

The Independent

Serving Petrolia and Central Lambton

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WELDING IN WATFORD



DT Welding and Erections of Alvinston braved chilly winds recently to build what will be the trademark tower for one of the anchor tenants of the new commercial complex in Watford - Libro Financial. Tony Wygergang and his crew are among the local contractors involved in the project which will also include the new Warwick municipal office. It's not clear how long the construction of the Nauvoo Road complex will take to complete.

HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

‘Dangerous, unhealthy’

Consultant says new works garage urgent

Heather Wright
The Independent

A consultant says Plympton-Wyoming’s Reeves Corners public works building is “beyond salvage” and a “dangerous, unhealthy workplace.”

John Whitesell was contracted by the municipality for a service delivery review. He’s recommending council move up the replacement of the garage because of the problems.

Whitesell says it is not clear the Reeves Corners building could meet fire code. He says the municipality should fast track the replacement of the building which the town estimates will cost about \$3.5 million. There is already \$1.9

million set aside for the plan.

Whitesell says council could then close the Wyoming garage and consider consolidating the municipal office at the new public works building.

Mayor Lonny Napper says the move “is not high on my list of priorities” adding he expects it wouldn’t be necessary to move the municipal office out of its current Wyoming location for 10 or 12 years.

Napper also likes the building in the heart of the community.

Whitesell also made a case that the town didn’t have enough administrative support. He recommended hiring an HR Specialist, pointing out the current CAO- who does this work - doesn’t have the credentials and it takes “a considerable amount of the CAO’s overall time.”

Whitesell also suggested the town work with the county to hire another planner.

SEE CONSULTANT PG 2

Disappointed but not surprised

Heather Wright
The Independent

Janine Bechard isn’t surprised an independent review board won’t reverse the sentence of her police officer ex.

The Corunna woman launched an appeal of Darcy Lunn’s case, a Chatham-Kent police officer, to the Office of the Independent Police Review Director after the constable plead guilty to discreditable conduct and was demoted. Lunn is back on the job today despite admitting to 10 years of domestic abuse and a criminal conviction of assault and uttering threats against Bechard and her young son.

But the independent police review declined her request to look at Lunn’s return to work saying it was out of their

jurisdiction. “The only means of appeal for this decision is a judicial review in the Superior Court of Justice,” said a review officer in a letter sent to Bechard Tuesday, adding “it would be an abuse of process for the OIPRD to reinvestigate the same incident.”

Bechard is not giving up, saying she’ll hire a lawyer to go to Superior Court.

“If I just let it go, I’m accepting it, and I’m not in that position right now,” she says. “I want something to happen, I want somebody to hear it and to help make a change so that we can change our laws and make sure that officers are held accountable,” Bechard tells *The Independent*.

SEE BECHARD PG 2

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* Canadian Media Concentration Research Project, 2020

MOE still wants Florence sewage plan

Heather Wright
The Independent

The Ministry of the Environment says there is still a major problem with sewage systems in Florence which needs to be fixed.

Last year, after more than a decade of trying to come up with a fix for sewage from Florence homes seeping into the Sydenham River, Dawn-Euphemia council notified the MOE it would only pursue a communal sewage bed to solve the problem if the province provided 100 per cent funding for it.

By then, council had spent over 30 years dealing with the problem and had come up with a solution which would cost over \$1 million – far more than the 67 homeowners could afford.

The council also questioned if the pollution was still occurring since the first testing was done 30 years ago. So, Mary Jane Corda, district supervisor of the MOE, says they went back to the hamlet in November and retested two of the drains which were running.

“The recent sampling has confirmed that the water quality in the drains is significantly degraded. The analytical results are consistent with those observed during the 2010 sampling survey. Both sampling surveys confirm that there is a significant load of untreated sanitary sewage in the storm water system,” she

documents Feb. 17. If passed, the budget would require a 1.75 per cent tax increase.

The treasurer told councillors \$657,000 in new assessment revenue helped bring down the planned increase by 0.8 per cent.

Warden Kevin Marriott, who had been pushing the county to adopt budget increases in line with the rate of inflation for years, is pleased with what administration is putting forward for discussion.

“I can live with inflationary numbers,” says Marriott, noting most of the wage increases at the county are in that neighbourhood.

While the substance of the operational and capital budgets might not be hotly contested, Marriott expects councillors will have a lot to say about grant requests.

SEE BUDGET PG 7

Bechard wants laws on police oversight changed

CON’T FROM PG 1

Bechard says the provincial government dumped legislation from the former Liberal government which would have made police oversight stronger and would have led to tighter sentencing for police who offend and “neglected to see the need to make some changes.” She hopes this case could be a catalyst for change.

Meantime, Bechard’s complaints about

And he says whoever become fire chief should consider whether an administrative assistant is needed to help with his role in the office, including being involved in data management for the department.

Whitesell also pointed out to council that “Camlachie is under serviced by the town. There are no paved shoulders, no trails and no alternate access roads.”

Council has applied for grants to provide some of those sidewalks and trails already.

The report will now be reviewed by staff and council and recommendations will be made for council to discuss. It’s not clear how long that will take.

wrote to council.

Reports from the ministry’s surface water specialist at the ministry says E. Coli, phosphorus and ammonia were still major problems for runoff into the Sydenham River. It noted some samples had 1,000 times the allowable limit of E. Coli and Phosphorus was 100 times higher than the ministry guidelines.

“The discharge of sanitary sewage without proper treatment is a well-known threat to human health and to beneficial uses of receiving waters,” wrote Corda.

“The ministry is therefore seeking an update from you on a path forward to address the contamination.”

Clerk Donna Clermont told council she outlined in the last letter to the MOE that the municipality will deal with each complaint of a damaged septic system as it came about. If there was a problem, she said, the township would deal with it under the building code, having each individual owner take responsibility for the maintenance of their own septic system.

Council agrees to send a reply to the ministry, stating their plans to hold homeowners accountable. But, it seems the ministry may not be ready to let the issue lie.

“I will be reaching out to you over the next few weeks to set up a time to discuss the current conditions in the drain and your proposed next steps,” added Corda.

Rate of inflation increase likely on county levy

Heather Wright
The Independent

COVID-19 is driving up costs for the County of Lambton in 2021.

The proposed budget shows it will cost about \$12.5 million to cover the costs of tracking the virus, keeping people in long term care homes safe and making sure people have housing and income.

But those costs aren’t expected to directly impact taxes since Lambton has received federal and provincial grants to cover it.

In fact, Lambton’s warden says the biggest discussion around the 2021 county budget may be about a grant to Bluewater Health.

Lambton County’s Treasurer, Larry Palarchio, outlined the draft \$203 million operating and \$36.4 million capital budget

Bechard wants laws on police oversight changed

how the Chatham-Kent Police Service handled Lunn’s police act hearing and the lack of victims services it provided to her family will be examined by OIPRD.

However, she says, the process again leaves police policing police. Her complaints will be sent to the Chatham-Kent Police Chief, who will explain what he will or will not do to address her concerns.

The chief has 60 days to do that.

Consultant recommends more staff, new works garage

The County of Lambton subsidizes one planner now. Whitesell says the population of the town is expected to increase 20 per cent in the next decade and another planner is needed.

The consultant also suggested hiring a deputy clerk. He cited a 17 per cent increase in voter turnout and the importance of accountability in the role of clerk as reasons.

Whitesell says the Public Works and Parks and Recreation departments should be reorganized so there is a director and two coordinators, one looking after parks and recreation, the other public works.



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Vaccine drought ends in Lambton

Heather Wright
The Independent

Fred Osmon calls it “light at the end of the tunnel.”

The 63 year-old emergency department nurse at Bluewater Health was the first of 2,000 health care workers to be vaccinated at the hospital.

