laurie, pictured here with George and Brienne, has been instrumental in moving the project forward according to officials at Bluewater Health. Hicks is still working with the group on a permanent 24 bed unit.

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Kelsey Syer R.M.T.



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519-882-3950

We are currently running low on the items listed here: Hamburger Helper, Sidekicks (rice & pasta), instant potatoes, boxed stuffing, Manwich, canned pasta (eg. Zoodles, Chef Boyardee), vegetable, mushroom and Habitant soups, large canned fruit, peanut butter, pancake mixes (just add water - preferred), and snacks for families (chips, cheezies, etc.)

Donations can be left at area grocery stores or dropped off to the Food Bank
Mondays 9:00-11:30am or 4th Wednesday 6-7:45pm



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Real Estate



492 Victoria Street
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for all classified ads is
Monday at 12 noon
for the paper that prints and distributes Wed-Thurs

Death Notices

January 16 - January 22, 2021

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16

WHITE, Nicholas “Nick”
Age 25, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

FRAGIS, Georgina
Age 103, of Sarnia
D.J. Robb Funeral Home

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17

FERNS, Marion
Age 87, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

MONDAY, JANUARY 18

LAMB, Dennis William
Age 75, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

TUESDAY, JANUARY 19

FONT, Donald
Age 65, of Sarnia
D.J. Robb Funeral Home

PALUMBO, Nicola
Age 74, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

MEAD, Helen
Age 93, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20

CHOPTOVY, Jody
Age 63, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21

FRAYNE, Frederick
Age 79, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

DEVRIES, Arnold
Age 88, of Wyoming
Needham-Jay Funeral Home

FARINA, Maria
Age 91, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home


WHITE, William
Age 93, of Sarnia
McKenzie & Blundy Funeral Home

FRIDAY, JANUARY 22

PELLETIER, COdy
Age 24, of Forest
Denning's of Forest

RAMSAY, Melissa
Age 37, of Sarnia
D.J. Robb Funeral Home

VANI, Maria
Age 94, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home



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

Notice

Lambton Outdoor Club - All upcoming hike's have been canceled until Feb 11, due to the provincial lock down. LOC Online events will still be held. Please check our website for more information. www.lambtonoutdoorclub.org

Notice

Kids ask the greatest questions! Share your children's questions about vaccines and learn more about the Questions from Kids Campaign at <https://shareyourvoice.ca/>.

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.**

Card of Thanks


Thank You

Many thanks to relatives, friends and neighbours for their acts of kindness, flowers, cards, gifts and phone calls on the occasion of my 100th birthday.

Aldean Burgess

STAY-AT-HOME ORDER

Parents, guardians or caregivers can travel between homes if the individual is under your care



Notice

The **ALVINSTON LIBRARY** will temporarily close for a period of two weeks starting on Monday, February 1, 2021 to complete a renovation. During this time, the dropbox will remain open; however, due dates for items have been extended until Tuesday, February 16, 2021. Please use neighbouring libraries in Watford, Petrolia or Florence during this time.

STAY-AT-HOME ORDER

You can leave your home to get groceries, food and beverages



In Memory



JUDITH MARIE SMITH
Passed away January 27th, 2007

Wife, daughter, sister, mother
You are still in our hearts,
Loved and missed by all,
Everyday

Hugh, Marie, Jim, Margot

STAY-AT-HOME ORDER

You can leave your home to get exercise. It's important for your physical and mental health.



Notice

Have your kids reported how many books they read this week for the Winter Reading Program? The top three readers aged 4 - 12 across Lambton County will receive a \$100 gift card to Amazon, \$50 gift card to The Book Keeper, and a \$25 gift card to The Book Keeper. Report how many books you read at www.lclibrary.ca/WRP

Notice

The **CORUNNA LIBRARY** will temporarily close for a period of three weeks starting on January 25, 2021 to complete a renovation. During this time, the dropbox will remain open; however, due dates for items have been extended until Tuesday, February 16, 2021. Please use neighbouring libraries in Sombra and Sarnia for contactless curbside pickup during this time.

