

Lambton's top doc urges social diet to starve COVID

Heather Wright
The Independent

Lambton's medical officer of health is urging people to go on a "social diet" this Christmas.

Dr. Sudit Ranade is asking people to keep social interactions small as the newest COVID-19 variant - Omicron - makes an impact on the province.

The number of people becoming ill in Ontario is rapidly rising. Sunday saw 4,177 people test positive for COVID-19 and another 3,784 Monday.

In Lambton, there are now 160 ill with COVID-19, an increase of 16 over the weekend.

Scientists advising the province warned the number of people contracting the virus could rise to 10,000 per day if new restrictions weren't put in place.

Friday, Premier Doug Ford announced new measures hoping to slow the pace of infection from Omicron long enough to get more COVID-19 vaccine booster shots into the arms of Ontarians. It's believed to be the best shot to keep people from getting seriously ill.

SEE RANADE PG 2

CHRISTMAS BREAD FOR EVERYONE



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Dawn MacLaren was one of the many volunteers putting food items into the hundreds of Christmas boxes in the Christmas for Everyone Campaign. Volunteer firefighters from across Central Lambton delivered over 400 food and toy packages to people from Forest to Dawn-Euphemia.

Negotiations underway to transfer Highland Glen to Plympton-Wyoming

Heather Wright
The Independent

The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority is willing to turn over Highland Glen to Plympton-Wyoming.

The board of directors recently agreed to start talking with the municipality about the details of what the turnover of the Lake Huron park would look like.

In late November, Plympton-Wyoming council gave Councillor Tim Wilkins the go-ahead to ask the conservation authority to begin negotiations to turn over the park. Council hoped by taking it

over, it could get the park's key asset - the only public boat launch between Sarnia and Grand Bend - reopened.

It's been closed for two years and the authority had little interest in putting big bucks into it anytime soon.

In late 2019, the original groyne wall on the west side of the boat launch ramp was damaged due to wave action and is now missing. Water levels on Lake Huron have been high, contributing to erosion on both the east and west sides of the ramp protection structure.

The erosion has exposed the steel sheet pile wall of the boat ramp

and has eroded the banks further along the beach which puts the parking lot in jeopardy.

An engineering report suggested it would take \$85,000 just for temporary fixes to get the ramp reopened.

The firm added a total of \$3 million would have to be invested in the park over the course of a number of years to fully repair the boat launch and protect the banks from erosion.

This fall, the board of the conservation authority opted against putting any money into repairs and instead formed a committee on the future of the

park.

That virtually guaranteed the boat ramp would remain closed in 2022.

Plympton-Wyoming councillors didn't like that option and felt the municipality should step in.

At its Dec. 9 board meeting, the conservation authority agreed to begin talks with Sarnia City Councillor Mike Stark noting the authority's 2022 budget only sets out \$31,000 for repairs at Highland Glen.

Wilkins told board members Plympton-Wyoming is aware of the costs, and after a lengthy discussion is willing to provide

what's needed to maintain the waterfront land.

Negotiations are now underway to strike a deal. It's likely to be similar to a package the conservation authority and Plympton-Wyoming put together when McEwen Park - just north of Highland Glen - was transferred to the municipality last year.

The town had a management agreement in place, which meant town staff took over maintenance until the provincial government approved the transfer of the park. It's not clear how long it will take to strike a deal or when it will take affect.

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‘Overwhelming demand’ for COVID booster

Heather Wright
The Independent

If Lambton residents can book a COVID-19 booster, many will be receiving the Moderna vaccine.

Ontario’s supply of Pfizer’s COVID-19 vaccine are temporarily delayed.

Health units across the province have been told to limit the available Pfizer doses to people between 12 and 29. Anyone over 30 will receive Moderna vaccine. The two vaccines are seen as interchangeable.

There’s no time frame on how long this will last.

In Lambton, people looking for appointments are not finding a lot of times available.

The last appointments before the Christmas break - there are no vaccine clinics listed on the public health website from Dec. 24 to 29 - are on Wednesday. The appointments at Point Edward Optimist Hall are booked already. Walk ins for first and second doses for those over 12 will be accepted.

Meantime, public health has added one more walk in clinic at the Forest location – The Shores Arena – on Wednesday. But officials say only people over 70 will be able to get their third booster at that time. Elderly people are most vulnerable to severe illness due to COVID-19.

Monday, *The Independent* did a check of the Lambton vaccine portal for adults seeking the third booster. The earliest appointments we found were at The Shores Jan. 26. There were only five at the time.

For children, there were vaccine appointment dates available at Lambton College for Jan. 10 and several days after that.

The public health website warns; “At this time, Lambton Public Health cannot guarantee everyone will receive their third dose at the minimum interval.

“We will, however, continue to open

additional clinics to meet demands as needed, so please be patient and check the listing of our upcoming clinics regularly.”

Officials added most people are now booking boosters in late January. Appointment’s in February haven’t opened up yet.

Public Health advises people to call one of nine local pharmacies giving COVID-19 shots. In Petrolia, Hogan’s Pharmacy has an appointment only clinic tomorrow where an extra pharmacist has been brought in to administer vaccines. However Pharmacist Margaret Kreibich tells *The Independent* on a regular day, staff can complete about 14 vaccine appointments between regular business.

Sarah Milner, executive director of the Central Lambton Family Health Team, says they have received some extra vaccine for booster shots which they are administering now.

“The demand far exceeds the supply we have,” says Milner in an email. “We are not running mass clinics due to limited staffing. We are also in the midst of flu shot season and increased COVID testing demand,” Milner says adding, “We are doing our best to vaccinate which patients we can and trying to increase capacity where we can.”

Lambton’s Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Sudit Ranade, told reporters Thursday, the rush to get a third shot is not an instant fix for the rapidly increasing number of cases.

