

The Independent

Serving Petrolia and Central Lambton

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GOING THROUGH



The Rodgers family from Rodney made the trip to AW Campbell Conservation Area in Alvinston Saturday to have some fun tobogganing on the hill at the park.

LIANA RUSSWURM PHOTO

MOH says school ‘safe enough’ as classes resume Monday

Heather Wright
The Independent

It seems students will return to class Monday.
Back to school was pushed back first by two days in early January, only to have the provincial government move learning online for two weeks. There had been much speculation about whether that was a realistic time frame considering the amount of COVID-19 circulating in the community and placing a strain on health care.
Late Monday, The Toronto Star confirmed with the premier’s office students would return to the classroom. Education Minister Stephen Leece has an announcement scheduled Wednesday.
He also issued a statement saying the province has been preparing for the return of in-class learning by shipping 9.1 million N95 masks for staff and over four million three ply cloth masks for students,

increasing availability of appointments for booster shots for teachers and vaccines for students and sending out an addition 3,000 HEPA filters to help with ventilation in schools.
Leece also points out the province has a deal with the Ontario Teachers’ Federation allowing retired teachers to lead classes when teachers are out sick or isolating. Some experts say 30 per cent of educational staff could fall ill to COVID-19 because of the highly transmissible Omicron variant.
The province also released guidelines today on COVID-19 in the schools. Students and staff will only be able to get a PCR test to confirm they have COVID if they start feeling ill at school. They will then do a take home PCR test which will be sent to a provincial lab.
But parents won’t be told about cases in schools since there is no requirement to report a positive rapid antigen or PCR test. Aside from the limited PCR testing,

the province won’t be keeping track of the number of students and staff members ill.
Ontario’s opposition leader, Andrea Horwath says parents may have to send their kids to school “hoping for the best” and “parents should not be in that situation.”
“These are impossible choices for parents to be making.”
But Lambton’s Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Sudit Ranade, believes heading back to class is the right decision
“From a public health perspective it is very evident, that as a population, the benefits of children being in school outweigh the risks of transmission, because transmission is happening, transmission is continuing to happen and transmission is inevitable,” Ranade told reporters during a weekly news conference.
“When you have an inevitable risk you have to change the conversation about safe and unsafe to safe enough. And a lot of things are actually safe enough.”

Oil Springs native charged in murders

Heather Wright
The Independent

A 42 year-old Oil Springs native is facing second degree murder charges after two bodies were found – one in Sarnia, the other near Oil Springs.
On Dec. 28, police were called to remote wooded area near the oil fields of Oil Springs on Crooked Road in Enniskillen Township about a suspicious person. It was around 2:30 pm in the afternoon. Lambton OPP found human remains there.
Just over an hour later, a second body was found in Sarnia in an apartment on Watson St.
Police identified the man as Lance Richardson, 31, of Mississauga on Jan. 1.

SEE MURDER PG 2

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Crowded hospitals, LTC outbreaks

Heather Wright
The Independent

Lambton’s hospitals and long term care homes are feeling the effects of the massive wave of illness and death caused by the Omicron variant of COVID-19.

Over the past week, eight Lambton residents have died in hospital and dozens of seniors have fallen ill and are confined to their long term care home with the wide spread of the COVID-19 variant.

Three people, including a man in his 50s, died of COVID-19 at Bluewater Health Monday.

Tuesday, there were 34 patients with COVID-19 in hospital - higher than at any other time during the pandemic - with, two men, one in his 50s, the other in his 70s, and a woman in her 90s passing away because of the virus.

In one week – eight people have died at the hospital.

Across Ontario, there are now 3,220 people in hospital. That’s up by 753 in one day. Eighty more people were admitted to intensive care units Monday as well. There are now 465 people in ICUs – with 67 per cent being unvaccinated.

There are now 16 outbreaks in Lambton County in congregate care homes for people with developmental disabilities, the Sarnia Jail, Huron House Boys Home and Bluewater Health’s inpatient rehabilitation unit. Six patients first tested positive there and now five staff members are ill with COVID-19.

And as happened through every wave of the pandemic, the virus is making its way into long term care homes. Even with between 93 and 100 per cent of 70 to 90 year olds being vaccinated and another 65 to 80 per cent having a third booster, residents are falling ill.

For the first time during the pandemic, a Petrolia long term care has significant numbers of residents and staff ill with the virus. There are six residents at Fiddicks ill and 12 staff

members.

The Petrolia home is one eight with outbreaks right now, including Trillium Villa in Sarnia with 17 residents and 19 staff ill with COVID-19 and Sumac Lodge has 12 residents and 10 staff members ill.

In all, there are at least 112 confirmed COVID-19 cases in long term care in both staff and residents.

Lambton’s Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Sudit Ranade is concerned but not optimistic things will improve during the Omicron wave in long term care.

He’s “hopeful” the two or three doses of the COVID-19 vaccine they’ve received will provide some protection. But Ranade isn’t mincing words about how difficult this wave will be for the most vulnerable people in Lambton.

“Even the current things we’re trying to do, it will be challenging... I do expect them (the number of COVID-19 cases in long term care) to sort of take off and we’ll see lots and lots of cases,” says Ranade.

“Their vaccination status is the best protection we have.”

But he adds; “They are going to end up in the hospital, they are going to end up sick, they may end up not making it through this and I’m concerned about that.

