

Oil Museum of Canada gets major facelift

Heather Wright
The Independent

A major renovation now underway at the Oil Museum of Canada will renew the unique original architecture of the 60 year-old building.

That according to Andrew Meyer, general manager of cultural services in Lambton and Laurie Webb, the manager of museums with the county.

Construction on the \$880,000 renovation began this week and is expected to take until at least June.

The museum has a storied history. Members of the Lambton County Historical Society and a committee working on a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the first commercial oil well in Oil Springs first came up with the idea in 1956, Webb says. The group joined forces and came up with a plan.

Soon, a modern new building designed by Ian Rutherford, was under construction for a cost of \$100,000. Webb says about \$18,000 of that was raised in the community and she told Oil Springs councillors in a recent presentation the village contributed \$16,000 to the development of the 10-acre site.

“The committee really wanted a modern facility and curtain wall window for a key feature that overlooked the still operating oil fields,” says Webb. “The fundraising efforts of the time noted that the building was constructed with modern petroleum by products, plastic metal flooring, glazed brick wall, the glass curtain walls, close to historic roots of the industry outside which ultimately resulted in the production of all these items inside.”

Webb says you could stand on one side of the building and see right through it. Over the years partitions and curtains were used to block off the windows because museum curators didn’t want the exhibits to be damaged.

But with new technology, Meyer says the new window walls will be covered with UV protection to reduce the damage of the sun.

SEE OIL MUSEUM PG 2

WHO TO BELIEVE



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Central Lambton residents can be forgiven for being a little bit confused about the weather for the next few weeks. Two Oil Springs Ollie’s - the original seen here with Heaven Jenkins from Heaven’s Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre, and the new Village of Oil Springs Ollie, seen in front of the Youth Centre - predicted the weather, but they couldn’t agree. **SEE MORE PAGE 3**

Gleeson remembered as leader, health care advocate

Heather Wright
The Independent

Mary-Pat Gleeson is being hailed as a champion of rural health care and the Town of Petrolia.

The co-founder of Charlotte’s Task Force and former Petrolia councillor passed away Saturday at Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital. She was 73.

Gleeson was born and raised in Petrolia and went to Windsor for university. She returned in the 1970s to work as the recreation director for the Town of Petrolia. But she didn’t stay long.

“Even as a young girl on Maude Street, she wanted to work in the film industry and she made that happen,” her family wrote in her obituary.

Gleeson worked in marketing in the film industry for 25 years rising to be the vice

president of both Alliance Communications in Toronto and Red Sky Entertainment in Vancouver.

But Petrolia beckoned when her mother, Bertha’s health failed. She returned home and continued working as a freelance film script editor and analyst.

And she became active in the community, most notably as the co-founder of Charlotte’s Task Force in 2005.

The group which took on the provincial government when it first threatened to remove services, like the emergency department, from the rural hospital.

Norm Sutherland worked with Charlotte’s Task Force and became friends with Gleeson. He says the group was a “major force in saving our Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital.”

Sutherland soon learned Gleeson was full of energy. “If she were feeling down, you

never knew it because she would have a quick quip that would lighten the air,” he says adding “They will know when she has arrived in heaven.”

Gleeson’s concern about the community’s health resources led her to be involved in the formation of what is now the Central Lambton Family Health Team.

She was the chair of the board of the health team from 2011 until her death.

Kelly Poore shared those duties with Gleeson in the last few months.

Officials with the Central Lambton Family Health team hailed Gleeson as a “leader and a champion in health care promotion” whose “commitment to rural health care was unparalleled.”

“This was her passion,” says Poore “and we are so thankful to have had such a kind, compassionate and insightful leader.”

SEE GLEESON PG 2

The

Independent

Serving Petrolia and Central Lambton

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FILE PHOTO
Mary-Pat Gleeson and a line of dignitaries open the Central Lambton Family Health Team in 2014.

Gleeson helped found family health team

CON'T FROM PG 1

Gleeson was interested in all things Petrolia. She told people her family were Hard Oils – the term reserved for those who helped open the oil fields of Lambton County. She took great pride in her heritage and could often be seen at heritage events helping out.

Her love of her hometown was instilled in her by her parents, Bertha and Lew, who were strong promoters of Petrolia according to family members.

Gleeson’s love of her hometown led her to serve three terms on Petrolia council until 2018.

Gleeson filed her nomination papers, and her name was on the 2018 ballot, but just after the deadline for withdrawing the nomination, Gleeson decided to retire from municipal politics. She said at the time she wanted to spend more time on health care issues.

In a social media post Sunday, former Mayor John McCharles called Gleeson caring and compassionate.

“Never in my terms on council did I experience anyone more dedicated to the betterment of our town,” he says.

The flags at Petrolia’s town hall flew at half staff in her honour.

In a news release, Chief Administrative

Officer, Rick Charlebois, lauded Gleeson for her work on Charlotte’s Task Force, the town’s Wellness and Recreation Committees, the Central Lambton Family Health Team and Petrolia council.

“Ms. Gleeson served our community on three terms of Petrolia council where she was a vocal advocate for all things Petrolia. Although, her love for Petrolia did not start there, it started a long time before that. She learned from her parents – other strong advocates for Petrolia; and then developed further when she worked in Parks and Recreation for the Town of Petrolia,” said Charlebois in the statement

“Ms. Gleeson has left us with wisdom, pride in our community, a strong hospital, a thriving health team, doctors to care for us; but most of all, the permission to carry her legacy, and continue her work in her famous phrase of “off you go, then”.

Gleeson’s family says a party will be held in her honour when the COVID-19 restrictions ease.



Mary-Pat Gleeson

Museum \$880k reno to take six months

CON'T FROM PG 1

“We’re actually looking to move back to a lot of the same ideas, architectural concepts and exhibit ideas that were in play back in 1960. It really was, and it is a progressive museum. And we’re excited about some of the renovation work that’s happening in some of our proposed exhibit renewal plans,” says Meyer.

Webb says the exhibits will be based on the nine important themes the first backers of the museum proposed, such as the geology of oil, how Indigenous people used oil, the 19th century discovery of oil, the international reach of Lambton’s oil drillers, the people who shaped the industry, as well as the history of Oil Springs and the oil boom.

She adds the exhibits will be interactive “including an exciting new virtual reality experience where visitors can put on VR (virtual reality) goggles and be able to dive into the Williams well to explore the underground geology of the area.”

The exhibits will be changed on a regular basis, Webb adds, so people can see many of the 9,000 exhibits the Oil Museum has in storage in the basement.

That basement storage also needs some attention, says Meyer. “Part of the project, we will also be excavating the full perimeter of the building; there has been some water penetration over the years - which happens

with failing mortar and brick - and we will be completely waterproofing the basement in order to ensure that the collection remains protected.”

Meyer expected the construction to begin in early February and continue until late June or July. He hopes after that, the museum will be able to show off the changes to the public, perhaps during Black Gold Fest.

It’s not clear how the pandemic will continue to affect gatherings into the summer, but it is not likely the event to reopen the Oil Museum will draw the same crowd as the opening did in 1960.

The grand opening featured a giant barbecue with 2,000 people in attendance. There were scores of provincial politicians on hand including the Ministers of Highways, and Travel and Publicity. The Lt. Governor was also there to mark the occasion.

Meyer says the people in the crowd “really underscores the importance of this very progressive museum in the middle of the century, to the local community, to the oil industry, to the nation, as a matter of fact, as a National Historic Site.

“It’s that energy and enthusiasm from 1960 that we’re looking to infuse into this project. And certainly, the importance to the community and to the county underscored the need to continue to renew this building.”

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519-882-0400

Athena's
Restaurant

Open for Take Out

Monday – Saturday 11am-7pm
4375 Petrolia Line, Petrolia
519-882-1998

Black Gold
Brewery

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Tuesday – Sunday 12pm-7pm
395 Fletcher St, Petrolia
226-738-0665 | shop.blackgold.beer

Buds Pizza

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

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4119 Petrolia Line, Petrolia
519-882-0633

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Petrolia

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4204 Petrolia Line, Petrolia
519-882-0300

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519-882-1050

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Premium Pizza Plus

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Sun 8-2pm
4206 Oil Heritage Rd, Petrolia
519-882-1000

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519-882-1886

Sitara
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Shop

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Analysts question why Lambton still online

Heather Wright
The Independent

Lambton’s Medical Officer of Health says it would be nice to know how the province is making decisions on sending students back to school.

Students who live in the public health units covering Ottawa, Eastern, Southwestern and Lambton’s next door neighbour, London-Middlesex, returned to school Monday.

Students in Lambton will wait until later this week to find out if they’ll return soon.

Premier Doug Ford said Monday the goal is to return all students to class Feb. 10.

Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. David Williams, adds the key is getting rapid tests in place. “We would like to have them prepared for the 10th, we don’t know if that will be the date for sure.”

But some public health experts are wondering why the province is allowing the return of students in these particular regions. Analysts can’t find a common denominator for the communities where students are in class.

Ryan Imgrund, biostatistician for South Lake Regional Health Center and the Department Head of Science at York Catholic District School Board has been crunching the COVID-19 numbers for months. He’s particularly interested in transmission of the virus in schools.

When the province announced the return to school for Middlesex-London, Imgrund questioned the move saying Lambton County has comparable statistics for the rate of transmission but students are still at home.

Public Health Ontario data for the past seven days shows Lambton had an average of 9.81 cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 people from Jan. 22 to Jan. 29, while Middlesex-London and the Southwest Health Unit had 11.92 and 11.2 cases per 100,000 in the same time frame.

“Ontario parents, teachers, and students want clear criteria around when a return to school can happen,” Imgrund said on Twitter. “This criteria doesn’t exist. It

Groundhogs don’t see eye-to-eye in Oil Springs

Heather Wright
The Independent

Furry Oil Springs Ollie says it will be an early spring.

But Village of Oil Springs Ollie says six more weeks of winter.