Osmon is benefiting from the first large delivery of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines in Lambton. Public health officials announced Friday another 6,000 vaccines are expected in Lambton between Feb. 22 and March 5.

Essential caregivers, like Osmon, who give direct patient care are among the first in line for the vaccine.

Over 2,000 nurses doctors, midwives and other direct care employees at Bluewater Health will receive vaccines in the next three to four days.

Lambton County is one of the last regions to receive enough vaccines to start immunizing front line health care workers – one of the first priority groups after residents of long term care. Public health officials have vaccinated 1,156 people there.

But now, with 6,000 vaccines headed this way over the next two weeks, Bluewater Health ramped up its clinic at the Sarnia site. Officials say all the available appointments were booked within 48 hours.

Lambton’s medical officer of health says there are about 12,000 people who need to be vaccinated in the first phase.

That includes people living at eight retirement homes in Lambton which did not get the a dose of vaccine in the first round.

Lambton only received 1,156 doses - enough to give the first shot to long term care residents and people living in what public health determined were high risk retirement homes - those that were older or linked to nursing homes.

Those retirement homes which missed out will be the first approached as the latest vaccines roll in.

Essential caregivers and personal support workers in seniors and long term care and retirement homes will also be at the top of the list for vaccines, as will seniors over 80 and the elderly in Indigenous Elder Care Homes.

While it is not clear how long it will



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Fred Osmon, an ER Nurse in Petrolia and Sarnia, gets the first vaccine at Bluewater Health Tuesday. About 2,000 hospital employees will get the vaccine this week.

take to vaccinate the highest priority group, it is clear there should be a lot more of the doses available.

After a month of just trickles of the vaccines coming into Canada, the big pharmaceutical companies have geared up to produce more and it is expected there will be 2.1 million doses in Canada by the end of March.

So, public health officials have been busy planning how to get as many shots in as many arms as possible.

It has plans for three permanent clinics; essential care givers and workers in long term care and high risk retirement homes and the highest priority health care workers will be offered their first doses the first week of March in Point Edward, Kimball Hall in Forest and the Wyoming Fairgrounds.

Public health says after that, others in the phase one group, including those over 80, will begin receiving the vaccine.

The province is setting up an online booking system as well, which according to Churchill, says people will be able to book into clinics in Lambton.

They can also book by phone.

The province says it wants multiple vaccination sites and it has 2,500 people volunteer to staff them.

Churchill says Lambton Public Health has “an additional pool of staff in place to schedule for both fixed site and mobile clinics, and our plans are to scale up using available public health staff as well as paramedics and some staff from Bluewater Health to support mobile teams.

“Additional staff needs are currently being considered.”

Lambton students to be offered testing

Pam Wright
Local Journalism Initiative

Voluntary asymptomatic COVID-19 testing for students in Chatham-Kent will soon be available.

The Lambton Kent District School Board and the St. Clair Catholic District School Board are partnering in the effort which was announced by the province when students returned to class in February.

The Ministry of Education plans to conduct the testing in five per cent of the province’s schools each week with up to 50,000 staff and students getting a test.

It’s hoped the testing will help in determining who may be carrying the virus by adding an ‘extra layer of protection.’

It will identify cases that may

have otherwise gone undetected and reduce the transmission of COVID-19 between schools and the community.

Officials in Lambton-Kent have chosen CLASS Shared Services — the company that oversees transportation for both boards — to coordinate the provincial directive.

Public school board director John Howitt says the plan is just at the beginning stage.

“This is not a school board initiative and it might happen outside of school,” Howitt told a municipal press conference last week.

He says the current early plan is to test three schools a week.

Howitt stresses the tests are “not mandatory” and that permission must be obtained from parents.

- The Herald

Why is Plympton-Wyoming’s CAO allowed to vote?

Heather Wright
The Independent

Andrew Sancton, a respected political scientist, says in the 50 year’s he’s been studying municipal politics, he’s never seen anything like this.

He was surprised to learn the CAO of Plympton-Wyoming had been given the power to not just attend committees of council to advise the group, but act as a voting member.

The issue came to light this week. The Fire Executive Committee agenda included a discussion about the group’s terms of reference. The committee discussed whether another member of council should be added to the executive. A councillor resigned from the committee over a year ago and was not replaced, according to Chair Bob Woolvett.

Woolvett says the fire executive committee decided to keep going with three people - himself, Councillor Gary Atkinson and CAO Carolyn Tripp as voting members.

A report on the committee agenda gives the terms of reference for the committee. The document, written by former Chief Steve Clemens, included the CAO as a voting member. Prior to that, administrators

were there as advisors. Council, according to the minutes, approved the terms without questions.

While Plympton-Wyoming is alone in this practice in Lambton County, the fire executive committee is not the only Plympton-Wyoming committee with staff voting.

The Independent found minutes of the Water and Sewer Committee from 2015 online which clearly show both the treasurer and the public works manager as active voting members. Staff still is today.

So, we asked Sancton, a former Western University professor who has authored five books on local governments and has been studying Ontario’s municipal governments for 50 years, whether the practice is unusual. “I’ve never heard of a situation where a staff person, let alone the CAO was a (voting) member of a council committee.”

Sancton says having the CAO on a committee could present an “institutional conflict” since councils rely on their top administrators to look at various issues to find the best interest of the municipality. That may be difficult if the CAO has already approved any recommendations coming from the committee.

Sancton adds council “contradicted themselves” when they agreed to the terms of reference in 2017 since the procedural bylaw, which governs the actions of council, allows just council and citizens to be on committees. “The long and short of it is I don’t see any justification for being a member of this committee.”

However unusual Plympton-Wyoming’s practice is, there appears to be no reference expressly forbidding it in the Municipal Act.

The Ontario Municipal Administrators Association’s Code of Conduct states administrators “submit proposals... provide facts and advice on matters of policy as a basis for making decisions... and refrain from all political activities which undermine public confidence in professional administrators.”

Neither Woolvett nor Mayor Lonny Napper could remember or explain the practice at both the fire and water and sewer committees. Woolvett suggested it was common practice until *The Independent* informed him it wasn’t. Woolvett then said he didn’t know what to say. “To be honest with you, I’d have to do the same as you’re doing, go and ask some questions.”

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Editorial

Police should not police themselves

Janine Bechard was not surprised the Office of the Independent Police Review Director won't look at reconsider the sentencing of her ex-husband.

Darcy Lunn, a Chatham-Kent Police officer, admitted to domestic violence over a period of ten years, sometimes using his police issued handgun as a weapon to threaten her and her young son. He was charged criminally and pled guilty to assault and uttering threats to cause bodily harm. He was given a suspended sentence and three years probation.

The sentence led to a Police Services Act Review by his employer, the Chatham-Kent Police Services Board. He also plead guilty to discreditable conduct there. He was demoted, will lose about \$14,000 in take home pay, and is already back on the job.

Bechard was angry with the sentence, saying she and her son still live in fear of Lunn. And she questioned how the Police Services Act hearing was held. Bechard expected to testify, but the lawyers for the police service and Lunn worked out a deal, which was accepted by the adjudicator.

So, Bechard decided to find another way to exact justice. She approached the Office of the Independent Police Review Director. The name would leave you to believe that there would be an independent review. Instead OIPRD dismissed her concerns about Lunn's sentence, saying it doesn't have jurisdiction to overturn it. And then, it sent her complaints about the way the hearing was handled by the Chatham-Kent Police back to the chief of the department to say what should happen, and his reasons for his decision.

So the woman who complained about the police policing themselves, will now be adjudicated again, by the police. It's clear the system is out of whack.

Bechard says she'll press on, going to court to try to have Lunn's sentence overturned and waiting to see what will become of her complaints about the process.

She shouldn't have to wait. Ontario knows its complex system of police policing themselves doesn't work. And the province should do something to provide justice even when police are the perpetrators.