“But I also believe once you’ve vaccinated them and done everything you can do when it comes to infection protection control measures, then you’ve done what you can do because it is really dependent upon that person’s body and their response to both the vaccine and the virus.”

Lambton Public Health reported Tuesday there are 1,315 people ill in the community who have a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Since PCR testing is no longer widely available, public health officials say that number isn’t accurate and could be four to five times higher.

That means there are as many as 6,575 people who have the virus and are either dealing with it at home or in hospital.

Murder suspect held in custody

CON’T FROM PG 1

Richardson, who had a criminal record which dated back over ten years, had been arrested in a summer drug raid in Toronto. In October he was released after the crown dropped the charges.

Richardson was in Lambton visiting friends before Christmas according to his lawyer, Stefan Peters. His partner was expecting Richardson would spend Christmas with her and their two year-old son, but he never returned home.

Peters says Richardson had recently called him, concerned about rumours he had traded information about other drug dealers in return for the trafficking charges being dropped. Peters says that wasn’t the case.

Richardson’s partner – deeply concerned he had not made contact since Dec. 23 – had filed a missing person report Dec. 26, two days before his body was discovered in the Sarnia apartment.

When the OPP released information about the incident, officials said one man was in custody.

Nine days later and after a court appearance Wednesday, police

announced Matthew Theriault, 42, of Sarnia and a native of Oil Springs, had been charged with two counts of second degree murder and two counts of indignity to a dead body.



Matthew Theriault

He remains in custody after his court appearance.

According to his social media accounts, Theriault’s hometown is Oil Springs. He is a graduate of LCCVI and is a member of the Carpenters’ Union Local 1256.

His social media is filled with photos of Theriault working on motorcycles or riding them.

The Ontario Coroner and the Ontario Forensic Pathology Services have yet to identify the other body which was found south of Oil Springs.

Investigators are still hoping to talk with anyone who may have spoken with Richardson in the days leading up to his death.

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Ontario

Citizens, Warwick Township concerned about Watford landfill vertical expansion

Heather Wright
The Independent

Mac Parker is worried about Waste Management’s plans to expand the Watford landfill by building up.

The former mayor and now member of the Watford Warwick Public Liaison Committee with the waste giant, voices his concerns in an open letter to the company and the Ministry of the Environment.

In Nov. 2020, Waste Management unveiled a plan which would allow the company to accept waste at the site outside of Watford for another 12 years by increasing the height of the berms and landfilling more waste.

Right now, the berms are about 262 meters tall. The current licence allows Waste Management to build up to 282 meters high. If the company gets provincial approval, the landfill could be as high as 320 meters or about 1,050 feet high.

Twin Creeks was opened in 1972. Waste Management took over in 1996 and began a long battle to expand the site. The expansion was approved in 2008, over the objections of the community.

Politicians at the time did negotiate a host agreement and since garbage began rolling in from as far away as Metro Toronto, and Barrie, the municipality had received \$23 million in hosting fees by 2020.

In 2017, Waste Management received approval to bring in 1.4 metric tonnes of waste a year. Officials say if the expansion is approved, that would not change. It would simply extend the life of the landfill.

Parker released his letter a week after the company released what it will be studying as it works towards MOE approval of the plan. Parker is already concerned about the increasing odours and the fact some of the leachate has seeped out of one side of the slope.

Parker questions why there isn’t more

oversight of the massive landfill.

“In 2008 when present site was approved, there was a full time inspector from the (ministry) which WM was in support of,” he writes. “About eight years ago WM convinced the ministry to (do) once a month inspections. It is now once a week.

“This is not what this community signed on for,” Parker says.

“Why is WM concerned about an extra set of eyes watching their operation if they are doing a super clean job of landfilling Ontario’s waste?”

Parker is not the only one concerned about the project. Warwick Mayor Jackie Rombouts says council is worried about what building up the landfill to store even more garbage will do to the infrastructure in place to keep it safe.

“It’s not something that has happened very often,” she says.

“They do have an intricate set of pipes... that go into the engineering of the landfill,

when you add that much more tonnage on top of it, who knows what’s going to happen,” says Rombouts.

“I haven’t seen or heard of anything quite like this.”

Rombouts says the township’s technical team, led by Environmental Lawyer Peter Pickfield, will look through Waste Management’s Terms of Reference for the project and make detailed comments of exactly what the community wants to be covered as the company continues to study the idea.

Waste Management’s plans for what it calls the Optimization Study can be found on the company’s website and in print at the municipal office or Watford Library.

Residents have until Feb. 6 to submit comments and concerns to the Ministry of the Environment before it decides what Waste Management should study before any decision on the expansion is made.

Officials with the company expected it could take until 2025 to get MOE approval.

Calls for safety measures on Shiloh in Alvinston

Heather Wright
The Independent

Matthew Charlton says Shiloh Line near AW Campbell Conservation Area has always been like a race track.

But since the road was repaved, Charlton says the situation is worse and he’s worried someone is going to get seriously hurt if Brooke-Alvinston council doesn’t do something about it.

In 2020, neighbours around the park asked council to reduce the speed limit in the area. The road, which has a sharp curve near a steep hill before the pavement turns to gravel, had become a race track.

But council turned down the idea saying the road would soon be paved and bike lanes would be added making it safer for pedestrians.

But Charlton, who lives on the bend in the road, says the paving “has only made the situation worse.”

Drivers are generally going to fast and the curve is so sharp, they have to swerve into the other lane to maintain control.