Both the original furry groundhog and the new groundhog mascot came out of their ‘holes’ this Groundhog Day to survey the weather in Central Lambton and both came to a different conclusion.

The Village of Oil Springs and Heaven’s Wildlife Rescue began the tradition of predicting spring with a groundhog in 2014 when the live groundhog from the centre, named Sheldon, predicted another six weeks of winter. Sheldon was renamed Oil Springs Ollie for the occasion.

Over the years, Ollie has traveled to Wyoming and Sarnia to see his shadow in front of a crowd. But this year The Village of Oil Springs introduced a new Ollie mascot to predict the weather at the Oil Springs Youth Centre. It was a virtual event because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Although Oil Springs Ollie predicted six more weeks of winter, we know there will be sunnier days ahead,” says Oil Springs Mayor Ian Veen after Ollie pops his head out of the Youth Centre front door, falls in shock to the ground and then goes back inside.

appears to be a guessing game. Let’s set this criteria. And share it.”

Lambton’s Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Sudit Ranade, also expressed frustration with the lack of a clear criteria recently, when the province started allowing southern Ontario students to return to school.

“I would have liked to see some information about what thresholds they use to make that decision,” Ranade told reporters Jan. 21.

“And I think it can be challenging where you have border communities where your neighbors are going to school and your kids aren’t.

“I think as a principle, it would be nice to see some information about how those decisions were made and what’s the rationale for using a regional approach when the entire province is under sort of a provincial approach with respect to lock down.”

The Ministry of Education says it made its decision based on the advice of Ontario’s chief medical officer of health.

John Howitt, the public director of education, is critical of the ministry for not reaching out to the local medical officers of health for input on whether or not schools should open.

Monday, Dr. Williams told reporters he did reach out to medical officers of health in some regions and their advice tipped the balance as to whether kids would go back to class.

Williams was asked by reporters what metrics he was using to make the decision. “There is not an exact number per se...We want a lower number.”

Minister of Education Stephen Lecce announced there would be some additional testing for students if the school boards felt it was needed.

The province received another \$381 million from the federal government Monday to help deal with COVID-19 in the classroom.

Meantime, some Lambton students who travel to London to attend a private school did return to in class learning Monday.

Meanwhile, out in the country at Heaven’s Wildlife Rescue, Peggy Jenkins, her daughter, Heaven and another volunteer brought real-life Ollie out of his ‘hole’ to take a look around. He’s predicting six weeks until spring.

Jenkins – who called Village of Oil Springs Ollie ‘adorable and hilarious’ – was surprised to hear about Ollie’s mascot counter part and his prediction of more winter.

Jenkins, understandably, says the original Ollie is likely right. Ollie has been making predictions for eight years and at least six times his weather senses proved to be right. Jenkins has lost track of a couple of the predictions.

This year’s event was much quieter than normal. Jenkins usually takes Ollie to a local school during the week or, if Groundhog Day falls on a weekend, to another community for a big ceremony. But that didn’t happen this year because of the pandemic restrictions.

But maybe that’s not a bad thing. Jenkins says Sheldon is getting older – he’s eight now – and his friend, Harvey, is likely to take over Ollie’s job for the predictions next year.

“Sheldon is getting up in age so his friend, Harvey, is in training. They were both out today. They talk together, but I don’t know what is being said.”

Seniors won’t all get vaccine by Friday

Heather Wright
The Independent

The province won’t hit its target to vaccinate all residents of long term care in Lambton by Feb. 5.

And it may be difficult to hit the new Feb. 10 deadline, too.

Premier Doug Ford said Tuesday it would be impossible to meet the Feb. 5 deadline to vaccinate the province’s most vulnerable seniors because the supply of vaccines has virtually dried up right now.

Pfizer, one of two suppliers of the COVID-19 vaccine, stopped shipments to Canada as it tries to retool its European plant to produce even more product. And there were only 28,000 doses of the Moderna vaccine in the entire province.

Jan. 26, Lambton received its first shipment of the vaccine - 500 doses. There are about 1,500 people living in long term care and retirement homes who require a vaccination. That doesn’t include their caregivers or the health care staff in the Lambton homes.

Lambton’s Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Sudit Ranade, is expecting more vaccines soon.

“We’re expecting more this week, but they haven’t given us a date and they said to expect it to later towards the end of the week,” Ranade says. “It’s all day by day, hour by hour.”

Ranade added it’s likely the health unit will receive between 500 and 600 doses, which would leave about a third of Lambton’s seniors unprotected.

Even if the next vaccine shipment does

arrive by Feb. 5, it will be impossible to get them into the arms of residents by the province’s self imposed deadline, says Ranade.

The health unit’s vaccination team completed five homes over five days with the last shipment.

While there is concern about the lack of vaccines coming to Lambton, there is reason for some optimism. The number of new COVID-19 cases daily is rapidly decreasing.

There were just three new cases of COVID-19 in Lambton reported Tuesday.

Lambton Public Health reports there have been 1,845 COVID-19 cases since the pandemic began nearly 11 months ago. Over 1,300 of those have been since December.


Just 68 people are actively ill right now in Lambton.

There are no new cases of COVID-19 in the four long term care outbreaks Tuesday. There are also two workplace outbreaks with five and three cases.

Ontario reported just 745 cases Tuesday however public health officials say the number is artificially low since Toronto Public Health transferred its data to the provincial system. A number of duplicate cases were found and the overall numbers were readjusted. The weekly average for new COVID-19 cases is 1,746.

Fourteen residents of long term care homes died with COVID-19, public health reports Tuesday. There were 36 people in all who passed away.

The province says they have now found 109 cases of the UK variant and one case of the South African variant in Ontario.



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.

Editorial

Give us the reasons for back to school

Somewhere in Lambton, students are sitting at home, online with their classmates, learning about functions in their math class.

Functions, according to Britannica, is “an expression, rule, or law that defines a relationship between one variable and another.” In other words, students learn about the clear rules which govern math.

There are a lot of clear rules and guideposts we follow in our everyday lives; the Ten Commandments, the speed limit, the 12 item limit in the express line. But it seems, the Ontario government doesn’t have clear cut rules when it comes to sending kids back to school.

That’s obvious to many parents as they monitor their children’s learning at home while friends they know in London packed their kids lunch and sent them to school. Students in nearby London returned to school after a pandemic break which lasted more than a month. Students in Lambton are still learning at home. That would lead you to conclude that London must have fewer cases of COVID-19 or less people in the hospital than Lambton.

Nope. In the London area, there have been about 400 cases per 100,000 people while in Lambton at the time of the decision, there were 109 cases per 100,000.

There must be, you would think, a rule which governs who gets to return to class. There’s not. And the top doctor in Ontario even admitted it.

When asked by reporters what metric he was using to make his decision on when students go back to school, Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. David Williams said “There is not an exact number per se... We want a lower number.”

Later he said he’d consulted with the local medical officers of health, however the local medical officer of health was surprised students weren’t returning to class. It appears the province didn’t consult him. The episode explains why so many people are angry and frustrated as this pandemic rolls on. As we have said before, the province needs to clearly communicate how and why it is making decisions which shape our lives if they want the people to get behind its decisions.

Letters to the Editor

The Independent welcomes Letters to the Editor.

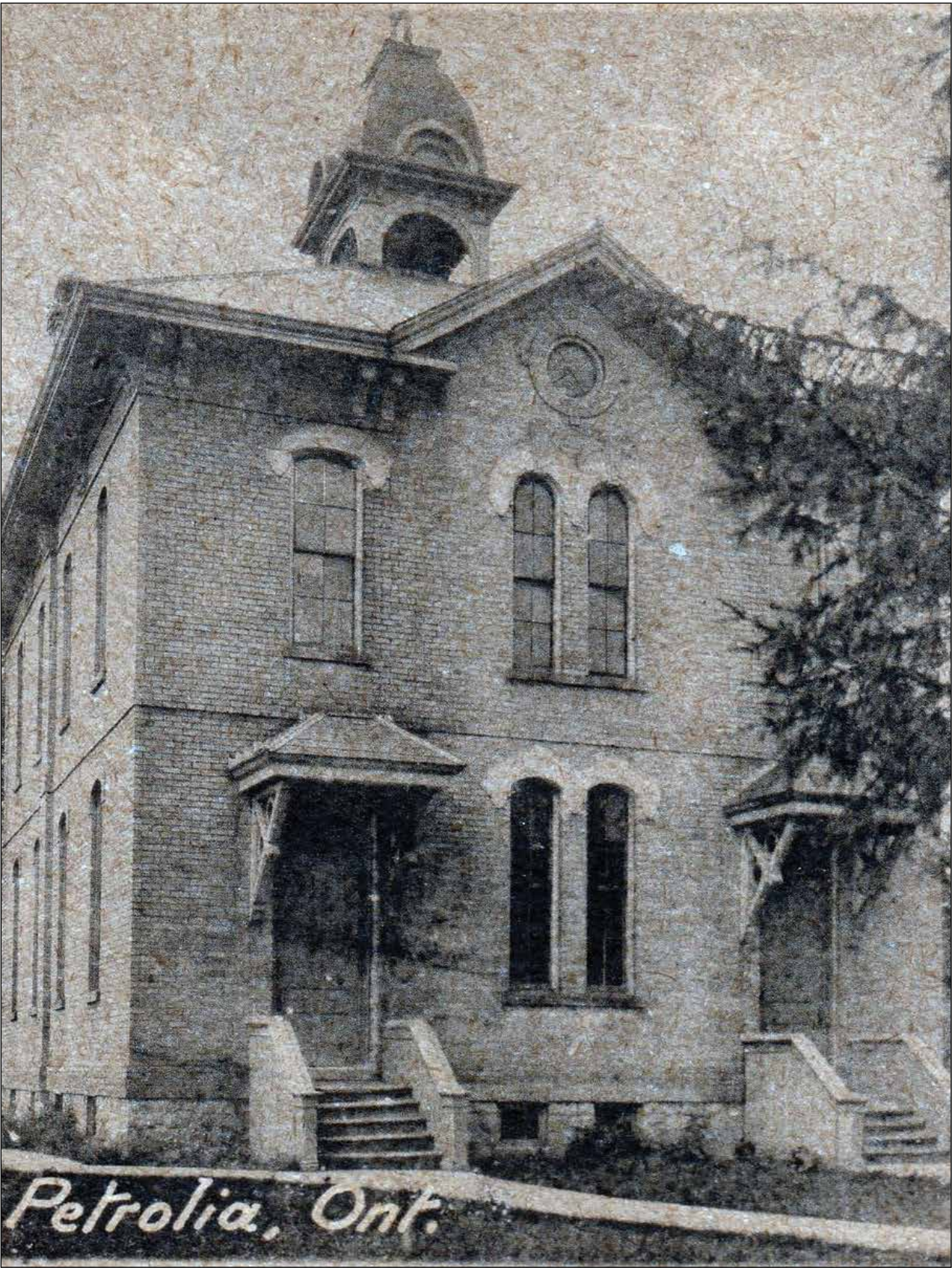
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You can also deliver letters to *The Independent* at 4156 Petrolia Line, Petrolia or drop them in the mail at *The Independent*, Petrolia, ON, N0N 1R0.