“There’s going to be really overwhelming demand for that booster and it’s going to be very difficult to meet that demand,” says Ranade noting it will take a “few weeks to take effect.”

He adds people who are double vaccinated already “probably have really good protection against hospitalization.

“Even in the face of boosting a lot of people, we may not actually change the outcome of what is going to happen with Omicron in our province.”

such as SilverStick - which are a staple of the Christmas season? Ranade says he has no plans to curb those types of activities.

“You could stop some of those activities, but this is still going to spread in other areas, unless we absolutely shut everything down, including people’s social interactions.

“And unless we actually did it last week, not much is going to change the trajectory. And so because of that, I wouldn’t be so eager to focus on one particular setting or area or sector or event, because there going to be so many other things that people are doing privately that are going to actually spread this disease as well.”

Dr. Stein Brown, the head of the Ontario COVID-19 Science Table says even with the provincial restrictions we have now, Omicron is going to make December and January difficult.

“If we want to blunt this wave, please note that I’m saying blunted not flat, we will need to reduce contacts between people. I believe we can do this without closing schools or shutting down businesses that have suffered during previous waves.”

Brown says hospitals will “still face incredibly strong pressures” because of the people who become seriously ill.

“This will come at an already challenging time when health care workers are fatigue burned out from the preceding waves.

“High-quality masks, physical distancing indoors, improved ventilation, and increased access to rapid testing can help buy time for boosters to take effect and keep schools open.”

Ranade urges social diet at Christmas

CON’T FROM PG 1

Sunday, all businesses had to reduce their capacity to 50 per cent. Sports venues, movie theatres and concert venues can’t serve food right now. Bars and restaurants can only have 10 people at a table. Last call will be 10 pm and the businesses must close at 11 pm.

And social gatherings indoors - like your Christmas party - should now be limited to no more than 10 people indoors or 25 people outdoors.

That’s where Ranade’s social diet comes into play. “Due to the high transmissibility of the Omicron variant, any type of social gathering presents a risk whether you are vaccinated or not,” said Ranade in a news release Monday. “I realize this may be extremely difficult for some, but to protect our health-care system, I strongly suggest residents go on a ‘social diet’ this holiday season and only do what is necessary.”

“Have the conversation with the people that you’re gathering with about what their risk tolerance is, because you cannot really guarantee that even if everybody tests negative, that you won’t actually have a person at that party who has Omicron or COVID,” he told reporters Thursday.

Ranade also recommends people “don’t go anywhere if you’re not feeling well and the smaller the better.

“We’re trying to, we’re trying to get people onto a social diet here. So it’s smaller. Smaller, smaller, smaller is better in terms of gathering.

What about those hockey tournaments -



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Oil Springs museum to open Jan. 26 after an extra six months of renos

Heather Wright
The Independent

A construction project at the Oil Museum of Canada which was expected to take six months, will take almost a year to complete. And it's cost has now grown to over \$1 million.

Lambton County officials say the opening date of the revamped museum originally planned for June 2021 is now expected Jan. 26.

In February, contractors began stripping the 60 year-old museum to the studs as part of a plan to return the building to its original design by Ian Rutherford. One of the keys will be opening up the museum again by returning the walls of windows which allowed visitors to look out over the existing oil fields.

The museum is also redesigning the exhibits based on the original vision of the museum's founders to feature things like the geology of oil, how Indigenous people used oil, the discovery of oil and the reach of Lambton's oil drillers as well as the history of Oil Springs and the boom there.

But as the construction began, Ontario began to tighten work and social restrictions because of the rise of the COVID-19 virus. The restrictions, which lasted for several weeks, slowed the flow of

construction materials which were already scarce because of a building boom across North America.

The contractors also had to figure out how many people would be able to work at one time, to make sure everyone properly distanced while the building was under construction.

As the June opening date rolled around, the province was reopening. Museums would be among the last venues to invite the public back in. By then, Oil Museum officials were thankful for the extra time as the construction lagged.

But the new opening date became October as supply shortages continued.

Monday, there was a light at the end of the tunnel according to Erin Dee-Richards, the curator of the Oil Museum of Canada. The engineers have given the green light to let visitors into the new space in Oil Springs when the county is ready to reopen.

That will be a month yet.

"Small things, deficiencies, that kind of thing, are being addressed. ... We have our display cases in and got the interpreter panels printed and started installing those and employing artifacts to prepare them to be able to put onto display," she says.

"We're working towards an opening, a soft opening date

of January 26 2022, which is a Wednesday," says Dee-Richards noting that is the museums regular winter hours.

"We're not doing anything fancy at this point, just because of restrictions. We are going to be planning public grand reopening events for the springtime. We're still going to be determining that date.

"We're just going to be opening our doors and allowing people to come and visit us again."

Dee-Richards says there has been some concern that the museum has been closed for so long, it may be off some patron's radars.

"We've been trying to up our social media presence, as well as we have a member E-blast that goes out with kind of behind the scenes pictures and information of what's going on," she says.

Employees have also started doing virtual programming, which has proven popular and has lead to an award for the museum.

"We're hoping that those types of things are keeping people maybe not in the front of their mind, but at least keeping people remembering about us. People have been interacting with us on social media and they seem to be excited for us when we return."

With the extra time to restore the museum comes extra cost ac-



OIL MUSEUM OF CANADA PHOTO

Members of the Facility and Exhibition team strategized and used a little brute force to place the 1,000 pound wagon into its place at the newly renovated Oil Museum of Canada in Oil Springs recently. The facility is expected to open to the public Jan. 26 - six months later than first anticipated.

cording to the General Manager of cultural services for Lambton, Andrew Meyer.

There have been about \$167,000 in approved changes throughout the course of the construction, stretching the \$880,000 price tag

to about \$1,048 million. Those costs will be finalized at the end of the project.