“They pick up speed, there’s lines on the road, but they don’t seem to matter because the cars are going so fast that they have to dig corners tighter or wider depending on which direction they’re going.

“I’ve seen trucks have to swerve off the road onto my boulevard to avoid hitting somebody,” says Charlton.

“There’s not a day that goes by that I don’t see somebody go by that corner and I shudder.”

In early December, there was a crash at the corner. A van headed toward the curve so fast it missed

it completely and ended up in a farmers field. Charlton says his wife though the squeals from the tires were so loud, a pig was being slaughtered. The man totalled the van and was arrested for impaired driving.

While no one was seriously hurt in that accident, Charlton is worried about the summer, when the campers return to the park.

“My fear is that the people can leave the conservation area driving around with their golf carts; there’s no seatbelts, they’ve got little kids, they’ve got sometimes six or eight or 10 people on a golf cart: one of those golf carts is going to get hit.”

Charlton and some of his neighbours plan to address Brooke-Alvinston council on the issue again Thursday.

He’d like to see the speed limit for all of Shiloh leading up to the park reduced from 80 km/h to 60.




SUBMITTED PHOTO

The remains of a van which ended up in a field after missing a turn on Shiloh near the Peaks of Mosa on Dec. 9.

And he suggests rumble strips near the hill would warn drivers of the curve they cannot see.

And Charlton is also hoping Lambton OPP will spend some time enforcing the speed limits.



PUBLIC NOTICE

**WARWICK TOWNSHIP
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING**

TAKE NOTICE that a Special Council meeting will take place on
Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 6 pm
for the 2022 Budget.

The meeting will take place electronically using Zoom teleconference and will be livestreamed to the Warwick Township YouTube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/channel>

The agenda for the meeting will be available on the Township’s website at www.warwicktownship.ca

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION,
contact the Township Office at
519-849-3926 or info@warwicktownship.ca

www.warwicktownship.ca



**A New Year,
A New Wave**

by Dr. Charles Winegard



**Charlotte's
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– ADVERTORIAL –

The New Year has brought a lot of uncertainty as communities across Ontario are responding to the latest wave of COVID-19; with the Omicron variant making up 97% of COVID cases across the province. Ontarians are also grappling with the latest provincial restrictions, new testing and isolation guidelines, and a move to online school yet again. It’s a lot to take in all at once.

Our community is being directly impacted by this wave, and we’re seeing local case counts getting higher and growing faster than ever. We expect to see a greater increase in cases over the next few weeks, and hopefully then peak.

Over the past two weeks, we have seen the number of COVID-positive patients in hospital more than quadruple and we expect the number of hospitalizations to continue to rise. Hospital staff in Sarnia and Petrolia are also being impacted by increased community infections more than ever before. We’re seeing younger patients being admitted, and 80-100% of the severe cases are unvaccinated patients.

Our Emergency Departments (EDs) in both Sarnia and Petrolia are also seeing an increase of upwards of 30% traffic. Understandably, the community is feeling overwhelmed and unsure during these challenging times. Please come

to the ED if you are short of breath or have chest pain. For milder/cold-like symptoms, assume you have Omicron, isolate, and monitor your symptoms at home. If you have non-urgent concerns regarding your symptoms, call your primary care provider for further support. It’s also important to note that our local EDs are not community COVID-19 testing sites.

With all this uncertainty and daunting news, what can you do to best protect yourself and your loved ones? Get vaccinated. Get your children vaccinated. The greatest cohort increase for hospitalizations in the province is pediatric cases. Book your boosters if you haven’t already done so. The booster shot helps protect you from the Omicron variant, providing generally up to 80% protection, and preventing serious illness and hospitalization. We will all likely require a 4th booster in the spring, and I will encourage you to get that, as well. And lastly, while community spread is so prevalent locally, please mask up whenever you are indoors and with non-family members, and avoid large gatherings.

To learn more about local COVID-19 resources, including where you can get your vaccine, your children’s vaccine, and booster shots visit: www.GetTheVaccine.ca

Editorial

Not much of a plan

Students head back to class Monday leaving us questioning why they were home in the first place.

The Ford government decided to move learning online after telling Ontarian’s the risk during the Omicron tsunami of COVID-19 was too great and schools needed time to prepare.

The province had already said it was going to supply teachers with N95 masks and bring more HEPA filters to schools. Local publicly funded boards were expecting them to arrive before the original back-to-school date Jan. 5.

Health professionals speculated the province wanted to give families more time to get elementary school children vaccinated. The opportunity for school-aged children to do so had only recently opened up and in many regions, there were thousands of children yet to be vaccinated. But that didn’t seem to be the government’s plan. There certainly wasn’t any concerted effort or messaging from the province to get the needles in the arms of small kids.

The one thing that we can see the province has done is attempted to deal with the issue which may cripple schools - teachers falling ill or isolating because someone in their house contracted the fast moving Omicron virus.

Monday, the government announced it had reached a deal with the teachers’ unions which would allow retired teachers to return to the classroom to fill those inevitable gaps. But, how effective will that be?

The proposal is to send teachers - many of whom retired because they didn’t have the energy to deal with COVID-19 in the classroom and many of whom are of the age that has the worst health outcomes if they get it - into an elementary school environment where two thirds of the children have not even had one vaccination in a time of unbelievable community spread. And they’re simply giving them an N95 mask and saying ‘Good Luck.’

Not much of a plan.