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



DAVE BURWELL POST CARD COLLECTION

This is an early photo of the Petrolia High School on Dufferin Street. The building is still seen among the buildings which now make up LCCVI.

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Canada

Opinion

Gleeson remained true to her hometown

EDITOR:
Petrolia has lost a wonderful lady. Mary Pat Gleeson passed away Saturday, January 30.
Several years ago, Pat served as Petrolia’s Recreation Director.
She then left Petrolia for a few years. Returning to her hometown as a true Hard Oil, she burst upon the scene. She was soon involved in many projects. She was a founding member

of Charlotte’s Task Force which was a major force in saving our Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital. Her interests in health care expanded and she was a driving force in the formation of Family Health. She contributed exemplary service as a member of Petrolia Council. I had the privilege of serving on Charlotte’s Task Force with Mary-Pat, so I was able to witness her energy and talents firsthand. If she

were feeling down, you never knew it because she would have a quick quip that would lighten the air.
They will know when she has arrived in Heaven. I trust that Petrolia can identify a suitable memorial for Mary-Pat.
May she rest in peace.
Norm Sutherland
Petrolia, ON

Ontario government should buy out for profit homes

EDITOR:
RE: *Calls to end for profit homes, Jan. 28, 2021*. Doctors for LTC Justice is absolutely correct.
I disagree with John Scotland when he said he balks at the suggestion by the doctors group (balk- hesitate or be unwilling to accept an idea or undertaking.) That in itself clearly identifies his problem in For Profit Homes.
They are in business to make money and satisfy shareholders.
When I was a county councillor I sat on the Long Term Care Committee. It was difficult at times working with the budget for the three homes but we did

it correctly.
Patient residents and staff first.
We cared for the seniors then and I am sure the committee and the County of Lambton still does.
Privately run long term care homes should not be for profit organizations.
John Scotland blames the Ontario Government. In part, he may be correct but it is about the money they receive. All long term care homes receive a set amount for each patient staying in the home.
The fact is that public run facilities can do it, even with unions, and private homes cannot. Why? They want to make a profit.

We have extended family in Europe and Scandinavia. I was told by our international daughter, a medical doctor in Stockholm, Sweden, that 85 per cent of the deaths from COVID-19 occurred in privately run long term care and publicly run facilities were at or near zero infections. The same results as occurred in Germany and France.
Lastly, Scotland says the Ontario Government cannot afford to take over private facilities. I say the Government of Ontario cannot afford not to do what is necessary for seniors.
Gordon Perry
Oil Springs, ON

The world won’t end with a few backyard coops

EDITOR:
RE; *PW chickens get pandemic reprieve, Jan. 28, 2021*. Oh no chickens; the world will come to an end!
I am amazed at the controversy in Ontario and in particular Lambton County against backyard chickens.
I was recently in Australia and my cousin lives in Brisbane suburb in a million plus home with a next door neighbor who has a legal chicken

coop.
We could sit on her deck and watch the chickens in their fenced in coop enjoying life and producing eggs. The coop was required to be kept in accordance with the municipal health guidelines and no roosters (he would be brought in for a conjugal visit).
In Petrolia, we live with backyards that have pools including ours, trampolines and assorted mechanical machines from kids battery driven

mini four-wheelers, dogs, cats and golfers.
Why a few chickens are a problem leaves us wondering why local councils react to any minority that becomes a squeaky wheel. For example the 50 km Oil City speed limit on Highway 21; that was implemented due to one complaint.

Bob Aldous
Petrolia, ON

Reader hopes bridge on Enniskillen trail will be fixed

EDITOR:
I was surprised to read about the new barriers put up to block the old rail trail between Lasalle and Churchill.
I, along with many others, have used the trail over the past year as we look for different places to exercise.
The bridge needs to be fixed so it’s

understandable that Enniskillen’s Council is concerned about safety and liability.
As the Verberne’s said in *The Independent’s* article, the frame is solid.
Hopefully council will investigate if it’s possible to access grant money for

bridge repairs.
If the bridge is fixed it would create an improved trail and better recreational opportunities.

Kevin Shaw
Petrolia, ON

COVID-19 creeps into Meadowview again with one staff case

Heather Wright
The Independent

There is another COVID-19 outbreak at Lambton Meadowview Villa in Petrolia.
Administrators said a staff member tested positive for the virus Thursday. Under provincial guidelines, an outbreak is declared when one resident or staff member tests positive for the fast moving virus.
“People living in the long-term care

home and their families were notified of the positive case today, and informed that as a result, Lambton Public Health has declared a COVID-19 outbreak in the home,” said Jane Joris, general manager of long term care for Lambton County, which runs the home.
“The positive case was detected through routine staff testing, which is conducted as part of the home’s regular surveillance protocol.
Residents were tested after the new

case was found and any residents who may have been in close contact with this employee are in isolation as a precaution,” Joris added in the news release.
This is the fourth outbreak at the home since the pandemic began in March.
The last was earlier this month. In each case, the COVID-19 cases were limited to one or two staff members at the home.

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More Letters to the Editor on Page Six

Opinion

Municipal budgets need to look to the future

EDITOR: I personally am not excited about paying more taxes, especially when we see blatant waste, questionable behaviour, and cash-for-life gold plated pensions given out on our behalf. I’m just not that giving of a person. But despite the higher levels of government, let’s seriously consider our blue-collar municipal government property taxes and where we may be heading after COVID-19.

Municipal level government is usually our most responsive form of government. We see the elected people who make the day-to-day decisions, often deal one-on-one with township staff, personally encounter the items of budget in the roads we drive on, the drainage we need for crops, the volunteer fire services and policing to name a few. So much of our daily lives are affected by what the local government does, or doesn’t do, for us and we pay the bill.

In little Dawn-Euphemia, I have been mostly proud of practical, common sense approaches to taking care of our business. Rural road quality has been a showcase to many throughout Ontario, but there is a serious, terribly serious problem on the horizon.

We have lost population steadily and surely over the last 30 plus years so we are now under 2,000 people. Things cost more every year. The wishes of local residents don’t matter as much when provincial standards are imposed over practical local needs. Liability concerns outweigh intelligent and innovative approaches to taking care of our community. Previous provincial governments progressively and substantially cut our Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund, hurting our budget. Worst yet, higher levels of government have been on an unbelievable spending period versus revenue in the noble pursuit of minimizing the COVID-19 damages, but that bill is still in the mail.

We are going to face heated, real debates, about spending as our piggy bank squeals bloody loudly. I suggest that we are near the “what do we want, and what do we need” questions; there simply won’t be enough to

go around. So, prompting me to write this are the quiet gossip rumblings of “let’s keep our taxes at zero increase due to COVID-19.” Sounds so sweet, I imagine as sweet as some snake asking someone years ago to bite the apple! The real discussion ought to be longer term planning. We had decades of a successful care-taker approach in little Dawn-Euphemia, don’t rock the boat, change isn’t good, if it ain’t broke - but the truth is, those days have hit the wall and a zero-tax increase may well mean 10 per cent next year and again after municipal elections in 2022.

In Dawn-Euphemia, we have not kept up with local development needs to maintain a workable revenue, so our taxes must rise for the remaining residents, they will have to go up or spending (largely out of local control due to prescribed must do’s from higher government) must be cut hard. With provincial cuts imminent due to their own spending, don’t hold your breath for more provincial cash. Farmers facing soaring carbon taxes among other serious oncoming challenges are ill equipped to unilaterally shoulder this financial load.

I would encourage every resident to wake up, right now, pay close attention and be realistic to what is actually going on. Question all of it, hold established leaders to account for where we are today, thank them for their past service, but demand the plan for how we are going to survive this potentially devastating financial tax tsunami on the horizon. Be smarter than to fall for sugar words and look at the serious challenge on our doorsteps. For myself, we need, and always have needed right-sized growth to support our basic needs. Skip the polished answers we want, instead, seek the truth and get involved in the solution. What we’ve always done hasn’t prepared us for what’s next.

Would our talented, new, bright people please step up to the table now? We need you.

**Emery Huszka
Florence, ON**

Social media giants devastating local news

EDITOR: High-quality news and information have rarely been more valued in communities across this country. During the first and second waves of the coronavirus pandemic, Canadians have turned to their local news outlets to find out what they need to know to stay informed.

Those same local news organizations have never been so threatened with extinction. That’s because the sharp revenue drop resulting from COVID-19 has come on top of years of predation by Google and Facebook, which have cornered the market, in Canada and around the world, on consumer data and the digital advertising it earns.

That’s years of journalism and local reporting bleeding revenue, laying off journalists and driving coverage down, down, down. Since the beginning of the pandemic alone, 48 community newspapers have temporarily or permanently closed. Over 300 have closed in the last ten years.