Letters to the Editor

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

Our Story



FROM THE DAVE BURWELL POST CARD COLLECTION

The Bear Creek Presbyterian Church in Moore Township was built in 1855 according to the hand writing on the back of this post card from the Dave Burwell Post Card Collection. There is also a notation that Angus McBean helped.

What do you do when you run out of things to talk about

The other night at dinner, my daughter's eyes began to glaze over. After our regular habit of asking how everyone's day had been, we had returned to that all too familiar topic, COVID-19, and she clearly was not interested.

A year ago, those dinner conversations about how our day had been could last the entire meal. There was talk about basketball games or play practice, the outrageous thing the weird kid at school did, Barry's tales from the road as he sold advertising or talk about friends from church.

Today, that talk maybe eats up half of dinner time and then we return to the pandemic. Not necessarily because we want to - we, like everyone else, are very tired of masks and regulations - but we get to the point when we run

out of things to talk about.

As we follow the rules and stick mostly to our tight family circle, we pretty much all know what each person is doing; if they get up in the middle of the night, if they ate the last cookie in the cupboard, and especially if they're in a bad mood.

And it's not just in our own little circle that we have little to share anymore, our kids find their conversations with friends are limited too, because when people ask them what's new, there is very little to share.

I know we are not alone in this.

I've had friends tell me socializing with friends over video conferencing just isn't the same - the conversation often circles back to COVID because the pandemic has played such a central part in all of our lives for the past year.

So, what do you do if you don't want to talk about COVID endlessly at the dinner table?

At our table, the conversation often turns to sci-fi programs on Netflix. It's not my choice for entertainment, but there is much laughter from our kids, which is good.

I think if we're all to be involved we may have to resort to playing those games you used to play on road trips to keep the kids from going squirrely.



Heather Wright

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St. Clair to make a pitch for twice rejected glass plant

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

Stratford’s loss may be St. Clair’s gain as Xinyi Glass looks for a new home for their float glass factory. Councillor Pat Brown raised the possibility at last week’s council meeting. The Chinese company plans to build a \$400 million plant to produce glass for things such as skyscraper windows to sun roofs. Brown made a motion to send a letter to MPP Bob Bailey to gather support. Both brownfield and greenfield sites were proposed as locations for the estimated one million square foot plant, including the current OPG site once the structure is finally cleared out in 2022. But drawing the plant to St. Clair may be a hard sell. Xinyi has already tried to bring the factory to two other Ontario communities, and both times was met with heavy opposition that ultimately sank the project. Xinyi’s first attempt was into Guelph-Eramosa Township in 2018. Council there voted it down, because it needed to draw more than one million litres of water per day from the water table. The decision drew condemnation

from Premier Doug Ford. “Who refuses 400 jobs?” Ford said. Xinyi’s next attempt was in Stratford, where they were met with regular protests ranging from the plant’s potential environmental impact to concerns of involvement with the Chinese government. In light of sustained backlash from the community, Stratford council tabled the proposal indefinitely. Recently, Xinyi “suspended the project indefinitely to avoid further financial loss and unfounded attacks on its reputation.” “Xinyi looks forward to bringing the project back to Ontario when the investment environment is more welcoming,” the company said in a statement last week. St. Clair thinks it could be a good fit along the St. Clair River. It hopes the local MPP will use his provincial influence to attract the plant. Council is also writing a letter to the Sarnia-Lambton Economic Program to express their interest. “I’m certainly interested in attracting businesses here,” says Deputy Mayor Steve Miller. But he added “It makes me a little leery that they’ve been turned down at two locations.”

“I do think there’s quite possibly a good fit for our township, and more industry and more jobs are certainly welcome here,” says Councillor Bill Myers. Mayor Steve Arnold indicated his support for the plant, particularly at the OPG site. He says it offers water, sewer and natural gas facilities, along with a dock. He added St. Clair has extensive experience with industrial (M3) zoning. But he’s hedging his bets whether the township can catch the international glassmaker’s eye. “We’ve started lots of processes over the years, some have worked out and some haven’t. But unless you start, you go nowhere,” says Arnold. Whether St. Clair lands the glass plant or not, Arnold wants something done soon with the OPG site. The mayor is hoping for some provincial pressure “to get OPG to move off the fact that they don’t want to do anything with that site. “It’s time that they get off the pot and let some other development happen on that site,” says Arnold. “Everything’s right there, yet it’s just a terrible waste to see that thing destroyed and forgotten about by OPG.”

Ten year gun ban for hunter who threatens Corunna officer

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

A Corunna gun owner who unleashed a barrage of threats against a St. Clair OPP officer will be banned from owning weapons for 10 years. Christopher Brown, 38, was in Sarnia Court Feb. 17 to address a pair of 2019 events that brought him before Justice Krista Leszczynski. Brown’s trouble started when he saw his fiancée pulled over for a traffic stop. Brown approached the OPP officer who said the vehicle was being impounded. Brown said the truck was his, and that “the vehicle is not being towed.” The officer disagreed and Brown swore at him. The officer got out of his car and told Brown to go away. But Brown continued to protest and was arrested. On the ride back to Corunna station, Brown – who knew the officer – threatened him. “You have no idea who you’re dealing with. I have lots of money. Your life is over,” said Brown. “You’ll forever look over your shoulder. I know where you live...You’re done. I’ll end you.” One month later, OPP officers searched Brown’s Corunna home. The warrant was granted because of the

threats. Officers seized three semi-automatic shotguns, three semi-automatic rifles, and a bolt-action rifle. Hundreds of rounds of ammo were also found including a nine-mm handgun magazine modified to hold more than 10 rounds, and a high-capacity magazine modified to hold more than five rounds, which is illegal. They found two more high-powered rifles in Brown’s truck with more ammo in plain view. He lives near a school. “It’s certainly more than you would normally hear of,” conceded Brown’s lawyer, Jamie Guggisberg. But he says his client is a subsistence hunter, pointing to his four freezers full of meat. “He’s not simply somebody who’s just a gun nut with a lot of guns and being unsafe about it,” says Guggisberg. “He misinterpreted the rules, and his storage obviously was insufficient by anybody’s regard. But not with intent to do so.” As for the threats, Guggisberg says Brown “lost his temper and misspoke. “I wish to make clear that, not withstanding the officer’s bona fide concern that the threat was real, there was nothing behind it from my client’s point of view other than frustration,”

says Guggisberg. Crown Attorney David Rows said normally, Brown would have faced a “short, sharp jail sentence.” But the Sarnia Jail is in the middle of a COVID-19 outbreak. Instead, Brown will serve six months including three months of full house arrest and then subject to a three month curfew. To make up for lack of jail time, the Crown came down heavy on another aspect of sentencing. “Most importantly is the weapons prohibition,” Rows said, asking for a 10 year weapons ban and forfeiture of all guns and ammo. “The accused is going to have to deal with not pursuing that particular passion. And that is a significant consequence. In Canada, being able to possess firearms is a privilege, not a right. The accused will have lost that privilege for an extended period of time,” says Rows. Brown’s lawyer agreed to the terms, as did Leszczynski. “What is most concerning from a community safety perspective is the manner in which a number of these weapons were stored, and the access that others would have been able to have to those weapons in the event they came across your vehicle,” said the justice.

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Smith honoured veterans, taught Cadets and founded Peacekeeper Park

Heather Wright
The Independent

A Petrolia man who made sure veterans were honoured for their service and shared his love of the military with old and young alike has died.

Retired Major Gene Smith died at his home of natural causes Feb. 17.

Smith – a veteran of the Canadian Forces – was passionate about the military and its members, finding ways to honour those who served the country.

One month before he turned 16, Smith enlisted in the Royal Canadian Artillery. It was the beginning of a 34-year military career where he was a driver/mechanic, a signaller, troop leader, and drove tanks like the Sherman, Chiefton and Centurion.