STAY-AT-HOME ORDER

Yes, you can leave your home to walk your pets



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.

Obituary



DEVRIES
Arnold

DeVries, Arnold - Passed away on **Thursday, January 21, 2021** at Bluewater Health, Sarnia. Born in the Netherlands, ARNOLD DeVRIES, farmed near Dresden most of his life before retiring to Wyoming, he was in his **88th year**. Arnold is survived by his wife of 66 years, Gertie (nee Braaksma). He was a loved father to Fred (Tonja) DeVries and Helen (Rick) Langdon. Loving Grandfather and Great Grandfather to, Racheal (Brendan) Keogh and their children Angel and Selina, Amanda Thomson, (Richard Smith) and their children Tyson, Jaxon and Livia, Micheal (Shalynn) Thomson, Matthew (Wendy) DeVries, Nick DeVries, Allison DeVries and Riley Strom. Arnold was the brother of Wilma (the late Frans) Veenstra, Margaret (the late Frank) Vanderheide, Ann (Elco) Wiersma, Charles (Jenny) DeVries, Alice (Fred) Postma, Christina (the late Bill) Kloostra, Janet (John) Fischer, the late Elsie (Frans) Vriesema and the late Harry (Joanne) DeVries. **Due to COVID 19 restrictions, a private service will be held with interment in Wyoming Cemetery.** As expressions of sympathy, memorial donations may be made to Providence Reformed Collegiate, 93 Queen Street, Komoka, ON N0L 1R0. Memories and condolences may be shared online at www.needhamjay.com.

Notice


Living Tobacco & Vape Free - Quitting is tough. But so are you. This year has been tough but let's use that strength to break bad habits. If you smoke/vape-set a quit date, make a plan, follow these tips, and access resources to help. Make this year all about your quit story. <https://lambton-publichealth.ca/.../quit-smoking-support.../>

Notice

Sign up for the latest program offered by the Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership! Learning for Life: Entrepreneurship Series (good for both new and seasoned entrepreneurs)! <https://www.sarnialambton.on.ca/learning-for-life-entrepreneurship-series-launching-this-winter>

STAY-AT-HOME ORDER

If you live alone, consider having close contact with one other household only



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Obituary



GUDZ
Olga “Ollie”

On the morning of **Saturday, January 23, 2021** at Fiddick's Nursing Home, Petrolia, Ollie Gudz (nee Luschak) passed away peacefully in her sleep at the age of **98 years and 10 months**. Beloved wife to John Gudz (pre-deceased); daughter to Anton and Mary Luschak (pre-deceased); loving mother to Ed (Sandra, pre-deceased) Gudz and Darlene “Doll” (Dale) Mathews; amazing grandmother (Nanee, Nana) to Jonathan (Yuka) Gudz, Garret (Joanne Graham) Gudz, Kimberly (Marshall) Heaton, Kelly Mathews and Amanda Pieraldi (nee Gudz); and, proud great-grandmother to Shogo, Kento, Henry, Micah and Camilo. Dear sister to Anne Bunzeluk, Joe Lucas and Frank Luschak (all pre-deceased). She will be fondly remembered by all of her extended family in Canada and the USA. Born in Winnipeg on March 26, 1922, Ollie moved to Toronto to marry her beloved John where both of their children, Ed and Doll, were born. A fixture on Larchmount Avenue, Toronto, Ollie worked for The Timothy Eaton Co. (Eaton's) for 29 years and was inaugurated into the Timothy Eaton Quarter Century Club on August 27, 1981 (membership #15410). Shortly after her retirement, Ollie moved to Wyoming, Ontario in 1989 where she lived close to her son and his family. Nana, also known lovingly as ‘Nana Banana’, was a bright star in the lives of her entire family – her kindness and generosity cannot be matched. Words said often that her loves will never forget, “don't do that”, and “love you tons of bunches”. We will greatly miss your amazing cooking; your sense of style; your love of life, fun, and a good laugh; and, adventure. But mostly, we will miss your unconditional love. This peach schnapps toast is to you! Special thanks to the staff at Fiddick's Nursing Home and Dr. Frank W. Riedl for their care of our Nana. **A Catholic Mass and a celebration of Ollie's life will take place in the Spring of 2021.** In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the charity of your choice. Memories and condolences may be shared online at www.needhamjay.com.