Facebook and Google are true monopoly destroying a public good, not the water or air this time, but our democracy. Together the web giant own 80 per cent of Canada’s \$6 billion digital ad market, don’t pay

taxes, and employ less than 100 Canadians, none of them journalists.

News Media Canada, the umbrella group of Canada’s many publishers big and small, want something done before it’s too late. It released its report on the Levelling the Digital Playing Field, retelling the familiar story of a broken business model and the decline of news coverage.

Another report, another call to action. Will it go anywhere at all?

To take Heritage Minister Steven Guilbeault at his word, the federal government may force Google and Facebook to recycle some of those monopoly dollars into journalism.

The solution News Media Canada wants, and the minister has warmed to, comes from Australia, the boldest of all sovereign nations to take on the web giants.

The Australians have gone for the low hanging fruit: the undeniable fact that Google’s search engine and Facebook’s news feed are grabbing the publishers’ news content off the Internet without paying for it.

SEE SOCIAL MEDIA PG 7

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Dawn-Euphemia tax increase 2.8 per cent

Heather Wright
The Independent

Dawn-Euphemia taxpayers will be paying just under three per cent more for municipal property taxes.

Council passed its budget Monday. Originally Treasurer Scott Gawley prepared a document that would not increase taxes at all this year. But council voiced concern saying they would fall behind on things like repairing gravel roads in the community.

So Gawley added in another \$50,000 more for gravel. Another \$66,000 has been added to deal with any COVID-19 expenses. Mayor Al Broad voiced concern that pandemic restrictions may not be lifted for a while and then the rental fees for the Shetland Campground or the Dawn-Euphemia Community Centre would be reduced.

“We’re not done with this thing. By the sounds of things, with how they’re getting along with vaccines...it sounds like this is going to be delayed. There was some talk even that we may not get the COVID vaccines until mid 2021.”

There is also \$11,851 more for insurance increases.

“Insurance is still playing havoc with us and has been for the last, I’d say almost eight years, where we’re seeing big

increases in the liability part,” says Gawley.

There is also another \$44,438 in the budget to pay for a full time treasurer. Gawley, who’s part-time, will retire in 2021.

The budget now represents a 2.85 per cent increase on average. That’s about \$19 for every \$100,000 of assessed value. Farmland will see a \$4 increase for every \$100,000 of assessed value.

The four members of council present on the teleconference say increasing taxes slightly is the right thing to do.

“I was looking for a bare bone budget but you know, you guys talk sense into me,” Councillor Mark McGuire told councillors. “The bare bones might have jeopardized the future...but I think we’re doing the right thing by covering the future a little bit. And it’s still a pretty reasonable number.”

Councillor Jason Meyer agreed.

“A wise man once told me if you present me a zero per cent budget, that means you’re cutting and his name was William Bilton. He was a very smart man. And I’m glad that we’re taking this in the right direction.

“And we’re not going to be stabbing ourselves in the back for the next budget going into 2022,” says Meyer.

Meyer, McGuire, Councillor Ann Gray and Mayor Broad all voted in favour of the budget. Councillor Leslea Williams was not present for the vote.

OPP seize \$57,000 in drugs, arrest three

The Independent

Three Lambton County residents face drug charges after a raid in Brooke-Alvinston.

Lambton OPP says members of the street crime and canine unit as well as the emergency response team executed a warrant on Nauvoo Road in Brooke-Alvinston Jan. 28.

Police found methamphetamine, hydromorphone, cocaine, cannabis and a stolen lawn tractor from Oxford County. Police value the drugs and goods at around \$57,000.

Georges Doucet, 50, of Brooke-Alvinston, Angela Bain, 31, and Tyler Grusie, 39, of Warwick were arrested and charged with



six counts of possession of drugs for the purpose of trafficking, five counts of drug position, possession of property obtained by crime, and two counts of possession of cannabis for the purpose of selling.

The three have been released and will be back in court to answer to the charges.

Social media giants need to be reigned in

CON’T FROM PG 6

That way, they can attract you and I to their platforms, while they make billions selling our eyeballs to their advertisers.

The publishers, in Australia and around the globe, want Google and Facebook to pay for their content.

The Australian model sets up a collective bargaining regime between publishers and the web giants.

A stand-alone publisher can use the model to negotiate directly with Google and Facebook (good luck) or combine as a group for more bargaining power. The Australian model offers binding arbitration in case the web giants stonewall the bargaining, something as a labour leader I have seen powerful companies do from time to time.

Facebook’s Mark Zuckerberg has already responded by threatening to pull the plug on their Australian news feed altogether, something us labour leaders would call a lockout.

Google has more finesse than Zuckerberg but still insists they provide more value to publishers through public exposure of their product than the publishers’ content provides for Google.

But here’s the problem with the Australian

model: its focus on paying for content is missing the real abuse; cornering the digital advertising market around the globe. Their monopoly won’t end any time soon: the web giants can only be reigned in by American governments, and that effort has only just begun.

It may sound hopeless for Canada, but it isn’t. It just takes a little political courage.

Three years ago the federal government asked an expert panel to advise how Canadian media might survive the onslaught of global digital giants. The report in January 2020 proposed a news fund bankrolled by regular contributions from Facebook and Google, like a monopoly-licence fee that funnels dollars back into public journalism.

It’s not really a novel idea. We already have news funds on the go in Canada: the 150 year old Canadian Periodical Fund, the Federal Aid to Written Journalism program, and the Independent Local News Fund for non-network local television stations.

If journalism is essential to democracy, and it is, it’s time to go for the best Canadian solution we can find.

Jerry Dias,
National President, UNIFOR



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Citizens urge Petrolia not to turn woodlot to housing

Heather Wright
The Independent

Neighbours around a proposed development in Countryview Estate are urging councillors to maintain a 24 acre woodlot, even though the developer was given approval for housing in the area in 2007.

And some are accusing the town of stifling debate and hiding information about the development.

Petrolia held a second meeting on the zoning amendment which would change the land from significant woodlot to residential. There were so many speakers opposed to the plan in December, council scheduled another meeting.

But when Councillor Wade Deighton - who chaired the meeting - made it clear only people who had not voiced an opinion before would get to speak, there were some who were upset.

Norm Sutherland pointed out council came to power in 2018 promising openness but then held planning meetings at 5 pm when working people and families would have a hard time attending. He also thought limiting who spoke was unfair.

But his biggest concern was lack of access to reports about the proposed development. A study done for the Ministry of the Environment on the woodlot was not made available to the public.

“Several reports associated with this proposal are dated and are only able to be accessed through freedom of information. Does that make things open and transparent and easy? No. Makes it difficult or being closed down,” said Sutherland.

“It would be really helpful to know what’s happening here. It just doesn’t - if I can use this language - smell right.”

Clerk Mandi Pearson said provincial regulations prohibit the town from releasing documents - even if they’re related to the development - if they haven’t first appeared on a public agenda.

The developers, Bob Leaper who is in charge now, and Louis Bratanek, who owned the development when the 2007 draft plan of the subdivision was passed, disagreed the process was not open to the public.

Both say all the regulations were followed throughout the process. Bratanek added a local farmer who is objecting - Greg Racher - should have known what was going on, since Bratanek sold his father part of the land behind the trees in 2004. He told him at the time he was putting houses there but could not use the extra farm land.

Leaper says he has gone out of his way with considerable expense to continue to develop the woodlot.

“Even though the 24 acres of woodlot was zoned residential, it was given special zoning restrictions so that the proper measures would be taken before any clearing could begin. The subdivision was always designed so that the majority of bush lots would have a 50 to 60 foot buffer zone of trees remaining on each latitude down the center of the plan. The treeline will be 120 feet across fully and seven acres of trees will remain intact,” he told councillors, adding he’d already agreed to pay \$72,000 for the trees which would be cut down but not replanted.

“For more than two years we have

worked with the Town of Petrolia, the County of Lambton, the Ministry of the Environment, St. Clair Regional Conservation Authority, ... we have hired foresters, biologists, engineers, lawyers and surveyors, we’ve conducted archaeological surveys and multiple soil tests, we have invested over \$400,000 for the future development of the remaining 129 lots. We’ve met the conditions to the draft plan, a plan that is a promise and a commitment from the town and county that we have the right to develop the property if we meet the requirements, we have and we will continue to do so.”

The developer seemed to have the backing of the county planning staff. Ken Melanson, Manager - Planning and Development Services, said the approval to remove the trees given in 2007 should stand.

“There is an approved draft plan of subdivision on the site. Nothing that occurs tonight or through this application changes that because the decision had been made a number of years ago. That approval still stands and has been extended and remains valid.”

Former Petrolia Councillor, Liz Welsh, disagreed, saying it could be changed at any time.



While many neighbours spoke against removing the trees, there were supporters as well.

Joe Gorzeman told council he “likes environmental stewardship...(but) driving this town forward with economic development is the way to go.”

Council will review the matter at a future meeting.

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Township of Enniskillen
Notice of Passing of an Interim Control By-Law

Take Notice that the Council of the Township of Enniskillen has passed By-law 8 of 2021 on the 18th day of January, 2021, under Section 38 of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, as amended.

The Purpose and Effect of the By-law is to conduct a study of the current policies and regulations applicable to the growing, production and processing of cannabis, including the production and manufacturing of cannabis-based items within the Township of Enniskillen. The study is expected to make recommendations regarding the need for amendments to the Township's Official Plan and/or Zoning By-law


The By-law will remain in effect for one year. However, the Council of the Township of Enniskillen has the authority to extend the period during which the By-law will be in effect to a total period not exceeding two years.

No Key Map has been provided as the By-law applies to all lands within the Township of Enniskillen.

For more information about this matter, please contact the Municipal Offices at 4465 Rokeby Line, R.R. 1, Petrolia, ON during regular office hours.

Dated at the Township of Enniskillen this 29th Day of January, 2021.

Duncan McTavish
Administration-Clerk
Township of Enniskillen
4465 Rokeby Line R.R.1
Petrolia, ON N0N 1R0
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Fax: (519) 882-3335



Integrity Commission vote ‘inappropriate’ says Armstrong

Heather Wright
The Independent

Brooke-Alvinston Councillor Jamie Armstrong says a conflict of interest complaint should never have been discussed at council.