He left the military for 11 years, but when he returned, he was transferred to the Cadet system, where he commanded 132 Repulse

Sea Cadets, the Sarnia Sail Centre, and 2563 Petrolia Army Cadets. He was later posted to Cadet Headquarters in London where he assisted in implementing a province wide shooting program and then went on to become a Regional Cadet Advisor.

An active Petrolia Legion Member, Smith heard the French Government was offering its highest honour to those who had served in France during the Second World War. He was instrumental in making sure Petrolia veterans Sid McLean and Ted Paisley received the honour.

Smith’s knowledge of military history was deep and he knew how important battles shaped the Canadian Forces.

In an interview with The Independent in 2017, Smith talked about the impact the Battle of Vimy Ridge had on the military and the nation.

“What occurred at Vimy changed the way we do battle... where

every man knows what his job is and what is going on each day... the idea of dropping their packs to go into battle and leapfrogging over each other,” he told The Independent at the time.

“The standards we live by today were set by these guys.”

That was true for Smith too, who learned from the soldiers at Vimy that “I was scared but I had a job to do and I had to do it.”

The veteran added at the time the proudest moment of his life was being at Vimy Ridge in his uniform and watching a medal ceremony.

For many, Smith’s lasting legacy will be Peacekeeper Park near Aylmer. It is a living memorial for the 258 Canadians who lost their lives in the service of peace. It includes the Path of Honour, where white crosses mark a trail marking the Canadians who have died in the service of peace. It includes storyboards with the information on many of the peacekeeping missions.

Smith wanted veterans to come to the park and feel at home and talk to other veterans who had experienced mental trauma, hoping the environment would help the vets feel free to talk about their experiences and learn how to cope.

Smith’s vision was to combine a memorial for those lost with an adventure camp for youth groups. Over the years, he conducted summer camps there.

For most of his adult life, Smith worked for Dow Chemical Canada in Sarnia and was sent to New



PHOTO VIA FACEBOOK

Retired Major Gene Smith was a faithful supporter of Royal Canadian Legion causes. He helped organize Remembrance Day services in local nursing homes and coordinated the local ceremonies for the 100th Anniversary of Vimy Ridge. He’s seen here with Petrolia’s Cookie Lady, Karen Wilson, who bakes thousands of cookies for Canadian troops around the world.

Mexico and Saudi Arabia to build and staff three chemical plants. He was also the leader of Dow’s hazardous materials response team.

Smith leaves behind his wife,

Linda, and his son, Patrick, daughter-in-law, Tearza and three grandchildren, Hunter, Taryn and Owen.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.



Gene Smith, seen at Peacekeeper Park near Aylmer. Smith was the cofounder of the park project.

Voting record of councillor questioned

Myers asked for report on most important vote of the year

Heather Wright
The Independent

A Dawn-Euphemia councillor says there are legitimate reasons she missed voting on the budget for the past five years.

Councillor Jason Myers asked for a report on who voted on the municipal budget over the last five years after council passed the 2021 budget on Feb. 1. Councillor Leslea Williams was absent for the vote.

The report showed that Williams had been absent for each of the budget votes in the last five years. In 2017, council deferred adoption of the budget for four meetings to get the full council present. Williams missed all of those meetings and council passed the budget in mid-May saying the County of Lambton needed the municipality’s tax rates.

Only one other member of council had missed a scheduled budget vote - Mayor Al Broad. He had unexpected medical issues in 2019 and gave his support to the document at the next meeting.

Broad called Williams’ voting record “very unfortunate,” adding the budget is one of the most important meetings of the year because it sets the course for the year to come.

“We provide lots of opportunity for anybody that’s unable to attend any of our meetings on any given subject to come on, when they may

not make a difference in the vote, they can at least confirm whether they support or not support any budget that we have during the course of the year,” said Broad at a recent meeting.

Myers, who requested the report, says “It’s all about transparency and the public needs to know.”

When contacted by *The Independent*, Williams said for many of the votes she had medical appointments or was recovering from medical issues, including this year when she was waiting all day for a specialist to call her.

“I can’t tell a specialist, don’t call me... you’re waiting for that call. It just regrettably came later than I planned...”

“There was no intention to miss that meeting,” Williams says

“In 2020, as I said, an impaired driver totaled my car on Super Bowl Sunday, the day before the budget vote.”


She added she was at Jan. 11 budget meeting where council talked about adding money to the reserves which produced a tax increase.

The veteran councillor voted in favour of those moves with the rest of council, according to the minutes of that meeting.

The councillor missed the meeting on Feb. 1 where council adopted the document.

Williams added until now, residents of the township had not voiced concern about her absence from the budget meetings, particularly when she was ill.

“People have been, with respect to the surgery, very, very supportive.”



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 TOWN OF PETROLIA

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 March 10, 2021, at the Petrolia Municipal Office, 411 Greenfield Street, Petrolia Ontario.

The tenders will then be opened in public on the same day as soon as possible after 3:00 p.m. at the Petrolia Municipal Office, 411 Greenfield Street, Petrolia.

Description of Land:

Roll No. 38 19 000 080 15200 0000; 4317 Discovery Line, Petrolia; PIN 43329-0100(R); Part of Lots 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30 Registered Plan 26 (PA), Town of Petrolia, County of Lambton, designated Parts 3, 4 and 5 Plan 25R-6964; File No. 18-09

According to the last returned assessment roll, the assessed value of the land is \$83,000

Minimum tender amount: \$35,148.82

Tenders must be submitted in the prescribed form and must be accompanied by a deposit of at least 20 per cent of the tender amount, which deposit shall be made by way of a certified cheque/bank draft/ money order payable to the municipality.

Except as follows, the municipality makes no representation regarding the title to, crown interests, or any other matters relating to the land to be sold. Responsibility for ascertaining these matters rests with the potential purchasers. Any interests of the Federal or Provincial Crown encumbering the land at the time of the tax sale will continue to encumber the land after the registration of the tax deed. The assessed value according to the last returned assessment roll may or may not be representative of the current market value of the property.

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:

Rick Charlebois
CAO/Treasurer
The Corporation of the Town of Petrolia
411 Greenfield Street
Petrolia ON N0N 1R0
519-882-2350 Ext. 225
rcharlebois@petrolia.ca
www.town.petroliia.on.ca

Sarnia Jail has largest COVID outbreak in Ontario

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

Lambton residents bound for Sarnia Jail may end up in facilities in other parts of the province because of one of the largest COVID-19 outbreaks in Ontario’s prison system.

Lambton Public Health reports 46 inmates and five staff members have tested positive for the virus since the outbreak began Feb. 7.

Lambton’s Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Sudit Ranade, says it is “an incredibly challenging environment to manage behaviours and interactions” and the design of the jail poses problems since there are no walls, just bars between cells which are close together. He says they are “design features that we really can’t overcome with public health measures.”

One of the things which can be done is increasing the distance between inmates by reducing the number of people at the facility.

The Ministry of the Solicitor General said they started finding sentencing alternatives and moving inmates to

other facilities early in the outbreak. Tuesday, officials said the Sarnia Jail had 55 inmates, just more than half of its 101 capacity. Thirty-three COVID-positive inmates are still in the facility. Thirteen of the outbreak cases have resolved with the inmate recovering.

Spokesperson Andrew Morrison says to reduce the risk of transmission “a number of inmates,” including some who are COVID-19 positive, have been moved to other institutions including the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre.

Morrison says inmates who are COVID-19 positive can still leave jail if they obtain bail or are finished serving their sentence. They’re provided with a cloth mask and instructions on how to deal with COVID-19, including isolation practices. Morrison adds if a home isolation plan can’t be worked out for an inmate, the ministry will take them to an isolation centre to complete quarantine.

Earlier in the outbreak, the ministry was reducing the inmate population at the jail with temporary release

programs where inmates serve their time in the community. But that may pose more hurdles for public health.