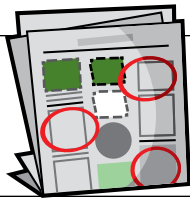
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Church DIRECTORY

Christ Anglican Church

414 Oil Street, Petrolia

Happy New Year!
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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

WORSHIP SERVICES
Via ZOOM
Sunday Mornings 10:30am

Pastor: Alex Craig
Church Office 519-882-2480
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
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Left on the side of the road

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

He abandoned his partner on the shoulder of a busy highway. Soon after he came back to dump off his kids, too.

Nathan Saunders, 34, was in Sarnia court Jan. 12 to hear his punishment for leaving his family “stranded on the side of the highway,” after a fight last March.

Saunders and his partner – who were separated at the time – were driving from London to Sarnia with their two children when an argument broke out. The woman, driving her own Ford F-150, pulled over on the shoulder under the Oil Heritage overpass and got out of the truck to cool down. Saunders took the opportunity to hop into the driver’s seat and take off.

Saunders wasn’t gone long. But he hadn’t returned to pick up his abandoned partner. Rather, he demanded she take their eight and 12 year-old children out of the truck. The woman quickly did and Saunders sped off again, this time leaving the entire family on the highway.

OPP officers later rescued the mother and two children from a ditch where they took shelter.

Saunders was found at his house with the

woman’s truck and arrested.

Saunders plead guilty to taking a vehicle he didn’t own and driving with a suspended license. “What is particularly aggravating... was a very aggressive action on your part toward a domestic partner, and in the presence of children, that had a significant impact on her and the children being stranded on the side of the highway,” says Justice Krista Leszczynski

She also noted that Saunders has a history of criminal offenses related to vehicles and stolen property.

But Leszczynski allowed him to avoid jail, accepting a joint submission of a 75 day conditional sentence followed by 12 months of probation. He was fined \$1,000 for driving with a suspended license.

Saunders will serve the conditional sentence under house arrest, and can only leave to go to work and once a week for four hours to gather supplies. He also can’t have people over to his house or leave Ontario.

When his sentence is over Saunders must take counselling for mental health and parenting issues as part of his year-long probation. He’s also banned from driving for six months.

- The Independent

Couple avoids trafficking charges for cocaine

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

A Sarnia couple managed to avoid drug trafficking charges after the husband plead to simple possession.

Spencer Buxton-Boekhorst, 22, appeared in court virtually Jan. 15 alongside his wife, Mikayla MacLean-McNeil, 22. The pair had each been facing cocaine trafficking charges following a raid on their home last year.

Lambton OPP surveilled the husband and wife at their Fairview Cres. home prior to obtaining a search warrant. Around 8 pm May 21 officers arrested Buxton-Boekhorst during a traffic stop while other OPP members moved into the house and found MacLean-McNeil. The couple was taken to the Petrolia OPP station.

A combined search of the house and car found 11 grams of cocaine and \$12,850 in cash.

Defense lawyer Sarah Donohue says her client had so much cash due to a recent settlement and because his job pays him in cash. She says Buxton-Boekhorst’s employer speaks highly of him.

“Mr. Buxton-Boekhorst is a very valued employee at that organization. His supervisor has said on more than one occasion what a good employee he is, and how reliable and trustworthy he is in his position,” Donohue says.

She added he’s the main financial support for his family, as MacLean-McNeil is currently at home taking care of the couple’s newborn baby.

Donohue says Buxton-Boekhorst has learned he has to give up the drugs. “He realizes that is something that is not going to assist him going forward, and wants to make sure that he leaves that behind him,

especially considering that he has a small child under his care.”

“I know I was in the wrong,” Buxton-Boekhorst says during his turn to speak. “I just had a baby, my life’s completely turned around, and I’m looking to go forward.”

A joint position of a \$1,000 fine was proposed by Donohue and Crown Attorney Brian Higgins. Justice Deborah Austin accepted it despite some of the underlying facts.