In January, municipal councillors agreed to call in the Integrity Commissioner to decide if councillors who were on community groups could be in conflict when dealing with issues involving the groups at council.

Armstrong has been in the middle of the debate about building a pavilion at the Brooke-Alvinston-Inwood Community Centre. He advocated for it as

the head of the Alvinston Optimists building committee and pushed it forward after being elected to council.

There was a written complaint to council about Armstrong and Deputy Mayor Frank Nemcek - who is also an Optimist member - voting on the project. That led to the Integrity Commissioner being called in.

But Armstrong - who was involved in the remote meeting but unable to take part because of a poor internet connection - said council shouldn’t have discussed the issue and passed a motion publicly.

He says it should be dealt with under the council’s code of conduct.

“We threw our bylaws right out the window when we did this. Because in reality, this conflict of interest complaint shouldn’t even have made it to the council meeting, because the proper protocol was not followed,” he told council Thursday. “There’s no point in having a code of conduct if we’re just going to go around this in a circle. Your response should have been to the people who called in on the phone, bring your \$100 in, fill out the form, send it to the Integrity Commissioner,” Armstrong told Mayor Dave Ferguson.

Ferguson agreed any future complaints would be handled that way.

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No jail time for man in St. Clair child assault

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

Joseph “Ethan” Sylvester plead guilty to assaulting a four year-old child but won’t go to jail.

Sylvester, 26, appeared in Sarnia Court Jan. 26 to answer for an incident last August – one which Crown attorney Nila Mulpuru described as “a serious assault on a vulnerable person.”

The St. Clair Township man had been in a relationship with a woman for two-and-a-half years. One summer afternoon, the woman went to run errands, leaving Sylvester to watch after her kids. She returned to find her four year-old son with a number of injuries, including scratches on his forehead and cheek, a busted lip and a mark on his eye.

When she asked Sylvester what happened, he answered “I happened.”

The woman left with her kids the next day and police were called. In conversations with the victim, he described Sylvester as his attacker. “He hit me with his hand,” said the child, adding “Ethan is the only one that hurt me and had smacked me so many times.”

Defense lawyer David Stoesser explained his client had expressed concern before the incident about being left alone with the child. Sylvester had told the woman the youngster was destroying his stuff and he was unable to control him.

A joint submission from Stoesser and Mulpuru suggested a conditional discharge with one year of probation. This means if Sylvester stays out of

trouble for three years he won’t have a criminal record.

“I have some concerns with respect to the imposition of a conditional discharge,” said Justice Krista Leszczynski. “It involved an act of violence toward a young and vulnerable victim who was in his care, and injuries were sustained by that child as a result.”

Asked for more reasoning to justify their position, Mulpuru says Sylvester has a high prospect of rehabilitation. Stoesser says the child’s mother was in support of the proposal, and that she doesn’t want the incident to “ruin his life.” The couple – though separated – share a child together from before the relationship ended.

Leszczynski eventually agreed to the submission, provided there were a number of probation terms. Sylvester cannot contact or go near the woman or her kids, except through a third-party to discuss matters involving their shared child.

He must also take counselling for parenting and anger management, submit a DNA sample, and observe a five year weapons ban.

“Mr. Sylvester was left in a position which he identified was one he ought not to have been left in,” says Leszczynski.

“He is amenable to counselling, which will go a long way in preventing him from committing any similar type of offense in the future.”

“That should not be taken in any way to minimize your conduct in the commission of this offense,” Leszczynski told Sylvester in her parting words.

Vision outbreak likely not caused by variant

Heather Wright
The Independent

It doesn’t appear a variant of COVID-19 was the cause of a fast moving outbreak at Vision Rest Home.

Lambton’s Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Sudit Ranade, says initial testing failed to turn up either the variant first found in the UK or South Africa.

All but one person who lives at the Sarnia rest home was diagnosed with COVID-19 in just 17 days. Fourteen staff members are also COVID-19 positive. Two people have died there.

Heather Martin, the CAO of the non-profit home, told *The Independent* “very rapid spread occurred at the onset of this outbreak.”

Ranade says because the virus moved so quickly through the home, he asked Public Health Ontario to test for the variants which spread the virus quicker. A very small number of the tests are reexamined. In Vision’s case, Ranade says three samples were retested.

“I think at least one of them has come back negative, and I’m not sure where the other ones are but if one came back negative, the likelihood all of them are negative is probably quite high.”

It’s not clear how the virus got into the rest home, but Ranade says as is often the case in rest homes, the staff and residents are “very social” and that meant lots of interactions. And he says rest homes generally have less staff, so each person would take on more tasks meaning they would have more contact with the residents, which could have also led to the rapid spread at Vision.

Three other long term care homes are also in outbreak right now. Lambton Meadowview Villa in Petrolia has one staff member who tested positive for COVID-19. Village on the St. Clair has 28 residents and 14 staff members who are COVID-19 positive. Three people have died there. Twin Lakes Terrace has 18 residents and five staff who have tested positive. One person has died there.

HAZARDOUS ROADS



ALEX KURIAL/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO

Blowing snow made driving difficult on many Lambton County roads Tuesday. Here, a driver makes their way through the blowing and drifting snow on Petrolia Line near Forest Road.

STAY STANDING THIS Winter!

Slippery sidewalks, driveways and icy parking lots can be risk factors for falls in winter. Avoid a bad fall with these top tips!

WALK LIKE A PENGUIN

The penguin waddle helps you keep a centre of gravity over the front leg as you step, instead of split between the legs. Short strides also help keep your centre of gravity, which help avoid falls. Don't keep your hands in your pockets! Walk slowly, with short strides and try to land your steps with a flat foot.

KEEP WALKWAYS CLEAR

Shovel snow and scrape ice as soon as possible. Liberally sprinkle ice melt product or sand onto walkways to provide foot traction and to make sure surfaces don't turn to ice. This is not only protects you and your family, but also postal carries and others when they're walking around your property. Where possible install or use handrails for extra support.

TAKE ALL PRECAUTIONS

Be extra cautious walking after a storm. Tap your foot on partially icy areas to see if it is slippery. Hold a railing while walking on icy steps. Stay steady by wearing proper winter footwear. lightweight boots with a thick, non-slip tread sole will provide good traction on ice. If a sidewalk is icy down the missile, walk on the snow beside it to avoid slips.

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Annual General Meeting

Notice of
Brooke-Alvinston Agricultural Society
Annual General Meeting

Tuesday February 9th, 2021
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EVERYONE WELCOME

WARWICK TOWNSHIP COUNCIL ARE LOOKING FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES/BOARDS

ALL written submissions must be submitted by **12 Noon on Fri., Feb 19th, 2021.**
Members shall be a resident and/or ratepayer in Warwick Township.

- WARWICK TOWNSHIP CEMETERY BOARD (2 MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC)**
The Warwick Township Cemetery Board is responsible for providing advice and input on Cemetery services and assisting in the management of all cemeteries within Warwick Township. (Watford Cemetery, Bethel Cemetery, Warwick Cemetery plus several 'inactive' cemeteries)
- COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT and LAND DIVISION COMMITTEE (APPOINTED MEMBERS ALSO SERVE ON THE PROPERTY STANDARDS APPEAL COMMITTEE) (1 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC)**
This is a Committee established by municipal council under the *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13 S.44(1)* and is responsible for making decisions on Minor Variance applications and Land Division - severance applications.
- COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (C.I.P.) COMMITTEE (1 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC)**
The C.I.P. Committee is responsible for receiving applications under the Community Improvement Plan (eg. façade improvements, murals, etc.) and making recommendation to Council.

For further information, or a copy of the Terms of Reference, contact Heather Willemse, Deputy Clerk, at hwillemse@warwicktownship.ca or by calling 519-849-3926. Written submissions, stating your interest, experience and/or qualifications, must be submitted by the above date and note the committee name on application.

Submissions will be accepted by mailing
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www.warwicktownship.ca

Calls for Gladu to resign over petition

Heather Wright
The Independent

Sarnia Lambton MP Marilyn Gladu is facing criticism from a number of churches after advancing a petition on conversion therapy.

Gladu told *The Independent* in an email that she presented the petition Dec. 9 in the House of Commons at the request of a constituent. It said the federal government should either amend or scrap Bill C-6, which would ban conversion therapy - a practice already illegal in Ontario. Gladu, in her statement to the House said Bill C-6 “prevents (churches from helping) people who, of their own free will, want counseling, advice or prayer about their sexual confusion.”

Gladu had said the bill was supported by the majority of her riding’s 91 churches. The petition bore 168 names which have not been released.

But a number of church leaders in the region have written letters saying their church was not consulted and if they were, they would not have signed the petition.

“We continue to be concerned that you choose to speak for the majority of Sarnia-Lambton churches without fully understanding that there are many communities of faith that not only strive to create a safe, welcoming space for LGBTQ individuals but seek systemic change,” wrote Rev. Deena Gibson and Greg Bond of the Brigden United Church.

Courtright and Sixth Line United Churches also weighed in. “While you have stated that your petition carried the support of the majority of churches in Sarnia-Lambton, our voice was never sought nor considered. We affirm the value and dignity of all people and strongly denounce any practice or efforts that attempt to change a person’s sexual or gender identity. It’s not only our faith that guides us to this position but the overwhelming evidence of the psychologically damaging nature of these practices,” write Pastor Gabrielle Heidinger and Congregant Reid William Eyre.

And while Gladu stated the petition was brought to her to present, a letter on stationary from Gladu’s office dated May 27, is circulating on Twitter. In it, Gladu tries to enlist local churches to sign the petition. “I am writing you today because I am extremely concerned about an attack on our freedom of religion, conscience, expression, belief and our ability to speak in the public square,” she writes.

She goes on to say the bill would make it a criminal offense to be involved in any way in what is called conversion therapy. Gladu draws the conclusion that pastors wouldn’t even be able to counsel or pray for people under the new law.