After two years of COVID - and a two week break specifically to prepare the schools for a safe return - parents and kids deserve far better than this.

If this was the provincial government’s big safe school plan, why were kids home in the first place?

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



LAMBTON COUNTY ARCHIVE PHOTO

Nicholas Plain (Osarskodawa) was a third generation descendent of Chief Animikeence with many honours. He was a champion plowman in Lambton in the 1920s and 1930s, (that’s the trophy beside him) Chief of Aamjiwnaang First Nation from 1934-1940 who emphasized the need for Indigenous voting rights in his address, and author of “The History of Chippewas of Sarnia and The History of Sarnia Reserve”

The

Independent

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Canada

Opinion

‘This is not what the community signed on for.’ Parker

EDITOR:

This is an open letter to Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) also Waste Management of Canada, Twin Creeks Landfill. (WM)

Wake up Warwick Township residents and smell the roses and not the ongoing odour and debris that has been an ongoing issue around the present landfill site.

WM has decided that when a pandemic has everything locked down, it is the perfect time to push through a so-called Optimization Project to make the present landfill site over three times higher than what it is now.

Now WM has applied to MECP as an optimization project to increase the height above ground level to 275.5ft. This will allow 191.2 ft of garbage

on top of the mountain that is already there. This is not acceptable to the residents of Warwick and Watford. WM submitted a Terms of Reference (ToR) to MECP on January 7, 2022 with a short review period to February 6, 2022.

Please review the terms of reference to make your thoughts and comments known. They can be found at the Warwick Municipal Office on Nauvoo Road and the Watford Library as well as at the company’s website.

There are increasing odour issues and a couple of leachate seeps on the side slope of present site. In 2008 when present site was approved, there was a full time inspector from the MECP which WM was in support of. About eight years ago WM convinced MECP

to do once a month inspections. It is now once a week. This is not what this community signed on for. Why is WM concerned about an extra set of eyes watching their operation if they are doing a super clean job of land filling Ontario’s waste?

We have a Watford Warwick Public Liaison Committee (WPLC) that was formed many years ago, that is a go-between WM and local community that meets four times per year for about two hours. There is a per diem and the committee presently has an opening for one or two members. If interested contact chair of the WPLC Mary Lynn Metras at marylynnmetras@gmail.com

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Warwick, ON**

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Father sentenced to six years in infant’s death

Heather Wright
The Independent

A Corunna man who admitted to shaking his two-month old to death has been sentenced to six months in prison.

Nathan Watson was charged one year after his son, Liam’s death in Aug. 2019 and pled guilty to manslaughter in May.

Watson first told police he left the child with a sibling while he went to make a bottle and returned to find him lifeless. Later he said he’d had his foot on a bouncy chair the baby was sitting in, shaking it. Later, he admitted he’d actually picked up the crying Liam, shook him and asked him what he wanted.

Watson’s lawyer, Ken Marley, suggested during the pre sentencing hearing that his client was also in emotional turmoil over the death of his son. And he says a psychological

report showed Watson “was experiencing significant situational and psycho social stress, lacking in impulse control, coping skills in support,” when he was left alone with Liam. “He was quite likely overwhelmed and in a state of emotional turmoil.”

Marley says evidence from an OPP officer who covertly befriended Watson in an attempt to figure out what really happened, shows the accused was remorseful about his son’s death.

But Crown Attorney David Rows disputed that, saying it took Watson three attempts to come out with the truth of how his own son died. “It was only when the accused was arrested that we approach the version of events that most resembles the truth,” Rows said, at the time noting it was a “convoluted route to the truth.”

Rows added Liam “was two months of age at the time of his death and the accused had that a duty of care to this

child – to care for him and protect him – and that he failed and that he breached the trust of Liam Watson.”

“Liam was two months old, he was not able to experience the joys that life has to offer; growing up, going to school, finding a partner having children of his own.

“His life was cut short after only two months.”

Rows had asked for an eight year prison term while Watson’s lawyer wanted a two year conditional sentence.

Justine Deborah Austin delivered a sentence Jan. 5 of six years in prison. Watson will get credit for about six months he’s already served waiting for the outcome of the court proceedings. He’ll serve his sentence at Joyceville Federal Penitentiary in Kingston.

He’s also banned from owning weapons for 10 years and must submit his DNA to the federal registry.

New vaccine clinics for essential workers in Lambton

The Independent

Lambton’s essential workers now have a dedicated vaccine clinic.

Lambton Public Health, the two of three local health teams, Lambton EMS and Bluewater Health are providing clinics at the Sarnia Legion for essential workers.

That includes principals, teachers, assistants, cleaners, office staff, early childhood educators and bus drivers, hospital front line staff, long term care

staff, police, paramedics, firefighters and other essential municipal staff.

These clinics will operate to January 20.

“With the addition of hundreds of new appointments, these new clinics will also free up much needed space in our regular COVID-19 vaccine clinics allowing us to accelerate booster doses for everyone,” says Dr. Sudit Ranade, Lambton’s medical officer of health in a news release.

These clinics will be operated

by appointment only and eligible staff will be notified through their employers with instructions on how to book online.

They can also book by phone. LPH recently ramped up clinic capacity from approximately 3,000 doses per week in December to over 7,000 doses a week in January.

Together, with primary care and pharmacy partners, the region plans to administer a total of approximately 11,000 doses each week in January .

Rotary helps Petrolia start community garden plots

The Independent

If you’ve always wanted a garden but don’t have the space, here’s your chance.