Meyers adds the cost over run will be covered with a contingency fund built into the contract and reserves at the county.

Deighton takes leave

Heather Wright
The Independent

Petrolia Councillor Wade Deighton is taking a three and a half month absence from his elected position.

Council gave approval for the move at the Dec. 13 council meeting.

"I've been offered an opportunity at work to further my career and have decided that the opportunity is too good to pass up," Deighton who works in the petrochemical industry.

"Unfortunately, it does take me away from my duties here at Petrolia. So, I do request a leave of absence I'll be gone from basically the end of December until sometime in mid April."

Council approved the request which Mayor Brad Loosley says is the maximum allowed under Ontario's Municipal Act. The leave cannot be extended and should Deighton need more time, the seat would become vacant just five months before the next election.

Petrolia workers reach deal

Heather Wright
The Independent

The Town of Petrolia has reached a new contract with its unionized employees.

Councillors heard the details of the tentative deal during an in camera session Dec. 13 and gave their approval for the pact.

Clerk Mandi Pearson says all full time and part time public works and parks/recreation employees fall under the collective agreement as part of Local 2393. It's not clear exactly how many people are employed in the two divisions of the town.

"At this time however the full details of the CUPE contract are not available as we will be presenting this through a by-law in January," she writes in an email to *The Independent*.

The four year deal still has to be approved in public by council with the passing of the bylaw.

Pearson confirmed that the improvements in the contract would also apply to management.

For your viewing pleasure, Petrolia council meetings hit YouTube

If you're interested in catching up on the political happenings in Petrolia but can't watch the virtual meetings as they happen, there will soon be a solution.

Mayor Brad Loosley says the town will soon post the meetings on YouTube. He says the move comes after *The Independent* suggested it.

Council will continue to meet virtually as long as Lambton County does. That's expected to be until at least March. After that Loosley says council will decide whether livestreaming is an option.

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Editorial

Rural Ontario not on the radar

It has become abundantly clear, again, that provincial governments can only see as far as the edges of the Greater Toronto Area.

It’s been a problem for as long as politicians have been politicking; the biggest city in the province gets the most attention. One understands half the population of the province lives there, so they need the attention, however the cynics view would be they also hold the balance of power. When elections roll around, they become more important.

With that as a backdrop, consider what has been happening as the province “ramps up” to fight “our worst enemy yet - Omicron.”

The variant of COVID-19 travels easily. A lot more people will be sick - as many as 10,000 by the end of the year without measures. And that means there will be more people in hospital.

The Conservative government has a plan to combat it - booster shots for everyone over 18. That, say scientists, will keep most people from getting critically ill. The province also placed limits on the capacity in stores and arenas, put new restrictions on restaurants and movie theatres and our personal gatherings.

And Premier Ford announced rapid tests would be available to anyone - freely distributed in high traffic areas. He should have added “offer may not be valid in southern Ontario.” Our scan of the places where people in Lambton could obtain the rapid tests came up empty. Students in schools took home five tests. Businesses can get them from the local chamber. But the Average Joe who wants one would have to travel to Windsor or Toronto and wait in line at a mall to maybe get some. LCBO stores - which were a distribution point across the province - were out one day after the announcement was made.

All the rest of the millions of tests were in Toronto. And yes, there were long lines there, too.

So, rural Ontarians trying to do the right thing to limit the spread of the variant don’t have the same tools as their urban counterparts.

It’s too bad because it appears Omicron doesn’t know to stay in the cities where we can keep better track of it.

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



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Ten years ago, St. Clair Fire responded to a fire in a large boat storage facility. It took approximately 55 firefighters 17 hours to extinguish the fire. Fire Departments from Michigan assisted by sending an aerial truck and fireboat to the scene. Damaged was estimated at approximately \$40 million.

Counting your blessings one by one this Christmas

There is an old song still sung in the church that I attend; Count Your Blessings.

I didn’t like the song much - mostly because of the tune - but I’ve been thinking a lot lately about the premise of it.

“Count your blessings name them one by one.” Simple. Or not, if you are consumed by anger or fear or frustration because of the pandemic.

But I’ll try.

I am so blessed by the humans in my life.

My kids - while still exhibiting the habits of every teen heading to adulthood - are good people; loving, caring and pretty funny and fun to be around. My husband is patient and helpful and hilarious.

Over the last year, my sister has become a huge blessing. Our weekly visits to my dad at the nursing home continued after he died, and it has been

wonderful to be able to share her life with her again after so many years of being caught up in my family and my work life.

I am constantly blessed by the people in my work life. Those I’ve worked directly with during these tough times have been invaluable, not just for their hard work but also because of their care and friendship. I think that it’s very rare not just to love what you do but to have great people doing it with you.

I’m also blessed by our readers. They are appreciative of what we do and that makes it worth while.

I’ve been blessed and inspired by the people I meet while I write; people like Frank and Carla Trepanier who are in the pages of this paper today. How can you not be inspired by a family who loves each other so well through difficult times and addiction?

I’ve been blessed by this community

and its volunteers. Watching people put their all into making Christmas special for others - either through a visit with Santa or making sure people have enough to eat - is heartwarming.

It is a reminder of the good we see all around us if we choose to “count our many blessings to see what God has done.”

This Christmas, I hope you have time to count your blessings. It might be a good thing to do while you’re with family and friends; speak the good out loud and watch joy unfold around you.



Heather Wright

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Opinion

Zero tax increase not good for long term planning: Welsh

EDITOR’S NOTE: *This letter was originally sent to Petrolia councillors one day before they passed a budget without a tax increase which put about \$2 million into the town’s reserves in 2022. Petrolia had \$7.99 million in reserves at the end of 2020.*

Does this council understand their strategic role in the governance of the municipality? This involves planning and thinking past the end of their term for the long term financial stability of the municipality.