Gladu’s office didn’t return a request for an answer if the petition was actually started by the MP.

By Feb. 1, Gladu posted a brief statement on her website. It reads “In response to many inquiries, let me clarify my position on Bill C-6: I vehemently oppose conversion therapy, and support the LGBTQ+ community. I support freedom of religion and speech.”

Meantime, the local NDP provincial riding association started its own petition on the issue condemning Gladu’s stand.

And a petition on Change.org calls for the MP’s resignation.

Tyler Whetham’s petition says in part “Marilyn lied in Parliament, to her constituents, and is hiding behind the idea of religious freedom to promote conversion therapy. The damaging effects of conversion therapy, particularly in youth, is very well known.

“Gladu has eroded her community’s trust that she represents the people of Sarnia-Lambton. Her support for amending Bill C-6 shows that she does not support the LGBTQ+ community, and is actively seeking ways to allow religious leaders to cause further harm to an already vulnerable population. Marilyn needs to resign for lying and for seeking support for her own ideology that fails against the LGBTQ+ community.”

At press time, 473 people had signed the online petition.

Roundabout accident ‘messed up’ driver’s life

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

Roundabouts are a notoriously confusing concept for many drivers. But one Sarnia man’s attempt to tackle the intersection by going straight up the middle left him with a busted car, lasting injuries, and now a criminal record.

Curtis Marks, 21, approached the divider northbound on Lakeshore Road at Mandaumin July 19, and instead of turning he blew through the centre with such force that his Nissan flew into the air. It smashed down in the roundabout wiping out several signs before crashing into a ditch and coming to rest against the trees.

A Sarnia police officer heard the crash and came to the scene. EMS and fire crews were able to remove Marks – the vehicle’s lone occupant – who had lacerations to his face and was drifting in and out of consciousness.

This is when OPP officers noticed a strong smell of alcohol on Marks, so an officer rode with him to the hospital. As soon as Marks was cleared by the ER doctor he was arrested for drunk driving. He was given breath tests at the hospital which returned blood alcohol readings of .190 and .170.

Defense lawyer Nick Cake was blunt about his client’s conduct. “He offers of course no excuse, and realizes – for lack

of a better word – the pure stupidity of his actions,” says Cake.

“It was a big mistake to make. It’s one that he regrets, and it’s one that he is here before the court taking accountability for,” Cake says. Marks suffered minor hearing loss in the accident.

Cake asked for a \$2,000 fine and one year driving ban. But Crown attorney Suzanne LaSha says the facts call for elevated punishments. “What takes it above the \$2,000 level... is the severity of the accident, and the injuries that were incurred by Mr. Marks. Those consequences were severe,” says LaSha as she asked for a \$3,000 fine.

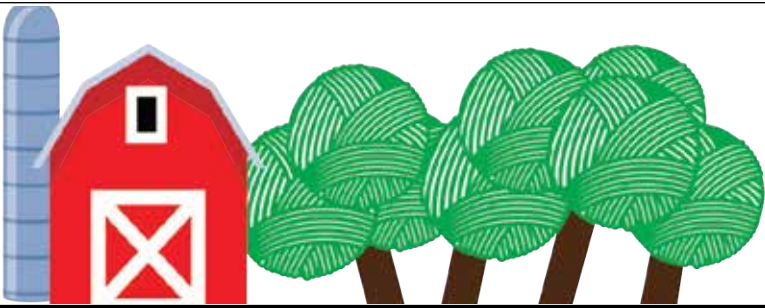
LaSha also argued a longer driving ban should be considered, suggesting 18 months.

Marks, appearing by telephone, spoke of the personal costs of the crash. “I know it’s a huge mistake to make. Everyone says they wish they could go and relive those nights, and I really wish I could. It’s messed up my whole life.”

Justice Krista Leszczynski was concerned about the high alcohol levels, but took into consideration his guilty plea and ordered a \$2,300 fine and one year driving ban.

“You frankly are very lucky that you did walk away without more serious injuries, and without hurting or killing someone else,” she says.

- The Independent



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Ministry steps up farm inspections

Heather Wright
The Independent

Farmers who hire temporary foreign workers to bring in Ontario’s crops will face more scrutiny this year.

Labour Minister, and Lambton-Kent-Middlesex MPP, Monte McNaughton says the ministry is expanding inspections to farms and greenhouses to check COVID-19 protocols.

Ministry officials say 650 Ontario farms hire 10 or more migrant workers each year. Right now, there are less than 1,000 people working in the province but by the spring that number will grow to over 20,000.

Last spring, nearly 1,800 workers, who often live in bunkhouses with between 10 and 20 people, were infected with COVID-19 on the farms.

It led the ministry to start enforcing COVID-19 rules, inspecting 1,000 farms in 2020 and issuing 400 orders on the farms.

“We want to get out proactively ensuring that farms have PPE,” says McNaughton.

“We want to ensure that physical distancing is going to be in place, that everything is sanitized, and make really a concerted effort to ensure that COVID-19 doesn’t enter these workplaces.”

McNaughton says the proactive inspections - once the government stepped up - did work.

“Last year, when the Ministry of Labor inspectors went out to farms proactively 98 per cent of the farms didn’t report any cases of COVID-19. So we know that these inspections are helpful,” he says.

But when outbreaks occurred, public health officials often traced the source to the quarters the temporary foreign work-

ers lived. In many bunkhouses, there is not enough space to be socially distanced - one of the keys to keep COVID-19 from spreading.

McNaughton says the Labour Ministry is working with the federal government and local health units to ensure the bunkhouses are also safe.

“It really is a concerted effort on behalf of all levels of government. So the federal government is responsible for the temporary foreign workers program, including the living quarters of migrant workers. And they’re now working in conjunction with public health to inspect bunkhouses,” he says.

“I am speaking regularly with the federal government - every other day - with the federal minister responsible.

They made a significant change this year, as well with the testing regime. Now, migrant workers coming to Ontario have to be tested within three days of coming here. And they literally go from the airport, into quarantine for 14 days. And again, that’s all under the federal government’s jurisdiction. But that’s the big change that they made.”

McNaughton hopes the concerted effort will protect the health of the workers.

During the first wave of the pandemic, Lambton Public Health went out to local farms with migrant workers and did COVID-19 testing. There were no positive cases in 2020 in Lambton’s migrant worker population.

In January, High Park Farms had a COVID-19 outbreak in one of the bunkhouses for its temporary foreign workers. Eight people working at the cannabis greenhouse in Enniskillen were ill. That outbreak was declared over this week.

No cat bylaw for Plympton-Wyoming

Heather Wright
The Independent

Plympton-Wyoming doesn’t seem to be ready to licence cats.

Rod Catford came to council Jan. 27, asking for cats to be included in the pet bylaw. He was prompted by a recent dispute with his own neighbour which he was able to resolve.

“I think the irritants and nuisance characteristics of pet cats comes up quite often. Over the years, I have heard several complaints expressed about pet cats,” he told council.

“I think people would rather put up with the problem than endanger their relations with their neighbours. But we should not be put in that position. Good fences make good neighbours, and in this case the “fence” should be erected by the municipality and it should take the form of a by-law.”

While councillors agreed cats could become an irritant, none seemed to think including cats in a bylaw would work.

Instead, council instructed staff to include an article in the town newsletter to remind residents to continue to be good pet owners and make sure their pets were under their control at all times.

Three charged after St. Clair theft

The Independent

Three people from the Wallaceburg area are facing charges after police stopped a suspicious car.

Thursday, around 8:20 am, residents called Lambton OPP saying there was a suspicious vehicle in the St. Clair Township area.

The same vehicle had been seen in the area the day before and it was suspected the people inside had taken items from a nearby

business.

Officers stopped the vehicle on Highway 40 and saw stolen property in it.

The people inside were arrested and the property was returned to its owner.

Miranda Boles, 34 and Shawn Prohney, 35, both of Wallaceburg and Neejig Shognosh, 33, of Walpole Island, have all been charged with theft under \$5,000 and possession of stolen property. They were released to return to court later.

Footprints in the snow lead to arrest

Lambton OPP on patrol in Dawn-Euphemia followed footprints in the snow to find two people inside a vacant house.

OPP were on patrol on Cairo Road around 1:30 am Tuesday when they found a vehicle parked on the side of the road.

They followed the footprints in the snow to a nearby vacant house where they could see

the home had been broken into.

Police found two people inside.

Kyle Lockyer, 31, of Dawn-Euphemia and Heidi DeHoog, 40, of Bothwell have been charged with break and enter, possession of break in tools, possession of stolen property, and possession of a prohibited drug – methamphetamine.

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NEWS

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WINTER MAINTENANCE NOTICE

Snow Removal

- Under the Highway Traffic Act Section 181 - Deposit of snow on Roadway, states that “No person shall deposit snow or ice on a roadway without permission in writing to do so from the Ministry of Transportation or the road authority responsible for the maintenance of the road.”
- This generally applies to the snow that accumulates in laneways from precipitation and from private or municipal snow plowing operations, those who insist on plowing snow from private property onto public roads can be fined

Overnight Parking

- Residents are reminded there is no overnight parking on Town streets between 2:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.
- This allows for the Town’s Road Crews to plow the roads safely and efficiently, we ask that you please abide by the by-law and be considerate of the road crews when they are out doing their best to keep our roads open and in safe condition

Parking on roadway

- Under the Highway Traffic Act Section 170.

Vehicles interfering with traffic

(12) Despite the other provisions of this section, no person shall park or stand a vehicle on a highway in such a manner as to interfere with the movement of traffic or the clearing of snow from the highway. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8, s. 170 (12).