“This court will respect the joint submission... despite the obvious concerns that police had when they became involved in this matter,” says Austin. “Cocaine is obviously a substance of great concern in our community, and the quantity was not insignificant.”

“But this is a personal possession charge, and in my view taking into account the fact that you have accepted responsibility for your actions, have a limited criminal record which does not include any drug related offenses in the past, a significant fine is an appropriate and reasonable penalty for the court to impose,” Austin said.

With the \$300 victim fine surcharge, Buxton-Boekhorst’s total penalty is \$1,300. He won’t face any probation.

“I hope that what you’ve said – that you stick with that. That is, stay away from substances, particularly now that you’re the parent of a young child, and you want to raise your child in the healthiest way possible,” Austin says.

“It’s encouraging to hear that you have really taken some mature steps to put drugs out of your life and to be a contributing member of the community. That’s important to your family.”

- The Independent

Province offers \$5 million to aid agricultural societies

Agricultural societies hard hit by the pandemic are getting a hand.

The Ontario government announced \$5 million in funding, including \$3.2 million for hardship funding. The applications are open now.

“This funding will help support these societies during a difficult period so they can operate future fall fairs and exhibits and participate in our future economic recovery,” said Agriculture Minister Ernie Hardeman.





LET'S SUPPORT OUR LOCAL RESTAURANTS

Dining GUIDE

Hours are subject to change.

Actors
Casual Dining

Open for Take Out

Tuesday – Sunday 11am-7:30pm

4211 Petrolia Line, Petrolia

519-882-0400

Athena’s
Restaurant

Open for Take Out

Monday – Saturday 11am-7pm

4375 Petrolia Line, Petrolia

519-882-1998

Black Gold
Brewery

Open for Take Out & Delivery

Tuesday – Sunday 12pm-7pm

395 Fletcher St, Petrolia

226-738-0665 | shop.blackgold.beer

Buds Pizza

Open for Take Out & Delivery

Sun-Wed 3-8pm

Thurs-Fri 10-12noon & 3-9pm | Sat 3-9pm

436 Albany St, Petrolia

519-882-0000

Coffee Lodge
Petrolia

Open for Take Out & Curbside

Mon-Fri 8-4pm | Sat 8-3pm

4119 Petrolia Line, Petrolia

519-882-0633

Crabby Joe’s
Petrolia

Open for Take Out & Delivery

Tuesday - Saturday 4pm-8pm

4236 Petrolia Line, Petrolia

519-882-4848

Godfathers
Pizza

Open for Take Out

Sun-Thurs 11-9pm | Fri & Sat 11-10pm

Delivery Hours: Sun-Thurs 11-9pm | Fri-Sat 11-10pm

4204 Petrolia Line, Petrolia

519-882-0550

Helen’s Hideaway Family
Restaurant

Open for Take Out & Delivery

Daily 8am – 8pm

4204 Petrolia Line, Petrolia

519-882-0300

Heng’s Chinese
Restaurant

Open for Take Out

Tues-Thurs 4-7:30pm | Fri & Sat 4-8pm

4150 Petrolia Line, Petrolia

519-882-1050

Johnny G’s
Premium Pizza Plus

Open for Take Out & Delivery

Wednesday – Sunday 3pm-8pm

4108 Petrolia Line Unit 1, Petrolia

519-882-2000

Munchies

Open for Take Out

Mon & Tues 8-3pm | Wed-Sat 8-7pm

Sun 8-2pm

4206 Oil Heritage Rd, Petrolia

519-882-1000

Petrolia Pizza & Subs

Open for Take Out & Delivery

Monday – Saturday 11am-8pm

4170 Petrolia Line, Petrolia

519-882-1886

Sitara
Indian Cuisine

Open for Take Out & Delivery

Daily 11am - 9pm

4189 Petrolia Line, Petrolia

226-732-0738

Staffy’s Sandwich
Shop

Open for Take Out

Mon-Fri 11-6pm | Sat 11-4pm

4159 Petrolia Line, Petrolia

519-381-1712

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519-882-4215

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