The Rotary Club of Petrolia and the town will be offering a Community Garden program this year.

Community gardens, town officials say, provides residents with access to healthy and low-cost food, physical activity, skills enhancement, and the development of meaningful

relationships.

The garden will be on Centre Street near the Public Works Yard.

“I am very pleased to have the Rotary Club take on this project for our community.

“It is important that all people have access to fresh and nutritious food, and for some members of our community this will assist with an immediate need,” said Director of Community Services Dave Menzies.

You need to apply for a plot in the


garden. This year, the committee will draw for the spaces in February.

There is no cost to apply to the program.

Each plot is awarded for one season, but people are welcome to reapply in the future.

It’s up to the gardener what type of plants and garden style they want to cultivate on their piece of land, which will be assigned by a committee.

Applications can be found on the town’s website



PUBLIC NOTICE

Town of Plympton-Wyoming

Please be advised that the
Town of Plympton-Wyoming
2022 Draft Budget and the
Water/Sewer Rates By-law
will be considered for adoption at the

Special Budget Council Meeting
to be held
Wednesday, January 19th 2022 at 5 p.m.



If needed, a second date for further consideration will be on Wednesday, January 26th 2022 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



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WINTER CORN



MARIANNE VANDERSPEK PHOTO

Aiden Badder was hard at work at Sollio Agriculture in Rutherford Monday unloading a late harvest of corn in the area.

Bridge work conditions unsafe: union

Heather Wright
The Independent

Employment and Social Development Canada is saying little about customs and immigration officers at the Bluewater Bridge refusing to work over COVID-19 concerns.

Eleven members of the Custom and Immigration Union have refused to work at the Bluewater Bridge since Dec. 27.

CIU National President Mark Weber says the members “exercised their right to refuse unsafe work due to management not following up-to-date public health rules and instructing employees to report to the workplace who should have been in isolation.”

Weber says the CBSA also isn’t doing any contact tracing such as telling employees when coworkers have been ill.

The union says 25 of the authority’s 200 employees have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 12 days. “Many of these cases are due to workplace exposure as the members had no other exposures other than working with positive co-workers,” says Weber.

Union members are also concerned, he says, about more travellers coming into Canada with the highly contagious virus. “Since the 72 hour test rule went back into effect there’s been a significant decrease in vehicles but an increase in positive cases returning,” says Weber. Many require direct contact with agents.

The Labour Program, a division of the federal department, enforces Canada’s Labour Code in federally regulated workplaces, like border crossings.

“The Labour Program has been made aware of a possible health and safety issue at the Blue Water Bridge in Sarnia, and is determining what compliance and enforcement actions, such as an investigation or an inspection, are required,” said Saskia Rodenburg, media relations officer with Employment and Social Development.

“For confidentiality reasons, the Labour Program cannot comment on any specific findings, nor publicly share any documents at any stage of an inspection or an investigation.”

Weber says the federal ministry has been investigating for the past four days.

Meantime, Allan Donovan, a media relations officer for the Custom Border Service Agency, says the agency is following health and safety rules.

“The CBSA works in close cooperation with Health Canada, our employees and the union to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to ensure the health and safety of all employees while effectively carrying out the agency’s mandate and limiting the spread of COVID-19,” he said in an email to The Independent.

“All frontline staff are equipped with personal protective equipment that is used per existing standard operating procedures.”

Donovan says all public health guidelines are being followed. “It is important to note that when a positive COVID-19 case is identified within the CBSA, a notice is sent out to all impacted staff in the workplace so that proper follow up measures can be taken as directed by public health.”

Donovan did not say whether workers with COVID-19 were being directed to continue working.

Petrolia Fund gives boost to six groups for everything from playgrounds to reading

Heather Wright
The Independent

Six Petrolia not-for-profits are getting boost, thanks to the Petrolia Community Fund. The group announced the annual micro grants from the organization at Monday night’s Petrolia Council meeting.

Organization for Literacy in Lambton will receive \$3,600 for a new Train Your Brain Program. It was the largest grant the Community Fund has given.

Tracy Pound says the program will start in Petrolia three times a week, to give children the foundational skills they need for

school.

The Petrolia Y will receive \$1,250 for a new sound system. Officials say it was welcome news in a week where the community centre had to close again due to new provincial pandemic restrictions.

Joe Cebulski of the Y says the system will provide better sound for members, including those in the Boomers Club.

Rebound Sarnia-Lambton will be getting \$2,000 for an art and mindfulness workshop in Petrolia.

Tiffany D’Angela says the program uses art as a conduit to mindfulness practices to promote

resiliency.

“We’re finding with the pandemic looming so long, youth’s mental health is struggling. This is a way to ground in the moment.”

Lambton Young Theatre Players will receive a \$1,000 grant for operational purposes. Community Fund Executive Director Jane Adema says the pandemic has been extremely hard for arts groups and the money will allow the group to continue.

St. Paul Church will be getting \$1,500 for the Community Fridge Project.

Larry Leckie says the food security project is the first of its kind in Lambton.

“We initially started opening 8 to 8, over the Christmas season we started 24/7 and now we are 24/7 here on in.”

“This particular (food security) project really struck a cord with the committee, thinking this couldn’t be happening in Petrolia. But it was,” says Adema.

The group asked for \$1,000 but the committee wanted to give a little more to help.

“They were very grateful that St. Paul’s stepped up to help the community.”