Ranade said if inmates return to the community, it may be more difficult to keep in contact with them to track the spread of COVID-19.

Ranade says generally speaking, the people in the Sarnia Jail aren’t in a high risk group for COVID-19, so the illness is less likely to have severe outcomes. Public health officials say most of the people who have contracted the virus have had mild symptoms or are asymptomatic.

But there is still concern about spread in the walls of the jail. Some inmates have averted jail time because of the outbreak. There have been a number of incidents where judges have allowed sentences of house arrest to avoid sending people into the confined space rife with COVID-19.

For now, public health is working with the facilities to adapt their pandemic guidance to fit the needs there. Ranade says it is a “dynamic situation. In some ways, there is only so much you can do.”

Hospital grant may be big budget discussion: Marriott

CON’T FROM PG 1

Bluewater Health is looking for a \$10 million grant over 10 years. It’s targeting spending the cash in a number of places including the redevelopment of Bluewater Health’s Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital.

Petrolia Mayor Brad Loosley has been urging the support of the request, getting his council to pass a motion supporting the grant.

But county politicians have been wary about giving any new grants this year. Councillors passed a motion in October saying council would not give out any new grants in 2021. The warden says Bluewater Health is aware its request could be delayed until 2022.

But Mayor Mike Bradley convinced councillors to discuss the grant at the upcoming March budget session.

“So, there’s two motions on the books; the one said we will not do any new grants in 2021 and then the second motion was to say have please have a look at it,” says Marriott adding it is likely to be “hugely debated.”

If the grant were to pass, it would add an additional 1.25 per cent to the budget.

Council will also discuss whether it should move forward on a roundabout at Petrolia Line and Kimball Road which would cost \$400,000 in 2021 for planning and another \$1.4 million for construction in 2022.

COVID-19’S \$12.5 MILLION IMPACT

Spending in the three departments facing the COVID-19 pandemic head on are seeing significant budget increases in 2021.

Social Services budget is up \$5.27 million over 2021 for a total of \$79.7 million in total spending. That’s the largest budget of any of the county’s divisions.

Social services expects to spend \$3.5 million more on homelessness initiatives in the wake of the pandemic – with the federal government chipping in \$1 million for a new program called Reaching Home.

Valerie Colasanti, the general manager of social services, is also

anticipating a two per cent increase in the number of people accessing Ontario Works in 2021 when the federal Canadian Emergency Relief Benefit expires. She’s anticipating up to 2,844 cases per month.

Public health – which heads up the pandemic response in the community – is also spending significantly more than 2020. County figures show \$29.4 million will be spent on public health services. That’s up \$2.249 million over 2020.

And the long term care division will spend \$3 million more this year than last for a total of \$36.8 million in 2021, should the budget pass as is.

The treasurer says the county has been given grants and subsidies from the federal government which covered the \$12.5 million costs due to the pandemic.

MEADOWVIEW NEEDS \$9 MILLION IN REPAIRS

Lambton Meadowview Villa in Petrolia is feeling its age.

Jane Joris, general manager of the long term care division, says in the next five years the nearly 30 year-old building will need \$9 million in repairs.

This year, there is \$697,000 in capital improvements to the building – about 43 per cent of that will come from reserves. The improvements include redesigning the dining room, replacing the elevator and upgrading sidewalks.

Another \$124,300 will be spent on equipment for the home.

The budget also includes \$400,000 to help renovate a portion of the building for a new 10-bed facility designed for people with dementia. The unit will be more like a home, with consistent staffing. The province still has to approve the idea.

While there will be spending on the Petrolia nursing home, Joris says county councillors have to start looking at replacing the home.

Joris, in a report to council, says the building no longer meets provincial design standards and is “nearing the end of its life.”

The replacement costs of the same size of home is about \$40 million. That doesn’t take into account the growing need for long term care. Over 30,000 people in Ontario are waiting for long term care.

But there is some concern among councillors about paying for a new home.

There are few reserves for the replacement of Meadowview Villa, with Joris noting the county puts less money into reserves at Meadowview than its other homes. The county sets aside money from the funding generated by private and semi private care into reserves for replacing buildings. The county has decided to put only 50 per cent of that cash into reserves this year.

The county will spend \$13,751,748 a year to operate Meadowview in 2021. That’s 22 per cent of the total cost to run the home.

COUNTY MAY SET UP RESERVE TO BUY BAYSIDE MALL

The county’s treasurer is suggesting councillors set up a reserve fund to help buy the Bayside Centre in Sarnia.

In July, the county approved long term agreements with Season Retirement Communities which firmed up the county’s lease for more than 80,000 square feet of space for the Shared Services building. It has an option to buy clause which would see the county purchase the building for \$23.5 million.

Palarchio is suggesting setting up a \$500,000 fund this year and growing it to \$14 million by 2031.

“If the county exercises its option (to buy), the \$14 million will represent a significant down payment on the \$23.5 million purchase price,” the treasurer writes in his report to council.

Palarchio adds it would be likely council would have to take out a mortgage on the property, and pay it back through rent revenues.

Councillors will discuss the budget March 3 on a virtual meeting which is streamed live on the county’s website.

TOWNSHIP OF ENNISKILLEN

2021 SUMMER STUDENT

The Township of Enniskillen is accepting applications for a temporary position from May to August 2021 working in public works.

Duties will focus on updating the Township Geographic Information System (GIS) and collecting field data.

Applicants must be registered in or recent graduates from a GIS program.

A valid driver’s license is necessary.

Applications will be received by the undersigned until Friday, March 5, 2021

Duncan McTavish

Township of Enniskillen

4465 Rokeby Line, R.R. 1

Petrolia, ON N0N 1R0

519-882-2490

dmctavish@enniskillen.ca



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The Town of Plympton-Wyoming is now accepting applications for the following:
SUMMER POSITIONS

4 Months (May – August):
Roads Technician
GIS Technician
Deadline to apply: Monday, March 8th, 2021

4 Months (May – August):
Office Administrative Assistant
Parks Labourer
Deadline to apply: Monday, March 15th, 2021

2 Months (July – August):
Junior Lifeguards
Deadline to apply: Monday, April 19th, 2021

Please visit www.plympton-wyoming.com for more information.

We thank all candidates for their interest, however, only those selected for further consideration will be contacted.

If you have a disability that requires an accommodation to assist you with any aspect of the hiring process, please contact our office: 519-845-3939

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Health critics pan provincial PSW programs

Heather Wright
The Independent

Not nearly enough.

That’s the reaction from health care advocates after Labour Minister Monte McNaughton from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex announced \$4.1 million in funding to train 373 personal support workers in long term care.

McNaughton announced the partnerships with organizations in the Metro Toronto area, Kitchener Waterloo and Northern Ontario Monday. Officials say the programs will train people to fill the PSW jobs in long term care homes. Some of the programs are a full year in length.

“For those looking for meaningful careers, we’re giving you a hand up to get started,” he says. McNaughton added one of the programs will provide a resource kit for PSWs across the province which talks about best practices in things such as infection control.

The Minister of Long Term Care, Merilee Fullerton, says the programs announced Monday are in regions of the province which were particularly

hard hit by the pandemic. And she hopes it will help fill the urgent need for personal support workers.

“More than 120,000 PSWs work in Ontario today, including 50,000 in the long term care sector, but the need for them is greater than it has ever been, especially as we begin adding more direct care for a growing seniors population,” she says.

The need for PSWs is well known, particularly in the COVID-19 pandemic. Long term care homes said a staff shortage left seniors in jeopardy as staff worked to care for those who were sick. In some cases, seniors were left alone in their rooms for hours on end, without food or water. In some communities, the Canadian Military was called in to help provide care.

Fullerton said this is part of the long term solution to ease the shortage of personal support workers in the province. She believes Ontario needs to train and recruit 27,000 more people in the field to meet the province’s goal of providing four full hours of care per resident in long term care.