Sidewalks

- Under By-Law Business owners are required to maintain the front area of their storefront, this includes the removal of snow
- The Sidewalk Plow will make its way through Town once permissible, Roads are the priority for Works Crew once they are clear Sidewalks

Sporting Equipment

- Please ensure all sporting equipment ie: hockey nets, basketball nets are removed from the curb & roadway

Your co-operation is appreciated

Mike Thompson
Director of Operations

Driving tests booking into 2022 in Lambton

Pam Wright
Local Journalism Initiative

There is growing frustration for prospective drivers as the wait times to get a road test now stretch into 2022 in Lambton.

It’s one of the communities facing long waits after hundreds of driving tests were cancelled in 2020 and 2021 during provincial COVID-19 lockdowns.

Jennifer Blackbird is one of the people caught in the long line. She will have waited 13 months by the time she gets in the car with a Drive Test adjudicator.

“This is crazy,” the Walpole Island resident says.

Bad timing accounts for some of Blackbird’s problem. She attempted to make an appointment for her G2 test in March 2020, just as the province went into the first lockdown.

The first available road test was eight months later on Dec. 1. When Blackbird arrived at Chatham Drive Test, her test was cancelled because of bad weather.

When she rebooked the next appointment was five months away. “It was infuriating,” Blackbird says, adding taking a day off of work was costly.

The 24 year-old, who works in Dresden full-time, faces a daily 70 kilometres round trip commute. She pays around \$40 a day to get to and from work.

Blackbird wants people whose tests were cancelled prioritized, not kicked to the back of the line.

“I don’t understand why they can’t give you access to a priority list or a cancellation list.”

The Independent has found at least three others whose tests have been cancelled since Boxing Day 2020. The average wait time for a test is an additional five to six months. That’s on top of the four to six months they’ve already been waiting.

Because they are located in rural communities where there is no access to transportation, the lives of the people waiting for tests are suspended as they can’t work or go to school without their G2.

The Ministry of Transportation says 79,000 road tests have been cancelled in Ontario since Dec. 26, 2020.

It’s unknown how many were cancelled in the first lockdown.

Those who have their G2 road tests cancelled receive an email telling them they need to re-book the test themselves. Potential drivers have to go back into the online booking system on a first come, first serve basis.

The Independent has reached out to SERCO, the company that has been running Drive Test since 2001, when the service was privatized by the Progressive Conservative government.

Communications spokeswoman Mary Dane, says Drive Test plans to offer additional road tests in the future to address the current backlog but cannot give dates in light of current pandemic lockdown protocols.

In a lengthy email Dane says the “health and safety of Ontarians remains our top priority,” which is why Drive Test has introduced the strict protocols and halted the tests.

Dane says extra tests will be added to “ensure that customers with existing bookings are not disadvantaged in terms of future road test bookings,

should it become necessary to cancel their existing bookings.”

However, Dane did not specifically respond to the question why Drive Test has not prioritized cancelled bookings.

She does say in the email “due to a high demand for road test appointments, we are unable to prioritize customers with cancelled appointments.”

It’s been reported there are third party websites that book Drive Test G2 road tests for a fee.

Dane confirms this is true, adding that the province is working with Drive Test to solve the problem.

Another complication factor that came to light last year is that aspiring drivers from then Greater Toronto Area “red” zone were coming to smaller centres such as Chatham and Lambton to do their road tests, making long lines even longer and taking spots from local people.

That practice was put to an end after a public outcry.


Smaller Ontario centres where COVID-19 was less prevalent continued to operate, but Drive Test centres were closed in pandemic hot spots.

Dane does not give specifics as to when the additional staff will be trained and added.

According to the Drive Test website there is a current six-month wait for G2 tests at the Chatham Drive Test and no spots available in 2021 at the Sarnia Drive Test centre.

However, this was neither confirmed or denied by SERCO when questioned.

Currently, commercial licensing road tests continue throughout the province at Drive Test sites, as this is deemed an essential service.



The Corporation of The Village of Oil Springs

Public Works Labourer

(SUMMER YOUTH POSITION)

The Village of Oil Springs is now accepting applications for a full-time summer youth position as **Public Works Labourer**, for the period May 10 – August 27, 2021.

This position is subject to receiving funding from Canada Summer Jobs, therefore applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Is between the ages 15 to 30 years of age (inclusive) at the start of employment;
- Is a Canadian citizen, permanent resident or whom refugee protection status has been conferred under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act; and
- Legally entitled to work according to relevant provincial legislation and regulations.

A valid G Driver's License is required.

Experience with Microsoft Excel and Word would be an asset.

The Village of Oil Springs is a unique community steeped in history and located in the central part of Lambton County. The Public Works Labourer will gain valuable experience in all aspects of municipal public works operations.

This position offers a wage of \$15.00/hour for 35 hours per week. The deadline to apply is Friday, March 19, 2021. Interested applicants may submit their resumes with a cover letter to the attention of:

Lynda Thornton, Clerk-Treasurer
Village of Oil Springs
4591 Oil Springs Line, Box 22
Oil Springs, ON N0N 1P0
Email to: clerk@oilsprings.ca

The Village of Oil Springs is committed to providing accommodations for people with disabilities and will make accommodations if required. We thank all applicants for their interest, however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted. In accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, personal information is collected under the authority of the Municipal Act and will be used for the purpose of candidate selection.

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Man protecting his cat gets conditional discharge

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

When James Willan felt his feline friend was under attack he didn’t hesitate to rush to its defense.

But a Sarnia Court ruled his method of drawing a firearm on the perceived offender crossed a line.

The incident took place last summer during a late night garbage run at a Roger St. apartment block. A man was taking waste to the outdoor bin around 11 pm when he saw a wandering cat. This made the man upset and he hurled his bag of garbage at the animal.

Willan saw this and came outside with a gun. He pointed it at the man which caused him to run away and call police. Officers came and arrested Willan. The firearm was recovered, which turned out to be a BB gun.

During Willan’s Jan. 21 sentencing Crown attorney David Rows felt a suspended sentence and a year of probation was appropriate. “It’s a bit puzzling to see someone who’s managed to make their way through life and not have a criminal record to date [do this],” he says of the 55 year-old Willan.

“I can appreciate that Mr. Willan probably wasn’t happy to see what he perceived to be inappropriate conduct toward a cat. But there’s

obviously better ways to address this,” says Rows.

Willan, representing himself, says he was very stressed at the time, and grieving over lost family members. But he admitted to overreacting.

“I wasn’t meaning any malice, I just meant to try and scare the guy from hurting my animal. That was all I was intending,” says Willan. “I apologize for the way I handled it.”

After listening to the facts and Willan’s explanation, Justice Krista Leszczynski decided to impose a conditional discharge instead of the suggested suspended sentence. This means Willan will remain without a criminal record.

Leszczynski’s reasons for the more lenient sentence included “the fact that you committed the offense as a result of (the man) throwing a bag of garbage at your cat, your indication that while you regret your actions, you have the insight that you did so as a result of a number of stressors on you at the time, your obvious remorse... and that you come before the court without any criminal record.”

Willan’s 12 month probation terms include staying away from the man and counselling sessions for stress management and grief issues. He also received a 10 year weapons ban and must forfeit his BB gun.

- *The Independent*

Dresden man faces charges after Confederation Line crash

A Dresden man is facing charges after an accident on Confederation Line in Warwick Township.

Lambton OPP were called to the area Feb. 1, around 3:15 pm for a two-vehicle accident.

Police found one of the vehicles had been the subject of a traffic complaint in the area a few minutes before.

Richard McGuire, 32, of

Dresden faces seven charges including operation of a vehicle while prohibited, dangerous operation of a vehicle, and driving while under suspension.

McGuire is in custody.



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:

R. Scott Gawley, CPA, CGA
Treasurer
The Corporation of the Township of Dawn-Euphemia
4591 Lambton Line
RR#4
Dresden, ON N0P 1M0
(519) 692-5148

Sports

Brigden’s Fulcher recalled by Red Wings to taxi squad

Barry Wright
The Independent

Up until a few days ago, Kaden Fulcher was preparing for the puck to drop on the new American Hockey League season this Friday with the Grand Rapids Griffins, the top affiliate of the Detroit Red Wings. But his mental focus changed Monday when he was called up by the Wings to be part of Detroit’s taxi squad at least for the time being.

“They haven’t really said anything,” says the Brigden native when asked if he expects to see any in-game action with the Winged Wheel during his stint with the big club. “You never really know.”

Whether it’s ultimately with the Wings or with the Griffins, Fulcher is looking for a bounce back season following an injury-riddled campaign in 2019-20 when he only appeared in two games with Toledo of the ECHL. After surgery a year ago for a nagging injury, the 22 year-old is raring to go out and prove he belongs among the

top goaltending prospects in the Detroit organization.

“I did a lot of work over the summer,” said the former OHL champion with the Hamilton Bulldogs who was originally drafted by the Sarnia Sting in 2014.

“I just want to go to the rink every day, work hard, and be a good teammate.”

He made his NHL debut in a relief role against the Buffalo Sabres in April 2019.

The Wings embark on a six-game road swing this weekend with a pair of games in Tampa Bay on Friday and Sunday and while it may be a long shot, the Lambton Jr. Sting alumni thinks it would be something to be able to go one-on-one with ex-Sting sniper Steven Stamkos of the Lightning during one of those two contests.

When it comes to world class goaltenders, Fulcher’s name may not yet be uttered in the same breath as Price, Hellebuyck or Vasilevskiy, but he knows that at least one person will always be solidly in his corner, no matter



FILE PHOTO

Brigden’s Kaden Fulcher made his NHL debut in April 2019. He’s hoping his next stint with the Red Wings may see him up on the big screen again

what.

“My grandma is over the moon,”

said Fulcher of his reassignment to Detroit’s taxi squad. “She’s my

biggest fan,” Fulcher said of his grandmother from Bridgen.

No ORV rules in St. Clair yet

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

There are still no rules for off road vehicle use in St. Clair Township - and that means riders can still use the roads, for now.

The issue of ORV usage in the township has come up at the past several council meetings. A new provincial rule came into effect Jan. 1, allowing for the use of ORV on all municipal roads unless a local bylaw stated otherwise.