Parents for Park is receiving \$2,000. “They started in 2019 with a big dream...and have been bulldogs to make sure the backend

of Greenwood Park inclusive.... and livable,” says Adema.

“As soon as the shovel is in the ground there will be another \$2,000 on the way.”

Erin Hawryluck says “We’re very excited to say we are ready to start to building this summer.

“We’re super excited to see this project started.”

The Town of Petrolia has also given a \$75,000 grant to make the \$300,000 accessible playground a reality.

In all, the six grants given through the fund totalled \$11,350.

The fund which provides cash to agencies in the community now at slightly more than \$120,000.

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Pandemic stirs Loosley’s creativity

Heather Wright
The Independent

When the pandemic brought life to a standstill in 2020, performers like Adam Loosley were at loose ends. The Petrolia native, son of Mayor Brad Loosley, has been a professional figure skater for decades. Right now, he’s a performance director for Disney On Ice producing shows across North America. He was slated to be in Ontario this month, but once again, the pandemic has put a halt to the performance.

“When the live entertainment and the industry took came to a screeching halt, I obviously went on a bit of a hiatus,” Loosley recently told The Independent. He describes it as a dark time.

But as Loosley spent time with his family, specifically his brother and his kids, Casen, Keira and Kesler, his creative juices started flowing.

“I was home with my brother reading bedtime stories to the kids. And to be honest, at the end of some of the stories, I thought to myself, ‘Wow, that was bad,’” Loosley says with a laugh.

“I said to my brother, ‘I think I could do better than that.’”

That moment led Loosley to write ‘You are a Great Story.’

“I just lost my job in entertainment and it was kind of a grim time if you remember. And I really wanted a creative outlet.”

Loosley remembered one of his friends, a performer who had been



Adam Loosley

working with Cirque du Soleil who was an artist. “He was also going through a rough time in entertainment. And he’s an artist, and both him and I came together.”

Loosley wrote his niece and nephews into the book and Daniel Henke illustrated it. The story leads the children through all kinds of adventures and it “encourages children to realize that each and every day, they have an opportunity to make their day a great one. And that they can be the author of their own adventure throughout their life.”

It’s not a surprising topic for the skater turned author. Loosley speaks passionately about allowing kids to follow their dreams, particularly young people who want to be a figure skater in a hockey town.

“I think more than ever, we’re finally realizing that it is best to really just be yourself and authentically yourself,” says Loosley.

“Do what you want. Follow your heart...There aren’t these rules anymore. ‘Oh, you have to play hockey or you have to figure skating;’ you can do both. Why not do both? I love hockey. “You don’t have to choose a side, you can write your own rules, create your own path, your own story.”

Loosley says kids just have to surround themselves with supportive people who help them reach their goals.

“I was lucky enough to have that in my family built in, and my coaching, and my friends, but it’s important to pick your crowds and that you pick a crowd that builds each other up to be their best.”

Loosley’s book “You are a Great Story” can be found at The Cottage and Petrolia Mercantile and Tea in Petrolia or on Amazon and Barnes and Noble’s websites.



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

A Lambton EMS unit carries Neil Harvey away from his funeral in his hometown, Ilderton.

Lambton EMS mourns loss of one of their own

Heather Wright
The Independent

Jeff Brooks says he will miss the sound of Neil Harvey coming down the halls at Lambton EMS. The paramedic died suddenly just before Christmas of a drug overdose. Brooks, the Lambton EMS deputy manager, said he’d struggled with PTSD from his work but had been treated. He also struggled with addiction.

“He would come into our office and like you would hear his laugh coming down the hall,” recalled Brooks after Harvey’s funeral adding he was “really

dedicated to the patients.”

Harvey also had a passion to pass on what he knew as a trainer with the Ilderton Fire Department and as an instructor at Lambton College.

Brooks adds Harvey’s death “reminds us all that there’s vulnerabilities, and we need to make sure we look after ourselves; take care of our own mental health.”

Brooks says over the years, the stigma of mental health issues has lessened and EMS provides support services and counselling for its paramedics. And he believes Lambton paramedics know “it’s okay to struggle” and there is help available.



NOMINATIONS WANTED!

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Several snowy owl sightings in Petrolia area

Heather Brouwer
Local Journalism Initiative

Now is a good time to be on the lookout for Snowy Owls in Lambton County.

“It’s easier to see a Snowy Owl now than it might have been 20 years ago,” says Pete Chapman, a birding enthusiast with Lambton Wildlife Inc.

“There definitely seem to be more sightings than in the past.”

Snowy Owls — relatively large, mostly white birds of prey — spend their summers in the Arctic, and head south in the winter months, where they generally stay from November to March.

According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, their migrations are variable, making their whereabouts in any season difficult to predict. But there have been a number of recent sightings in the area.

To date, there had been 12 Snowy Owl sightings reported on SnowyOwls.ca in Lambton County in the past month. And according to data from Cornell, this season has already had more sightings than those of two decades ago.

Of course, as Chapman points out, there could also be more people out looking for the birds, as he believes birding is becoming more popular.

Plus, it’s a COVID-friendly activity.

“Driving around in a car is something we’re still able to do.”

There have been a few Snowy Owls



ALLANAH VOKES PHOTO

This image of a snowy owl was captured by avid birder Allana Vokes with her telephoto lens near Waterworks Road in December. Wildlife experts urge people to observe the birds from a distance and like Vokes, to use long range lenses for photos.

reported sightings just outside of Brigden and Petrolia this season, and Chapman has spotted the birds near the Sarnia Yacht Club.