Advocacy groups, like the Ontario Health Care Coalition, say the number is far more - an estimated 34,000. The group’s executive director, Natalie Mehra, was disappointed with the announcement.

“We have never, in all of our years advocating in long-term care, seen such a widespread and profound staffing and care crisis. In context, this announcement is so inadequate as to be unconscionable,” she says in a news release.

She says not only is the government taking years to implement its plan to increase the amount of hands on care residents receive, it’s losing PSWs because of pandemic pressures.

By the end of the first wave, Mehra says, Ontario had lost about 30 per cent of long term care staff, and more staff were lost in the second wave.

Mehra says “most long term care residents will not live to see any real improvement in care if this plan is not improved dramatically.”

Mehra reiterated calls to launch a massive campaign like Quebec did this summer.

The government there hired and trained about 7,000 people to work as PSWs, paying them \$21 per hour.

Minor injuries

Three people escaped with minor injuries after a driver lost control on a slick road heading into a curve.

Three people had to be removed from a car which flipped into a field on Rokeby Line Feb. 18.

Petrolia/North Enniskillen Fire Chief Jay Arns says firefighters were called to Rokeby Line near Mandaumin Road around 7:30 am to find a car on its roof in the snow. Two people were outside of the car and another was stuck inside.

Firefighters removed the person from the vehicle and all three were taken to



PETROLIA/NORTH ENNISKILLEN FIRE PHOTO

hospital by paramedics with what Arns said were minor injuries.

Arns says there were patches of snow on the road nearby.

Lambton County Science Fair

Open to students
Grades 3-12

Judging
April 9&10 2021
Virtual Event

For information and to register
www.lambtoncountysciencefair.ca
Registration Closes March 26th.

PUBLIC NOTICE

TOWN OF PLYMPTON-WYOMING

Please be advised that the Town of Plympton-Wyoming 2021 Draft Budget and the Water/Sewer Rates By-law will be considered for adoption at the Special Budget Council Meeting to be held **Monday, March 8th 2021 at 5 p.m.**

If needed, a second date for further consideration will be on **Wednesday, March 10th 2021 at 5 p.m.** before the regular scheduled Council Meeting. Please monitor the Town’s website for updates

Members of the public are welcome to attend virtually. Log-in information will be made available online on the Towns website www.plympton-wyoming.com under Public Notices and at the top of the Agenda which will be found at this link once published
<https://plympton-wyoming.civicweb.net/Portal/>

Copies of the draft Budget and By-law will be made available upon request.

For any questions or additional information, please contact:
Erin Kwarciak, Clerk
Town of Plympton-Wyoming
(519) 845-3939
ekwarciak@plympton-wyoming.ca

IODE HELPS FUND TRANSGENDER PROGRAM



A new program to help transgender youth and their families is getting a bit of a boost from the IODE. It has donated \$25,000 to Rebound Sarnia-Lambton to help set up the virtual program by May. The program hopes to bridge the gap for transgender youth and their families by creating a support network for youth and families. They’ll provide information, resources and a safe and accepting space for peer support to promote healthy relationships. This is the 11th grant from the IODE across Canada. IODE Canada Board member and IODE Ontario President Linda Gryner, IODE National Councillors Jan Casbourn, Sarnia and Helen Danby, Petrolia, presented Rebound Executive Director, Carrie McEachran and Client Services Team Manager, Andraya MacMillan with an IODE package, including a laminated copy of the announcement.

This Month In Lambton

February 2021

Warden Kevin Marriott
[@LambtonWarden](https://twitter.com/LambtonWarden)

Borrow an Ontario Parks Day-Use Pass with a Library Card

Ontario Parks day-use passes are now available to borrow for free with a Lambton County Library card! The seasonal day-use pass will provide unlimited entry for one vehicle plus all its passengers at any provincial park in Ontario.

The pass can be borrowed for seven days and can be borrowed with other materials from the library’s collection to enhance park visits, including snowshoes, pedometers, GPS units, wildlife books, trail guides and kid’s nature books.

This pass program is made possible through the Province of Ontario’s, Ontario Parks Library Day-Use Vehicle Permit Lending Program. Visit lclibrary.ca or call your local library to reserve a pass today!

Lambton County Archives Accepting COVID-19 Submissions

Lambton County Archives is currently accepting COVID-19 submissions from the public. Please consider sharing your stories and include photos if possible to help the Archives document this historic moment in time to share with future generations. Share your experience online at lambtonarchives.ca.

Oil Museum Renovations

The Oil Museum of Canada, National Historic Site is currently undergoing a significant renovation. As a result, the Museum will remain closed until Summer 2021. We look forward to reopening celebrations this summer.

In the meantime, you can enjoy the museum experience from the comfort of your own home! The Oil Museum of Canada offers virtual tours of the main gallery, as well as the grounds and outbuildings. The website also offers educational virtual programs that complement school curriculum as well as a series of educational videos titled ‘Drilling Deeper’. Access the virtual learning programs and keep up-to-date with our reopening at oilmuseum.ca.

Looking Ahead

9 a.m., March 3, 2021 - Lambton County Council Budget Meeting

9 a.m., March 11, 2021 - Lambton County Council Budget Meeting **** if required**

Agendas, minutes and links to meeting live stream videos can be found in the online Council Meeting Calendar at lambtononline.ca/meetings.

Office of the County Warden
519-845-0801 | 1-866-324-6912
www.lambtononline.ca

To read more, go to lambtononline.ca

Sports

Minor hockey in flux as COVID rules change

Barry Wright
The Independent

Now that the province has downgraded Sarnia-Lambton to the lower Red COVID-19 protocol designation, Mooretown Minor Hockey wants to know how many of its players will return if the season should resume March 1, as was planned under the less restrictive Orange classification.

“We want to give our membership the opportunity to voice whether or not they want to return to finish out this season,” said a statement on the association’s website Monday.

“MTMHA’s first priority is to keep our kids safe, while also allowing them to stay healthy, get some exercise, and enjoy the game we all love.” The survey is available until this Thursday.

The East Lambton Minor Hockey Association will continue on in Red, according to league President Adam MacKellar.

“We appreciate everything the Watford Arena, and Warwick Council have done to support the local association by keeping arenas open, being flexible and doing their best to keep kids active and on the ice,” said MacKellar. “We think that they have set a great example of how small communities work together.”

The Lambton Junior Sting continue to aim for a March restart with fewer players on the ice at one time, but also with the hope restrictions will lessen before that.

Lambton Attack Girls Hockey has also posted a survey on its website to determine if its players and parents want to proceed, and Sarnia Sting Girls Hockey has put a pause on its plans until Sarnia-Lambton is designated as Orange or better.

Minor hockey associations in Petrolia and Lambton Shores have already cancelled the remainder of the seasons due to uncertainty over the pandemic.

Province nixes latest OHL Return to Play plan

Barry Wright
The Independent

Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health has turned thumbs down on the latest effort by the Ontario Hockey League to get its teams back on the ice.

In a interview in Ottawa this week, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture, Lisa MacLeod said Dr. David Williams rejected the plan following a meeting with the league Friday.

MacLeod said the OHL plan could not be signed off on because it did not include, among other things, rapid testing or plans to properly secure bubble locations to keep the players isolated.

She told CTV the two sides continue to work together on a solution and is hopeful a final decision can be made by mid-March.

MacLeod said, if a season is to happen, she would like to see a champion crowned before the NHL draft which is scheduled for late July.

Wyoming’s Myers, South Carolina, unbeaten in NCAA

The Independent

Noah Myers and his South Carolina teammates swept Dayton to open their NCAA college baseball season last weekend.

The Wyoming Wranglers grad had a double, two walks and a run scored in the three games against the Flyers. The Gamecocks were scheduled to play Winthrop on Tuesday

afternoon, but the score was not available prior to our press time.