Federal and Provincial entities do not want to fund municipalities who don’t have long term financial planning incorporated into their policies. They want positive projects with municipalities who are prepared and plan for long term success, not short term votes.

By 2024, Ontario Regulation 588/17 states that municipalities require a “funded” Long Term Financial Plan. This includes funding reserves for future projects. Petrolia has had a comprehensive and integrated long term financial plan since 2014. It is fully integrated with the budget planning process to make it easy for councillors and residents to see why a capital fund is justified and necessary.

This council has already approved funding for various studies and long term projects. Just two examples funded by the working capital reserve are the Parks Master Plan Study at \$55,000 and building condition assessment tender approved at \$25,500.

At any time during the months of preparation it takes staff to develop the budget did council direct staff to deliver a zero increase and as such also direct them on which projects would no longer be supported with long term financial planning? I cannot find this motion or discussion in council minutes.

At any point during the budget planning process was staff informed that council would not be supporting the very plans they previously approved including the budgetary recommendations?

Has council also directed staff as to what future capital projects not to do when the reserves are drained? This is what was proposed by Councillors Deighton’s first motion on November 8, 2021.

Councillor Deighton “only wanted staff to explain the \$1.5 million extra for savings”. The explanation comes from councils own approved studies and policies during their term.

If contributions to the Reserve are clawed back, are these councillors prepared to explain to residents why there is no money to complete future capital projects or have money set aside for the town portion of grant contributions, creating another structural deficit?

Staff do not always know when or if federal and provincial grants will happen, the key is to be prepared to be able to take advantage of these. Luckily, the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund will be increased.

This program is not designed so that councils can institute a 0 per cent tax increase nor should councils rely on increases in provincial or federal funding. Sufficient long term financial planning on behalf of the municipality must happen to ensure continued infrastructure improvements and other projects can happen for the community.

The Ministry of Finance recommends at least 1 per cent per annum of the total budget be allocated for the maintenance, repair and replacement of tangible capital assets (TCA) above in year capital related expenditures. Pandemic recovery continues to create future uncertainty with changing business needs, supply chains challenges, and inflationary concerns. The Waste Free Ontario Act will have budgetary implications for municipalities over the coming years that must be planned for and funded. Significant improvements are coming to our hospital these may require unanticipated capital expenditures. Petrolia has to be ready for these and other future projects. It is this councils duty to ensure we are prepared as a municipality.

It took a decade to dig Petrolia out of the structural deficit created by years of 0 per cent tax increases and no Long Term Financial Planning. It is this councils current responsibility to ensure this doesn’t happen again.

Liz Welsh
Petrolia, ON

Students begin Christmas break with hope of returning Jan. 3

Heather Wright
The Independent

Educators were determined to make Christmas vacation as normal as possible for students this year.

So when they sent children home Friday, no one packed their computers or their text books, as they had during the last Christmas and March Breaks. That’s despite the fact Ontario is facing what could be one of the most challenging junctures of the pandemic.

As the highly transmissible Omicron variant pushes up the number of people becoming ill with COVID-19, and predictions of 10,000 cases per day by the end of Decembers, there are fears the students would have to return to online learning.

But John Howitt, the director of education with the Lambton-Kent District School Board says both the public and separate board decided for the good of everyone’s mental health to send students home with the expectation they will return.

“There’s been a pattern of us not returning from vacations or breaks within the school year. ..through that, we’ve seen a little bit higher levels of anxieties in the school and concerns and questions around that stability and a level of insecurity.

We know that schools are a stabilizing place for students, as well as that routine is really important. We know that students do suffer from isolation when they’re not at school.”

So, the devices stayed at school,

since one of the unintended consequences for kids to take them home is higher anxiety about what comes next. Howitt says he boards will deal with online learning, if necessary, after the break.

The only sign of the pandemic for students was the rapid testing kits the province provided to each school aged family. Provincial officials want school kids to use them to ensure they don’t return to school with COVID-19 in January. They’re among the few rapid tests available in Lambton. The province handed out millions of the devices in the GTA, however the only place they were available in Lambton for free, other than to school children was one LCBO outlet in Sarnia. They were gone in one day.

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	Group 1	@ Mooretown Jr Flags	
9:30am	U18 B	Ingersoll Express	2
	Group 1	@ Lambeth Lancers	
11:00am	U18 B	Petrolia Oilers	3
	Group 1	@ Wallaceburg Lakers	
12:30pm	U18 C	Dresden Jr Kings	4
	Group	@ Lucan Irish	
2:00pm	U18 B	Lambeth Lancers	5
	Group 1	@ BCH Ice Dogs	
3:30pm	U18 B	Wallaceburg Lakers	6
	Group 1	@ Ilderton Jets	
5:00pm	U18 B	South Huron Sabres	7
	Group 1	@ Ingersoll Express	
6:30pm	U18 C	East Lambton Eagles	8
	Group 1	@ Petrolia Oilers AE	
8:00pm	U18 B	Mooretown Jr Flags	9
	Group 1	@ Petrolia Oilers	
9:30pm	U18 B	BCH Ice Dogs	10
	Group 1	@ South Huron Sabres	
TUESDAY DECEMBER 28			
8:00am	U18 C	Lucan Irish	11
	Group 1	@ East Lambton Eagles	
9:30am	U18 C	Petrolia Oilers AE	12
	Group 1	@ Belmont Rangers	
11:00am	U18 A	St. Thomas Jr Stars	13
	Group 1	@ Strathroy Jr Rockets	
12:30pm	U18 C	Hagersville Hawks	14
	Group 1	@ Clearview Canucks	
2:00pm	U18 A	London Jr Mustangs	15
	Group 1	@ Erin-Hillsburgh Devils	
3:30pm	U18 A	Strathroy Jr Rockets	16
	Group 1	@ Halton Hills Thunder AE	
5:00pm	U18 C	Clearview Canucks	17
	Group 1	@ Dresden Jr Kings	
6:30pm	U18 C	Belmont Rangers	18
	Group 1	@ Hagersville Hawks	
8:00pm	U18 A	Erin-Hillsburgh Devils	19
	Group 1	@ St Thomas Jr Stars	
9:30pm	U18 A	Halton Hills Thunder AE	20
	Group 1	@ London Jr Mustangs	