“Just because you go to places where they’ve been seen doesn’t mean you’re going to see once,” he cautions.

Snowy Owls prefer areas with plenty of low, open terrain, and they are most often spotted on the ground or on low features, like fence posts and hay bales.

Chapman recommends sticking to back roads and taking along a pair of binoculars for best results. Wildlife experts remind people to stay well away from the birds and use those binoculars or a telephoto lens to get a very good view of the birds.

And no matter where you see one, though, Chapman says “any day with an owl is a pretty good day.”

St. Clair office remaining closed due to Omicron wave

St. Clair Township’s Civic Centre will remain closed for the next few months due to rising COVID-19 cases and the prevalence of the Omicron variant.

Council agreed in November to open the Mooretown building to the public in January but opted to reconsider

at the Dec. 20 virtual meeting and quickly agreed to postpone.

“If we keep moving this ahead, we won’t be back [in person] until the next election,” said Mayor Steve Arnold.

Staff will be available during business hours by phone or via email,

and council and committee meetings will remain electronic.

Many Lambton municipalities will continue online meetings until at least the end of March, when the province expected safety measures like masking to be removed. The St. Clair centre is scheduled to reopen in April.

FIRE CASH



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Watford Fire Chief Rick Sitlington and Warwick Chief Brad Goodhill recently received a \$5,000 donation from Enbridge to help with training at the department. The energy company donates to volunteer fire departments in communities which it has assets in. The money will be used to help train the 50 volunteers in the two departments on enhanced lifesaving techniques.

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Children aged 5-11 can receive their second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine 8 weeks after their first dose

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	1							2
				4	9			
4			5					
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				3				
7		5				8		

Here’s How It Works: Level: Intermediate

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

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Sports

Trade deadline passes for Flags, Flyers

The Independent

Neither the Petrolia Flyers nor Mooretown Flags were active as the junior hockey trade deadline came and went Monday.

Given the current pause in the season and the uncertainly going forward trades became difficult, said Flags GM John Baker.

If provincial restrictions are lifted on January 26, the Flyers and Flags are scheduled to return to action on January 27 and 28, respectively. But those dates could

be adjusted since teams have not been able to practice since early this month.

Meantime, former Flyer goaltender Jakob Knowles has signed with the PJHL's Essex 73's.

He made his debut last week making 19 stops in a 2-1 loss to Amherstburg a day before the league was paused due to the most recent provincial restrictions.

He split his time between the pipes for the Flyers and Sarnia Legionnaires between 2017-20.

Legionnaires deal Santavy to London

The Independent

Bradyn Santavy has been traded to the London Nationals by the Sarnia Legionnaires for an undisclosed return.

The Forest product, a graduate of both the Lambton Jr. Sting and Elgin-Middlesex Chiefs programs had four goals and 12 points in 14 games this season with Sarnia.

But the 18 year-old will not get a chance to play with the league's leading scorer as Jr. Sting alumni Zach Power has been released by the Nationals to play Junior A hockey with the Steinbach Pistons of the Manitoba

Junior Hockey League.

The Pistons lead the MJHL with a record of 24-6-1.

Power, a Glencoe native, had 17 goals and 54 points in 22 games with London prior to his release.

And Billy Faragher has been added to the St. Marys Lincolns' roster for the second half of the season.

The Sarnia Sting draft choice is the son of long-time Lambton College Athletic Director John Faragher.

The younger Faragher played most recently with the London Nationals in 2020.

Sting add size and youth at trade deadline

The Independent

The Sting made a pair of trades getting bigger and stronger in the process.

First, the team acquired blueliner Chandler Romeo from the Hamilton Bulldogs for a second and third-round draft choice before sending overagers Brayden Guy and Aston Reesor to Guelph for Marko Sikic and a third-round draft choice.

Romeo is 6'5" and 205 lbs. The Cambridge native had a goal and eight assists in 28 games with the Bulldogs this

season.

Sikic, from Kitchener, had five goals and 11 points in 27 games with the Storm. He's 6'3", 185 lbs.

Both made their debuts in a 5-3 win over Flint last Saturday at the Progressive Auto Sales Arena. Romeo had an assist and had a plus two rating. Sikic had four shots on goal and was plus one.

A day earlier, Sarnia sent Nikita Tarasevich to North Bay for an eighth round choice as the trade deadline neared Jan. 7.

Lambton's Marinaro heading to Olympics

The Independent

Michael Marinaro of the Point Edward Figure Skating Club and his partner Kirsten Moore-Towers of St. Catharines, pictured at the right, are heading back to the Olympics.

They were named to Canada's national team after winning their third straight

national pairs title last weekend in Ottawa.

The duo finished 11th in Pyeong Chang in 2018.

The Beijing Olympics open Feb. 4.

They've also been named to Team Canada for the ISU World Championships in France in late March. The pair finished sixth at the World's last year.



Former NHLer, Robbie Moore dies at 67

The Independent

Former Sarnia Bees goaltender, All-American at the University of Michigan and member of the Philadelphia Flyers organization Robbie Moore has died.

The Sarnia native was 67.

Moore played with the Bees during the 1971-72 campaign before embarking on a record-setting collegiate career with the Wolverines.