In practice this means ORV have been legal in St. Clair since Jan. 1, since no bylaw was passed before then. A draft bylaw finally came before council Monday which would have largely permitted ORV use, with bans present only in downtown areas along the St. Clair Parkway, certain high volume streets, and in parks, campgrounds, and the golf course.

But like previous debates, opinion split sharply among the six councillors.

Councillor Bill Myers has been a big proponent of ORV use, and says most users are responsible operators.

“I realize this bylaw may not be perfect and it may be a work in progress, but I think we need to start somewhere and I think now is the time,” Myers says. “I’m willing to give people the benefit of the doubt.”

But the question of enforcement remained a major sticking point. “If the OPP can’t handle these people and stop them, then what are we going to do?” asked Deputy Mayor Steve Miller.

OPP have said they cannot charge ORV users for violating a municipal

bylaw. Officers would only pursue the vehicles if they were violating the Highway Traffic Act, and may pass along a rider’s information to bylaw enforcement if they make a stop.

Miller doesn’t see a place for ORV on the roads aside from work purposes. “They’re called off-road vehicles for a reason, and they shouldn’t be on the streets period.”

Councillor Rose Atkins was concerned with ORV use on the parkway. “When I look at the thought of being on the St. Clair Parkway, I can’t help but think we spent millions of dollars for the last 15-20 years creating and promoting a trail system for cyclists and walkers,” she says. “The thought of adding motorized vehicles to that just doesn’t sit well with me.”

ORV are generally not allowed on trails, but along certain stretches of the parkway this would be unavoidable.

“We can go around in circles with this for 100 years. I think we need to pass it as it is,” says Councillor Tracy Kingston. “If we need to make changes afterwards... then so be it.”

A vote on the bylaw left the matter gridlocked: Myers, Kingston and Jim DeGurse voted for ORV legalization while Miller, Atkins and Pat Brown voted against it. Mayor Steve Arnold quickly cast his deciding vote on the ‘no’ side.

“The OPP couldn’t enforce it, how the flip are we going to enforce it? All it does is shift the complaints from where they should be – at the provincial level – to the municipal level,” says Arnold.

Staff will try again, presenting a new bylaw in March.

Calling small business owners

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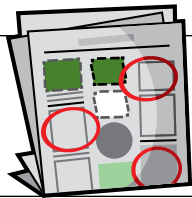
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February 14, 2021

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In Memory

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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/>.

STAY-AT-HOME ORDER

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

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 drop-box 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.

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News Media Canada
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* Totum Research; Canadians 18+, weekly readership, March 2019

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STAY-AT-HOME ORDER

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

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

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

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>

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.**

Obituary

GLEESON
Mary-Patricia

Mary-Pat Gleeson, a spirited advocate for Petrolia, died at her beloved Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital on **Saturday Jan. 30** at the age of **73**. Feisty and funny with a wicked sense of humour, she could light up a room and forged many lifelong friends. Her warmth attracted new friends, young and old, through the decades, wherever she lived. Being a Girl Guide and then one of its leaders had a long influence on her life. Mary-Pat was passionate in her causes and fearless in speaking her mind. She could be a force and a marshmallow too. Her appetite for life included all things Irish, too many books and films to mention, and chocolate anything. A gifted storyteller, she also revelled in listening to tales of friends, embraced life's absurdities and sorrows, and was fond of saying "Jeeze Louise" in mock surprise or "Get outta town!" Born in Petrolia to Lew and Bertha Gleeson, strong promoters of Petrolia, Mary-Pat decamped to Windsor for her university degree in theatre. She returned to Petrolia to become the Parks and Recreation manager during the heady 1970s, when the town enjoyed a "renaissance" fuelled by young energetic professionals. Petrolia charged to the forefront of heritage in Ontario and the groundbreaking Theatre Passe Muraille performed a collective depicting Petrolia people at Victoria Hall to rave reviews in the Globe and Mail. Even as a young girl on Maude Street, she wanted to work in the film industry and she made that happen. During her 25-year career in film she rose to be vice-president of marketing for Alliance Communications in Toronto. Working with Hollywood heavyweights like David Cronenberg, Robert Altman and Roberto Benigni and even getting flirtatious remarks from actor James Earl Jones, provided her with a lifetime of wild tales. Her better known films included *Trainspotting*, *Pulp Fiction* and *The English Patient*. One of her many fun highlights was on working the Muppet movie, *Follow That Bird*. At Toronto Film Festivals she was known and feted by the rich and famous. After Alliance, she moved to Vancouver, as a partner and vice president of marketing for



the newly formed Red Sky Entertainment. When her mother's health was failing in 2001, she returned to Petrolia, as she always said she would. For years she freelanced as a film script editor and analyst while plugging herself into community life. From 2006 to 2018 she served as a hardworking knowledgeable town councilor who mentored several and fought for anything she considered good for Petrolia. She also was a champion of the CEE Hospital. A fierce fighter to save the hospital and better its services, Mary-Pat was the founder and driving force to create the Central Lambton Family Health Team. Establishing a new medical building bringing patients and physicians together, recruiting new doctors and supporting them was a massive achievement benefitting the entire community. Additionally, she chaired the Charlotte's Task Force for Rural Health for the past eight years and brought teams together to establish 24-hour emergency access and other improvements. She was exceedingly thankful to her devoted medical team of Dr. Khan, Dr. Crombeen, Dr. Mall and Sarah Milner, her thoughtful caregivers, and to her many friends. Her parents and brother, Michael, predeceased her. Mary-Pat is survived by family members Kelly and Donna Thomson, Penny and Paul Patterson, Alyssa Paulley, Jan Gleeson, Kelly Gleeson Thompson and family, plus her many, many friends. **At a future date, friends will gather for a party in her name as she wished.** And Mary-Pat is thanked for her Irish coffee recipe. Donations in her memory may be made to CEEH Foundation and the ALS Society through Needham-Jay Funeral Home in Petrolia.

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

Yes, you can leave your home to walk your pets

Obituary



PHILLIPS
Dennis James

At his home in Brooke Twp., on **Sunday, January 31, 2021**, Dennis James Phillips passed away in his **67th year**. Beloved husband of Janice (MacRae). Dear father of Jackie Phillips (Andres), Rachel Cornell (Brent), Michael McLean (Jill) and Danielle McLean and loving grandfather of Huxley, Bohdan, Oaklyn and Jett. Dear brother of Don (Penny) Phillips and brother-in-law to Shawn MacRae and Kristina Henry. Several nieces and nephews also survive. Predeceased by his parents Bill and Jenny Phillips and an infant sister. **A private family service will be held at the Van Heck Funeral Home, Alvinston and interment will follow at the Alvinston Cemetery. A Celebration of Life will be held when Covid restrictions allow.** Memorial donations may be made to the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 249 Alvinston or online condolences to www.vanheckfuneralhome.ca **Livestream link will be available on the website for Thursday at 10:30 a.m.**

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>

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.

for all classified ads is

Monday at 12 noon

for the paper that prints and distributes Wed-Thurs

Classified Deadline:
Monday @ 12 noon



Classifieds

Word Classifieds: \$10 plus tax for up to 40 words
Stop in at the office 9a-5p Mon-Fri
4156 Petrolia Line – Call 226-738-0728
or email: office@petrolialambtonindependent.ca

Death Notices

January 23 - January 29, 2021

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23

ADAMS, Michael Jr.
Age 30, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

LUMSDEN, Sue-Elin
Age 66, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

GAUTHIER, Dianne
Age 68, of Sarnia
McKenzie & Blundy Funeral Home

GUDZ, Ollie
Age 98, of Petrolia
Needham-Jay Funeral Home

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24

BROOKS, Frank "Bud"
Age 91, of Wyoming
Needham-Jay Funeral Home

OVERHOLT, Murray
Age 93, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

MONDAY, JANUARY 25

BROCK, Judith
Age 66, of Sarnia
D.J. Robb Funeral Home

LEA, Elsie "Betty"
Age 91, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26

BAILEY, Edith
Age 84, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

MAIDMAN-BOLTON, Joyce
Age 87, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27

PLANKER, Kathryn
Age 33, of Forest
Gilpin Funeral Home

CLOUD, Ron "Shorty"
Age 60, of Sarnia
Denning's of Forest

MOLITOR, Dwayne
Age 60, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

CAMERON, Allan
Age 80, of Watford
Denning's of Watford

VANDERVEEN, Dick
Age 84, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

SCHAUS, Mervyn

Age 86, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

VANDERHEIDE, Riemie

Age 91, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

CANIE, Rita

Age 99, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

KOCK, Dirk

Age 100, of Sarnia
McKenzie & Blundy Funeral Home

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28

BRAR, Baldev

Age 74, of Forest
D.J. Robb Funeral Home

PHIPPS, Patricia

Age 77, of Sarnia
D.J. Robb Funeral Home

KLEMM, Alexander

Age 84, of Sarnia
Steadman Funeral Chapels

HARRISON, Margaret

Age 89, of Corunna
Knight Funeral Home

RATTIGAN, Lena Maria

Age 89, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29

THOMAS-BRESSETTE, Chris Jr.

Age 38
Denning's of Forest

PHILLIPS, Timothy

Age 43, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

HANSON, Norman

Age 65, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

VANDEVENNE, Gerald

Age 66, of Corunna
Knight Funeral Home

DIXON, Lois

Age 94, of Elmira
Steadman Funeral Chapels

This information is provided as a community service.
For detailed information, please refer to the funeral
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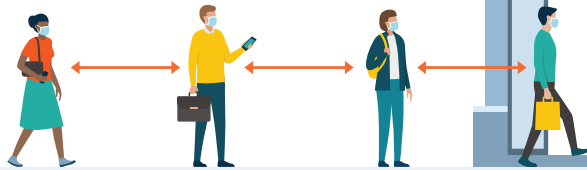
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Church DIRECTORY

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

WORSHIP SERVICES
Via ZOOM
Sunday Mornings 10:30am

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

Pastafest

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* Canadian Media Concentration Research Project, 2020