U18 A, U18 B, U18 C			
WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 29			
8:00am	U18 B	Seed #8	21 B Elim 1
	Group 1	@ Seed #1	
9:30am	U18 B	Seed #7	22 B Elim 2
	Group 1	@ Seed #2	
11:00am	U18 B	Seed #6	23 B Elim 3
	Group 1	@ Seed #3	
12:30am	U18 B	Seed #5	24 B Elim 4
	Group 1	@ Seed #4	
2:00pm	U18 A	Seed #5	25 A Elim
	Group 1	@ Seed #4	
3:30pm	U18 C	Seed #7	26 C Elim 1
	Group 1	@ Seed #2	
5:00pm	U18 C	Seed #6	27 C Elim 2
	Group 1	@ Seed #3	
6:30pm	U18 C	Seed #5	28 C Elim 3
	Group 1	@ Seed 4	
8:00pm	U18 A	Seed #2	29 A SF 1
	Semi Final	@ Seed #1	
9:30pm	U18 A	Seed #4	30 A SF 2
	Semi Final	@ Seed #3	
THURSDAY DECEMBER 30			
9:30am	U18 C	Seed #4	31 C SF 1
	Semi Final	@ Seed #1	
11:00am	U18 C	Seed #3	32 C SF 2
	Semi Final	@ Seed #2	
12:30pm	U18 B	Seed #4	33 B SF 1
	Semi Final	@ Seed #1	
2:00pm	U18 B	Seed #3	34 B SF 2
	Semi Final	@ Seed #2	
4:00pm	U18 A	Seed #2	35 A Final
	Champion-ship	@ Seed #1	
6:00pm	U18 C	Seed #2	36 C Final
	Champion-ship	@ Seed #1	
8:00pm	U18 B	Seed #2	37 B Final
	Champion-ship	@ Seed #1	

Greenwood Recreation Centre

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Nick Salaris
Tournament Director
salaris1@hotmail.com • 519-331-0991

Mike Krall
Assistant Tournament Director
dmkrall1990@gmail.com

Monday Dec 27 - Thursday Dec 30

Brooke Alvinston Inwood Community Centre

3310 Walnut St., Alvinston

Travis Duncan
Tournament Director
alvinstonatomsilverstick@gmail.com

2021 Alvinston Regional Silver Stick Tournament

U11 A, U11 B, U11 C			
MONDAY DECEMBER 27			
9:00am	U11 A	Mount Brydges Cougars	1
	Round Robin	@ Strathroy Jr Rockets	
10:05am	U11 A	Erie North Shore Storm	2
	Round Robin	@ St Thomas Jr Stars	
11:10am	U11 B	Lambeth Lancers	3
	Group 2	@ South Kent Lightning	
12:15pm	U11 B	Petrolia Oilers	4
	Group 1	@ Mooretown Jr Flags	
1:20pm	U11 A	St Thomas Jr Stars	5
	Round Robin	@ Mount Brydges Cougars	
2:25pm	U11 A	Southpoint Capitals	6
	Round Robin	@ Erie North Shore Storm	
4:00pm	U11 C	Lambton Shores Predators	7
	Group 1	@ East Lambton Eagles	
5:05pm	U11 C	Dresden Jr Kings	8
	Group 2	@ Seaforth Stars	
TUESDAY DECEMBER 28			
9:00am	U11 C	East Lambton Eagles	9
	Group 1	@ North Middlesex Jr Stars	
10:05am	U11 C	Lucan Irish	10
	Group 2	@ Dresden Jr Kings	
11:10am	U11 A	Strathroy Jr Rockets	11
	Round Robin	@ Southpoint Capitals	
12:15pm	U11 A	Erie North Shore Storm	12
	Round Robin	@ Mount Brydges Cougars	
1:20pm	U11 B	Mooretown Jr Flags	13
	Group 1	@ Wallaceburg Lakers	
2:25pm	U11 B	South Kent Lightning	14
	Group 2	@ Ilderton Jets	
3:30pm	U11 A	Southpoint Capitals	15
	Round Robin	@ St Thomas Jr Stars	
4:35pm	U11 A	Strathroy Jr Rockets	16
	Round Robin	@ Erie North Shore Storm	
5:40pm	U11 A	Ilderton Jets	17
	Group 2	@ Lambeth Lancers	
6:45pm	U11 A	Wallaceburg Lakers	18
	Group 1	@ Petrolia Oilers	

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 29			
9:00am	U11 C	North Middlesex Jr Stars	19
	Group 1	@ Lambton Shores Predators	
10:05am	U11 C	Seaforth Stars	20
	Group 2	@ Lucan Irish	
11:10am	U11 A	St Thomas Jr Stars	21
	Round Robin	@ Strathroy Jr Rockets	
12:15am	U11 A	Mount Brydges Cougars	22
	Round Robin	@ Southpoint Capitals	
1:20pm	U11 B	3rd in Group 1	23
	Quarter Final	@ 2nd in Group 2	
2:25pm	U11 B	3rd in Group 2	24
	Quarter Final	@ 2nd in Group 1	
3:30pm	U11 C	3rd in Group 1	25
	Quarter Final	@ 2nd in Group 2	
4:35pm	U11 C	3rd in Group 2	26
	Quarter Final	@ 2nd in Group 1	
5:40pm	U11 B	Winner Game 23	27
	Semi Final	@ 1st in Group 1	
6:45pm	U11 B	Winner Game 24	28
	Semi Final	@ 1st in Group 2	
THURSDAY DECEMBER 30			
9:00am	U11 C	Winner Game 25	29
	Semi Final	@ 1st in Group 1	
10:05am	U11 C	Winner Game 26	30
	Semi Final	@ 1st in Group 2	
11:10am	U11 A	2nd in Round Robin	31
	Champion-ship	@ 1st in Round Robin	
12:25pm	U11 B	Winner Game 28	32
	Champion-ship	@ Winner Game 27	
1:40pm	U11 C	Winner Game 30	33
	Champion-ship	@ Winner Game 29	