South Carolina has a three-game series with Clemson this weekend.

Conference play begins March 19 and continues until late May.

Myers and his team have jumped up a spot to number 17 in the NCAA baseball rankings following the sweep of Dayton.

McGregor surpasses goal for Terry Fox Foundation



The Independent

The captain of Canada’s national sledge hockey team has exceeded his fundraising goal for the Terry Fox Foundation.

As of our press time, Forest’s Tyler McGregor had raised \$27,260 from his 25 km skate in his sledge hockey sled along the Blue Mountain Trail in Collingwood last weekend.

His goal was \$25,000. The two-time world champion lost his leg to cancer as a teenager and has always considered Terry Fox a hero.

“Tyler credits his hero Terry for helping him overcome his cancer battle, and return to excel in sport,” says the Foundation through social media.

The North Lambton grad is preparing for the IPC World Para Hockey Championships in May and the Paralympics in Beijing in 2022.

Granfondo hopes it’s a go for this year’s cycling event

Bluewater International Granfondo is keeping its fingers crossed for an event this summer.


The largest cycling event in Sarnia-Lambton has an optimistic eye on this August.

“We will continue to monitor the situation very closely because the health, safety and welfare of our participants, volunteers and community is our highest priority,” said the organizing committee in a recent news release. The event is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, August 1, 2021.

Those who did not request a refund from last year’s cancelled event will automatically be given a spot in the ’21 event at no charge.

The event has raised more than \$200,000 for the Bluewater Health Palliative Care Unit and St. Joseph’s Hospice.

“A challenging year is in our rear-view mirror,” said the committee. “But we are still in uncertain times. We can’t wait to celebrate riding with you once it’s safe to do so.”



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 WARWICK

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 March 25, 2021, at the Warwick Municipal Office, 6332 Nauvoo Road, Watford Ontario.

The tenders will then be opened in public on the same day as soon as possible after 3:00 p.m. at the Municipal Office, 6332 Nauvoo Road, Watford.

Description of Land:

Roll No. 38 41 042 002 04400 0000; 505 Huron St., Watford; PIN 43053-0307 (LT); PT LT 7 PL 1 WATFORD AS IN L770015; T/W INTEREST IN L770015; S/T L770015; S/T L233929, L340568; WARWICK; File No. 19-05

According to the last returned assessment roll, the assessed value of the land is **\$41,000**

Minimum tender amount: \$40,023.50

Tenders must be submitted in the prescribed form and must be accompanied by a deposit of at least 20 per cent of the tender amount, which deposit shall be made by way of a certified cheque/bank draft/money order payable to the municipality.

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. The assessed value, according to the last returned assessment roll, may or may not be representative of the current market value of the property.

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, visit: *****.OntarioTaxSales.ca** or if no internet access available, contact:

Trevor Jarrett
Treasurer/Deputy Administrator
The Corporation of the Township of Warwick
6332 Nauvoo Road
RR #8
Watford ON N0M 2S0
(519) 849-3926











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Classifieds



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In Memory

In loving memory of a dear granddaughter, niece and cousin,

Cassie Lynn McNally

who passed away 34 years ago on
February 27, 1987

In our hearts precious memories are kept,
Of one we loved and will never forget

Always loved and remembered by
Grandma Deanie & the Jardine families

In Memory

Lucan

In loving memory of our a sweet, special friend,
Kristel Leighann

Jesus took her home to Heaven on February 22, 1987. She was 5 1/2

Dear Kristel,
Although we cannot see you,
We feel your presence in so many special ways.
Birthdays, anniversaries, every celebration,
You are a part of every day.
The memories we carry with us
Will never, ever be gone.
You will not be forgotten.
Our love for you lives on.

Lovingly remembered by
Jim, Marie and family

McNally

In loving memory of a precious daughter, sister and aunt,
Cassie Lynn

She left us to live with Jesus and the angels on February 27, 1987. She was 5 1/2

The years can't take away our memories.
Not a moment goes by that we don't think of you.
We journey on this rocky road that leads to Heaven.
And Jesus helps us through.
We miss your hugs, your smile, your laugh.
We are so thankful, that you are ours.
We send our love to you on angels' wings.
On earth, we bring you flowers.
Your nieces and nephews remind us of you.
The cute things you did and said.
We all hold you close in our thoughts and our hearts,
Until we can hold you in our arms, where no more tears will be shed.

Achingly missed and lovingly remembered by
Mommy, Daddy, Candice, Chris, Charity, Shane, Maleah, Braxton, Alayna, Celina, Levin, Atticus and Shepherd

Card of Thanks

Thank You

A sincerer thank you to everyone who made my 80th Birthday so enjoyable. It was very appreciated.

Margaret "Margie" Clark

Celebration


HAPPY 1st BIRTHDAY

Aidan Wark

February 24th

To our beautiful boy!
We love you more than words can say!

Love
Mummy & Daddy,
Soph & Magoo



Celebration

BARRY CLARKE
IS TURNING
SEVENTY-ONE-DERFUL
ON MARCH 1st, 2021!

Happy Birthday from your loving family



Notice

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

Wanted to Buy

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


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>

Obituary

DOBBYN
Owen

1940-2021



Passed away on **Friday, February 19, 2021** at C.E.E. Hospital in Petrolia, ON. Owen was the loving husband of 47 years to Jessie. Much-loved father of Michelle Bidner (Todd), Kevin (Amy), and cherished step-father of Bonnie Sharp (Ron), Terry Acton (Gord) and was predeceased by his stepson Joe Acton (Debbie Button). Dearly missed by his grandchildren Dylan Carter, Colton Bidner, Alexa Dobbyn, Aidan Dobbyn, Marcie Sharp (Jared Leeson), Holly Sharp, Andy Sharp (Keri), Sally Butler, Karly Butler, as well as great-grandchildren Jake and Robin Leeson, and Gibson, Eddie, and Hudson Sharp. Survived by his sister Anna May Aldous (Bob), as well as many nieces and nephews. Owen was born in Shetland and lived and farmed for many years in that area. He was a graduate of Ridgetown Agricultural College, a retired member of the Bothwell Slo-Boys hockey league, and a member of the Florence Oddfellows Lodge #196 for 50 years. He served on the Ontario Soybean Marketing Board, and was the Canadian director to the American Soybean Board for 4 years. Owen had appointments to the Grain Financial Protection Board, the Crop Insurance Commission, and served as a board member for the Agricultural Hall of Fame. Retiring from farming in 2004 to Petrolia, Owen continued to take an interest in farming on the local and national scene. He found coming back to the local Shetland coffee shop a great place to stay informed on these matters. Always interested in keeping the Faith, he served on several church boards over the years. Currently a member of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Petrolia, he was known (amongst other titles) as the dishwasher. He was a generous, community-minded man that will be missed by friends and family. **A private funeral service was held on Wednesday, February 24, 2021. The funeral service can be viewed at www.facebook.com/NeedhamJay.** As expressions of sympathy, memorial donations may be made to Florence Oddfellows Lodge #196 or C.E.E. Hospital Foundation (www.ceehf.ca). Arrangements entrusted to Needham-Jay Funeral Home, Petrolia www.needhamjay.com

Notice

Ontario Small Business Support Grant - The Ontario Small Business Support Grant is currently accepting applications. The grant provides \$10,000 to all eligible businesses, up to a maximum of \$20,000 to help cover decreased revenue expected as a result of the Provincewide Shutdown. Learn more here: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/businesses-get-help-covid-19-costs>

Service

BOB'S TAX SERVICE - 256 Warwick Street, Watford, Personal, Small Farm, Small Business, Rentals, Self Employed, Prior Years, e-filer, Fast Dependable Service, Reasonable Rates, **Call Robert Alcock for Appointment - 519-876-2360.**