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‘I’m a volunteer firefighter wherever I go’ says Trepanier

Heather Wright
The Independent

Frank Trepanier says the training he’s been given clicked in as he jumped in to help a man in a wheelchair in medical distress. But the Dawn-Euphemia firefighter says three years ago, he would have been too “self absorbed” looking for his next drink to even notice what was happening.

Trepanier was honoured by the Canadian Red Cross Society with the Rescuer Award at the volunteer fire department’s annual dinner for stepping in to give CPR to the man. It was a big moment for Trepanier and his family on the road of recovery from addiction.

Trepanier and his wife Carla were coming back from vacation recently. They’d landed at Hamilton International Airport and as they were going through the terminal, Trepanier noticed movement out of the corner of his eye.

“We were waiting for our luggage to come through and there was some commotion going on over in the corner, and I happened to look over and they were dragging a man out of a wheelchair. So, being a volunteer firefighter and always pretty much being on call 24/7, I went right over to help.”

Trepanier says there were a couple of people already there whom he coached to help him do CPR as they waited for Hamilton firefighters and paramedics to take

over. The man did not survive and Trepanier learned later he was COVID-19 positive. That lead to some testing and isolation of his own until he learned he was fine.

“The fact that I’m trained in CPR and stuff like that... it was a natural reaction for me to jump in and try to help right to the best of my ability,” he says adding his brothers and sisters on the fire department deserve credit for training him.

And while Trepanier is humble about the award, his wife Carla, can barely explain her pride in her husband. But it’s not just about trying to save a man’s life on vacation. In 2018, Trepanier stepped up to seek the help to save his own life after years of alcohol and drug abuse.

Trepanier - a self-confessed adrenaline junkie - had always wanted to be a volunteer firefighter but his drinking and drug use made that impossible. And for some time, he wasn’t able to change. “I was self absorbed. All I cared about was Frank, right. I didn’t care about what anybody else wanted, what anybody else was doing,” he says. “My life was falling apart around me and I didn’t even realize it... if I’d been involved in this situation before when I was using, I don’t think I would have done that.”

Trepanier had been using drugs and alcohol for years, staying sober for a few months before Carla recognized the signs of abuse or traced his calls to his drug dealer and confronted him again.

He isolated himself from his wife and two young kids, living in a shed on their property.

One day, he wouldn’t go to work. It was tearing his wife up and eventually her boss sent her home, knowing she couldn’t concentrate. She found him in the shed again, high. It was a turning point. “I said I’m done... I don’t know where we go from here, but I know that I can’t live like this anymore. And like I’m broken. I’m just I’m done.”

She stayed with him, silent for four hours before their kids came home. She went to make them dinner and Trepanier joined them at the table. “He looked me in the eye and his tears start to flow. And he said, ‘I need help. I can’t do it anymore either.’”

Trepanier ended up at Westover Treatment Centre in Thamesville.

“I’ve had so many lost opportunities before I got sober and... I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. I was sick of chasing my next drunk and I was sick of chasing my next high. And yeah, pretty much my life was falling apart and I didn’t see it.”

Today, Trepanier works at Westover as the facilities maintenance director. He calls it an honour.

“This place saved my life and now I’ve got a chance to go back out into the community and its a way of making amends for me being on the fire department.”

His wife sees the Red Cross award as a marker on Trepanier’s



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Dawn-Euphemia firefighter Frank Trepanier received the Canadian Red Cross Society’s Rescuer Award at the departments annual awards night. Trepanier performed CPR on a traveller at Hamilton airport while on vacation.

road to recovery.

“There are not enough words to express how proud I am of him... I always knew he was this man. I was just waiting for him to figure it out.”

Trepanier seems a bit uncomfortable with the praise and the award. He says he was only doing what he’d been trained to do at the Dawn-Euphemia fire department.

Shoreline protection project under way in PW

The Independent

Work is underway to stop the erosion of the banks at Plympton-Wyoming’s Lamrecton Park.

The “significant” erosion was first seen in June 2020. At the time, neighbours in the area were completing some erosion control measures, however the town wasn’t able to do the work at Lamrecton at the same

time.Council reviewed a number of options and decided this fall a double layer of armour stone should be installed along the waterfront. Marine Construction won the contract for the work. It’s expected to cost \$512,000. That’s almost \$20,000 more than council anticipated. That will be covered by reserves.

It’s hoped the work will be completed before the May 2022 long weekend.

RIVER STREET EMERGENCY



LIANA RUSSWURM PHOTO

Volunteer firefighters from Brooke Fire Service were called to River Street in Alvinston Friday to extinguish a car fire. Witnesses on the scene say the blaze in the pickup truck was quickly brought under control. The owner was not hurt.



CHRISTMAS & NEW YEARS

WASTE COLLECTION SCHEDULE

There will be NO CHANGE to the Waste Collection Schedule over the Holidays.

Please remember to flatten all cardboard to no larger than 32" by 32", and to be mindful of the three-bag, and the 50lb. weight limit.

We ask that Christmas trees be placed at the curb, with all ornaments and tinsel removed and staff will be around to collect them beginning Tuesday, January 4.

From Mayor Loosley, Council and Staff we wish you all the best this holiday season, and send warm wishes to you and yours for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

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you'll be surprised!

The Municipal Office will be Closed at noon, Dec. 24 and will re-open on Tuesday, Jan. 4, 2022.



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

The Northern Vikings spoiled the LKSSAA Junior Girls soccer home opener for LCCVI Thursday, blanking the Lancers, 5-nil. It was quite a windy day, making it tough to see the ball at times.



LIMITLESS PHOTOGRAPHY - THERESA CHALMERS PHOTO

Scott Case of the Alvinston Killer Bees and Mike Findlay of the Tillsonburg Thunder help the President of the Alvinston Legion, Jack MacDonald, off the ice at the Brooke-Alvinston-Inwood Community Centre after the puck drop of the Remembrance Day game Nov. 4.



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Curtis McCallum of the Port Lambton Pirates found a way to cool down during a double header against Dresden this summer - he went to the splash pad.

Hot Shots of 2021

A pictorial review of Lambton Sports



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Jeremy Park of the Wyoming Cattlebarons tries to make the play at second during the team's defeat to the Petrolia Raiders Saturday en route to the championship this summer.



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Mike Bush of the Petrolia Squires gets in a tussle during the first game of the Western Ontario Hockey League season in October.



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Jalyn Jackson heads to the net for the LCCVI Lancers against the Great Lakes Wolfpack in September.

Sports

Lancer volleyball club unbeaten at Christmas break

Barry Wright
The Independent

The LCCVI senior girls’ volleyball team sits atop the AA standings following a four-set win over Great Lakes.

The Lady Lancers improved to 3-0 by beating the Wolfpack, 25-16, 23-25, 25-14 and 25-18.

Elsewhere, the LCCVI junior girls improved to 1-2 with a straight sets victory over Great Lakes and North Lambton improved to 1-2 in tier two action with a 3-0 triumph over Chatham Christian.

In girls’ hockey, LCCVI improved to 1-1 with a 7-1 win over North Lambton before the Eagles rebounded for a 5-0 verdict over Great Lakes.

In boys’ basketball, Ursuline took both ends of a doubleheader from LCCVI to drop the Lancers to 1-3 in both junior and senior play and Blenheim defeated North Lambton, 37-31 in junior boys’ tier two action. The Forest school is now 0-2.

High school sports is now on break until Jan.3.



FOILED AGAIN



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Brad Burton came back to haunt his former franchise scoring the overtime winner in Clinton’s 4-3 win over the Squires on Turkey Night at Greenwood. The veteran winger played parts of six seasons with the Squires from 2014-20. Josh Barraclough, Eric Marsh and Sam McCormick scored for the Squires. Here, Brandon Campbell stymies the Radars during the second. Petrolia is now 4-7-2 on the season. The next scheduled home game is Jan. 7.

Flags winning streak reaches seven

The Independent

The Mooretown Flags will take a seven-game winning streak into Wheatley Wednesday for their final pre-Christmas contest.

The Flags scored four power play goals in a 5-3 triumph over Essex Saturday and got by the Admirals, 5-4 in Amherstburg Sunday night.

Mooretown has not scored fewer than five goals per game over the seven-game stretch.

Brody Genyn led the Flags against the 73’s with two goals and an assist while Nolan Farr contributed a goal and three helpers.

Logan Gardner scored twice for Mooretown against the Admirals.

The Flags are 15-3 on the season.

The Flags first home game in the new year will be Wed., Jan. 5 against Wallaceburg.

Meantime on Saturday, the team honoured eight former players who had their careers cut short by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Brock Perry, Jake Wilkins, Trevor Bogaert, Max Steeves, Cameron Rannie, Cade Robbins and Garrett Miller were all presented with their game worn jerseys.

And the Flags have also announced that they have cancelled weekly meat draws until further notice.

Killer Bees come up empty in Stratford

The luck of the Irish was not with the Alvinston Killer Bees losing 10-0 to the Irish in Western Ontario Super Hockey League action in Stratford.

The home team had period leads of 2-0 and 6-0 on its way to the one-sided victory Saturday.

Alvinston is now 1-14 on the season.

The Bees play road games in Tillsonburg, Strathroy and Stratford in January before returning home to finish its inaugural regular season with five consecutive home games beginning Jan. 22.

Port Franks’ Everaert registers first GOJHL shutout

Ethan Everaert made his first Junior B victory a red-letter one.


Everaert turned aside all 49 shots he faced as the Sarnia Legionnaires blanked the Lasalle Vipers, 2-0 last Wednesday in LaSalle to record his first career GOJHL shutout.

The Port Franks product and graduate of the Lambton Junior Sting program followed that up a 33-save performance in a 5-4 win over Strathroy last Thursday and 41 saves in a 3-1 loss to the Flyers in Leamington on Sunday afternoon.

Former Petrolia Flyer Will O’Leary-Dilosa spoiled the Leamington shutout bid by scoring with just 25 seconds remaining in regulation time.






Ethan Everaert



This Month In Lambton

December 2021





Warden Kevin Marriott

@LambtonWarden

Winter Travel Tips

Winter travel season has arrived and motorists are being reminded to adjust their travel plans when severe weather is forecast.

511Ontario.ca provides travellers with information on road conditions, weather, radar imagery, and plow routes.

If you become stranded, it is often best to stay with your vehicle and wait for help. Make sure you have an emergency supplies kit for these situations. For details on what to include, visit **EmergenciesLambton.ca**.

Check It Out!

Stay up to date with Lambton County Library and pick up your copy of *Check It Out!*, your guide to Lambton County Library news and programs. Discover upcoming programs taking place in January and February including author talks, tech help workshops and learning sign language. The bi-monthly program guide will also explore your right to intellectual freedom and recommend titles that have been banned throughout history. Visit your local library and pick up a free copy or subscribe for a digital copy today at **subscribe.lclibrary.ca**.