Obituary

HILL
Violet Pauline



Peacefully surrounded by her daughters on **Sunday, February 21, 2021**. Violet Pauline Hill (Kelly) (nee Adams), of Petrolia and formerly of Brooke Township, passed away in her **99th year**. She was the daughter of the late Jennie and Orville Adams and sister of the late Bernice Coke and Orma Andreacchi. Pauline was the wife of the late Robert Kelly (1980) and Owen Hill (2007). She was predeceased by her sons Dan (2016) and Dennis (2011). She is survived by daughters Joyce (Bruce McLeod) Kelly, Judy (Charlie) Duncan, and Debbie (Wayne) Dupuis, and daughters-in-law Lorraine Kelly and Cheryl Kelly. Cherished grandma to 15 grandchildren, 27 great grandchildren and 5 great-great grandchildren and predeceased by a great grandson Patrick (2005). Mom was a devoted member of Christ Church Anglican in Petrolia, the Royal Canadian Legion Br. 216, and enjoyed her time golfing in retirement. She also spent many years delivering for meals on wheels. And was a devoted employee of Twilight Haven. A big thank you at Meadowview Villa for the past 15 years of caring and loving our mom, even though you had to watch for the left hook. We especially wish to thank Ellen for her care. Mom enjoyed her monthly card games with the Wisdom Group. **A private service will be held, and will be livestreamed on Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 1:00. Please visit www.facebook.com/needhamjay. Interment at St James Cemetery near Watford.** As expressions of sympathy, memorial donations may be made to the MS Society (mssociety.ca) or Diabetes Canada (www.Diabetes.ca). Memories and condolences may be shared online at www.needhamjay.com

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

February 13 - February 19, 2021

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13

JOHNSON, Cornelia
Age 82, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home

KENNY, Thomas
Age 94, of Sarnia
McCormack Funeral Home

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14

HARPER, Ralph
Age 88, of Warwick
Denning's of Forest

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15

LEENDERS, Dorothy
Age 79, of Sarnia
McKenzie & Blundy Funeral Home

CATES, Evalean "Jean"
Age 95, of Wallaceburg
McCormack Funeral Home

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16

HOEFNAGELS, John
Age 57, of Watford
Denning's of Watford

WARD, Brian
Age 87, of Sarnia
D.J. Robb Funeral Home

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17

SMITH, Eugene
Age 79, of Petrolia
Needham-Jay Funeral Home

ZANYK, Joseph
Age 89, of Sarnia
McKenzie & Blundy Funeral Home

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18

BOGAERT, Dennis
Age 68, of Sombra
Steadman Funeral Chapel

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19

JAMES, Shirley
Of Sarnia
Gilpin Funeral Home

HOGG, David
Age 70, of Sarnia
McKenzie & Blundy Funeral Home

CHIVERS, Ernest
Age 75, of Sarnia
McCormack Funeral Home

DOBBYN, R. Owen
Age 80, of Petrolia
Needham-Jay Funeral Home

CROZIER, June
Age 88, of Forest
Denning's of Forest



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

Church DIRECTORY

Christ Anglican Church
414 Oil Street, Petrolia

We are closed due to Covid-19 at this time.

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.

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 at this time. Please contact our office at wyoing_united@outlook.com to be sent the Zoom link to join us for our 10am live service.

Rev. Steven Longmoore
Church Office 519-845-3963
Find us on Facebook

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Two thumbs up for hot tub and a ticket

Alex Kurial
Local Journalism Initiative

A night in a Plympton-Wyoming hot tub got out of hand for one man last summer.

Douglas Johnston, 39, appeared by telephone in Sarnia Court Feb. 23 pleading guilty to a drunk driving charge from June. He was discovered by OPP officers pulled over on the side of Oil Heritage Line with his hazards flashing just before 3 am on a Tuesday morning.

Officers approached the vehicle to investigate and found a shirtless man slumped over the steering wheel. Despite repeated knocks on the window, Johnston only groaned and moved slightly.

The officers finally got Johnston’s attention when they shone flashlights in the car. After a minute of fumbling with the handle he managed to open the door.

The officers then asked Johnston for some identification, but he instead leaned back and said “I’m sleeping.”

Officers eventually got Johnston to produce some ID, at which point he slumped into the passenger seat. They asked if he’d been drinking, and Johnston held up both his thumbs while saying he’d had two or three shots while hanging out in a hot tub.

Johnston was arrested and taken to Petrolia OPP where he blew an alcohol reading of .185, more than

double the legal limit.

“The Crown’s concern for public safety is that someone got behind the wheel of a vehicle when they essentially couldn’t even speak or walk,” says Crown Attorney Ryan Iaquina.

“That’s an incredibly aggravating situation.”

Iaquina asked for a \$2,000 fine and one year driving ban. Johnston, representing himself, offered no objection to the proposed punishment.

“It was a completely irresponsible decision that I made,” says Johnston. “I don’t remember a whole lot about that night. I was obviously very impaired.”

“I’m adamant this was a one-off thing that’s never going to happen again in my life,” Johnston added. “I’m very glad that nobody was hurt.”

Justice Krista Leszczynski agreed with the proposed sentence, and also approved a victim fine surcharge to bring Johnston’s total fine to \$2,600. She said the elevated punishment was appropriate, “Given the aggravating features... specifically the very high readings that you had at the time, as well as the fact that you were essentially unconscious in the vehicle, and after being awoken demonstrated severe impairment.”

“You are lucky that neither you nor anybody else was hurt as a result of your decision to drive on that night,” Leszczynski says.

International Women’s Day goes online

The Independent

A group of local business women is launching a pandemic-proof virtual celebration of International Women’s Day on March 8.

Cat Cabajar, owner of The Painted Cat, and Chelsey Hart, founder of Her Initiative Co., are spearheading an online day of events and calling it Her Gathering 2021.

“It’s important, especially with the uncertainty of the pandemic, to come together to support and inspire each other,” said Cabajar.

International Women’s Day has been marked in various ways around the world for more than 100 years. About 10 years ago, the event cranked up in Canada with gatherings and speakers to celebrate the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women.

It also became a call to action for accelerating gender parity.

“When I started my own business 17 years ago in Sarnia, it was still rare for a woman,” said Cabajar. “We’ve come a long way since then but we still fight double standards.

“That’s why events like this are needed to empower women and make sure they know they are part of a larger, supportive community.”

With a grant from Startup Canada

and sponsorship from more than 20 local businesses, Her Gathering 2021 hopes to attract at least 100 women to the zoom event.

“And we hope we’ll be successful enough to do it annually,” said Cabajar.

In total there will be three hours of programming that combine professional development with self-care. Guests are from the local community and include Ashley Smith, owner of Heart & Hands who will lead live meditation and yoga. Carrie McEachran, executive director of Rebound and the owner of F. Revolution, who will join Hart to discuss this year’s theme “Choose to Challenge” and what leadership and courage mean.

Cabajar and Danielle Catton, founder of Danielle is Anxious, are discussing self-love and body positivity, followed by a therapeutic art session hosted by Cabajar. Musical guest is Cynthia Fay performing original songs.

Hart is also introducing a new online meeting place called Her Community for women who are in business or aspiring to start one.

Tickets are on sale at eventbrite.ca under her gathering. The first 20 registrants in Lambton County receive swag bags.

Fido can still get his Petrolia dog tags online

If you live in Petrolia and you need a dog tag, you can now get it online.

The town hall was closed throughout the provincial lockdown when licenses were due. So, Clerk Mandi Pearson says, they set up an online option.

The secure form, which can be found under Town Hall on Petrolia’s website, allows residents to fill in the required information about their pooch and pay with a credit card online. The 2020 dog tags are still valid until the end of this month.



Social gatherings can have deadly consequences.



Stay home to stop the spread of COVID-19. Learn more at ontario.ca/covid-19

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