Creative County Awards 2022 Funding

Lambton’s Creative County Grant Program has approved 21 projects for the 2022 program year, representing an investment of \$101,965 in funding. Eight of the projects are Indigenous-led or in partnership with neighbouring Indigenous communities.

It is estimated that this funding will leverage a total of \$515,820 in local cultural investment by applicant organizations in 2022, based on the total estimated project costs.


The next application intake is scheduled for the fall of 2022, supporting initiatives taking place during 2023. For more information about Lambton’s Creative County Grant Program, visit **lambtononline.ca/creativecounty**.

Looking Ahead

9 a.m. & 11 a.m., Jan. 19, 2022 - Committee A.M. & Committee P.M.

9:30 a.m., Feb. 2, 2022 - Lambton County Council Meeting


Agendas, minutes and links to meeting live stream videos can be found at **lambtononline.ca/meetings**.



Office of the County Warden

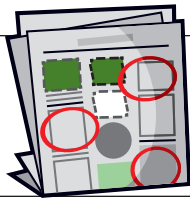
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Church Services

Christ Anglican Church

414 Oil Street, Petrolia

Friday, December 24

Christmas Eve Service @ 6pm

Sunday, December 26

No Sunday Service

Sunday, January 2

Lessons & Carols @ 11:15 am

-- Merry Christmas to All --

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

416 Queen Street, Petrolia

Tuesday, December 21

Blue Christmas @ 7 pm

Friday, December 24

Carols & Readings @ 4 pm

Sunday, December 26

Morning Service @ 10 am



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In Memory

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<p>Christ Anglican Church 414 Oil Street, Petrolia</p> <p>Welcome Back! In-person Church Services Sunday Mornings @ 11:15 am</p> <p>Rev. Michelle Collins-Wongkee Church Office 519-882-1430 christchurchpetrolia@gmail.com</p>	<p>St. Paul's United Church 4169 Petrolia Line at Centre Street</p> <p>In Person Services now taking place Sunday's @ 10:30am</p> <p>Rev Carol Ferguson Church Office: 519-882-1390 www.stpaulsunitedpetrolia.net</p>	<p>First Baptist Church 418 Greenfield Street, Petrolia</p> <p>IN PERSON CHURCH SERVICE Sunday Mornings 10:30am</p> <p>Pastor: Alex Craig Church Office 519-882-2480 email: fbcpetrolia@gmail.com www.firstbaptistpetrolia.ca www.facebook.com/First-Baptist-Church-Petrolia</p>	<p>Wyoming United Church 730 Second Street, Wyoming</p> <p>In Person Services taking place Sunday's @ 9:30 am</p> <p>Rev. Steven Longmoore Church Office 519-845-3963 wyoming_united@outlook.com Find us on Facebook</p>	<p>St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church 416 Queen Street, Petrolia (Behind the Post Office)</p> <p>In Person Service now back Sundays @ 10:00 a.m.</p> <p>Services also available online: www.standrews-petrolia.ca Pastor Katherine Hawley</p>
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HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Daniel Gibson of the Petrolia Flyers gets tied up at the net during the 2-2 tie against Dresden Jr. Kings Friday.

Flyers notch a win and a tie before break

Barry Wright
The Independent

Thursday will be the final opportunity for Flyer fans to bring donations for the Petrolia Food Bank when the Flyers and Dresden Junior Kings hook up for a PJHL rematch at the Greenwood Recreation Centre.

Game time is 7:30. It'll be the fourth of four Thursdays that the Flyers have asked their faithful to support the less fortunate during the holiday season.

In Dresden Friday, Tyler Richardson made 53 saves, including seven in overtime and Dresden product Michael Vanek scored the equalizer in the waning seconds of the third period as the Flyers and Dresden skated to a 2-2 tie. Peyton Armitage had the other Petrolia goal.

A night earlier, on home ice, Petrolia doubled Wallaceburg, 6-3.

Landon Marcy scored his first two goals of the

season in that contest to lead the Flyers while Evan Morningstar had three assists.

Armitage, Daniel Gibson, Tanner Hull and Noah Harse also scored for Petrolia.

Richardson made 33 saves in the Flyer cage.

Petrolia is in seventh place in the Stobbs Division, two points better than both Dresden and Wallaceburg.

After the Dresden contest this week, the Flyers will be off until Jan. 6 when Lakeshore pays a visit.

Meantime, Morningstar scored for Team West in a 3-2 to Team South in the PJHL Top Prospects Game last weekend in New Hamburg.

The goal was assisted by teammate Andrew Jaques and Quinton Johnston of the Mooretown Flags.

Bo Doxtator of the Flags was also scheduled to play in the contest but had to skip it because of injury.

Morningstar was named the Most Valuable Player for Team West in the contest

U15 CHAMPIONS

SUBMITTED PHOTO

The East Lambton Eagles went 5-0 to win the U15 C division title at the Roy Caley Memorial regional Silver Stick in Watford. After going unbeaten through preliminary round play, the Eagles beat Aylmer, 4-3 in the semi finals and downed Lucan, 3-2 in the championship contest last Sunday.



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Petrolia, Alvinston host Silverstick

Regional Silver Stick hockey is on the slate for the Christmas Break.

Petrolia opens the Earl Trevail Regional Silver Stick Dec. 27. The U18 play in this tournament.

The opening ceremony is that night at 8 pm at the Greenwood Recreation Centre.

And the Alvinston Regional Silver Stick Tournament takes flight Monday as well with U11 players from across southern Ontario playing in the event. The games will be at the Brooke-Alvinston-Inwood Community Centre in Alvinston.