He was promoted to the

NHL playing five games with the Flyers in 1979, two of them shutouts. Moore's debut was a 5-0 shutout win over Colorado. Moore played four more games that season, picking up another shutout against the Vancouver Canucks.

He also won a Calder Cup with the Maine Mariners in 1979.

The DJ Robb Funeral Home website indicates a Celebration of Life for Robbie Moore will be held at a later date.



Former Flyers Goalie Robbie Moore

If you feel unwell, isolate and help stop the spread of COVID-19:

- Unwell with symptoms of COVID-19**
 - Isolate for five days if you are fully vaccinated or under 12 years old, or 10 days if you are not fully vaccinated or are immunocompromised
 - Inform your close contacts of their exposure
- Unwell with no symptoms of COVID-19**
 - Isolate until symptoms are improving for at least 24 hours

Notice of Submission of Terms of Reference

Twin Creeks Environmental Centre Landfill Optimization Project

Environmental Assessment

As part of the planning process for the Waste Management of Canada Corporation (WM) Twin Creeks Environmental Centre (TCEC) Landfill Optimization Project, a Terms of Reference (ToR) was submitted to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) for review as required under the *Environmental Assessment Act*. If approved, the ToR will serve as a framework for the preparation and review of the environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed increase in landfill airspace capacity at the TCEC.

WM, the owner and operator of the TCEC in Watford, Ontario, has initiated an EA seeking approval to focus the EA on the assessment of alternative methods for increasing the landfill airspace capacity at the TCEC. The TCEC has approximately 13.2M m³ of remaining approved landfill airspace, which corresponds to about 10 years of operating life (2021 to 2031). This optimization project could provide additional airspace capacity of up to approximately 14M m³, which could extend the site life by about 12 years (from 2031 to 2043). There would be no change to the current 301 ha site area, the approved service area, or the annual fill rate.

There is a need for the continued development of the TCEC as it is a significant component of the provincial waste management network and infrastructure, which is lacking in sufficient and secure long-term disposal capacity. Optimizing the future development of the TCEC allows for on-going sustainable business operations and continued provision of essential financial support for community services and programs.

The TCEC is located in the Township of Warwick near the Village of Watford, at the corner of Nauvoo Road and Zion Line (see Location Map below). The purpose of the EA is to assess the potential effects of the proposed landfill optimization on the environment.

LOCATION MAP

The ToR will be available for public review from **January 7, 2022** through **February 6, 2022** on the TCEC project website www.wm.com/ca/en/twin-creeks-landfill/landfill-optimization-project and at the following locations during normal business hours:

Township of Warwick Municipal Office 6332 Nauvoo Road, Watford, ON N0M 2S0	Watford Library 5317 Nauvoo Road, Watford, ON N0M 2S0
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Members of the public, agencies, Indigenous communities, and other interested persons are encouraged to actively participate in reviewing and providing comments on the ToR. Written comments on the ToR must be received by **February 6, 2022** and should be submitted to the MECP Project Officer:

Cindy Batista, Special Project Officer
Environmental Assessment Branch
Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
135 St. Clair Ave. West, Toronto, Ontario M4V 1P5
Telephone: 437-248-0058
Email: cindy.batista@ontario.ca

A copy of all comments will be forwarded to WM for consideration.

If you have difficulty obtaining a copy of the ToR from the project website, or have project-related questions, please contact:

Wayne Jenken Area Landfill Manager, Eastern Canada Area Waste Management of Canada Corporation 5768 Nauvoo Road, Watford, ON N0M 2S0 Phone: 519.849.5810 E-mail: wjenken@wm.com	Larry Fedec, P.Eng. M.B.A. Solid Waste Program Lead, Canada HDR Corporation 100 York Blvd., Suite 300, Richmond Hill, ON L4B 1J8 Phone: 289.695.4696 E-mail: larry.fedec@hdrinc.com
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All personal information included in your request – such as name, address, telephone number and property location – is collected under the authority of section 30 of the Environmental Assessment Act and is collected and maintained for the purpose of creating a record that is available to the general public. As this information is collected for the purpose of a public record, the protection of personal information provided in the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) does not apply. Personal information you submit will become part of a public record that is available to the general public unless you request that your personal information remain confidential.

Published January 7, 2022

Classified Deadline:
Monday @ 12 noon

Classifieds



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Notices

Oil Springs Optimists

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- Show Proof of Double Vaccinations
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- Be 18+

All proceeds go to local youth

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Celebrations




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Monday @ 12 noon

Obituary



RUNDLE
Joan (Vanita)

Joan (Vanita) Rundle passed away of I.P.F. at her home on **Sunday, January 9, 2022** in her **76th year**. She was the wife of Ross Rundle for almost 58 years. She and Ross produced three sons; Bob and Shiela Rundle, Kevin and Lynn Rundle, and Todd and Nikki Rundle. She was the grandmother of Dillon Rundle, Nicole Rundle, Kyle (Emma) Rundle, Shelby (Fletcher) Haley, Tyson McCartney-Rundle, and Riley Sauve and great grandmother to Fraser Haley. Joan was the daughter of the late Garnet “Shorty” and Willy Statton of Forest and Reeces Corners and was a sister to the late Margaret Maxfield. She will also be missed by her best friends Jo-Anne Cope, Marlene Chisholm, and Dorothy Mathers. **A funeral service was held on Tuesday, January 11, 2021 at the Needham-Jay Funeral Home, Petrolia at 2pm.** As expressions of sympathy, memorial donations may be made to C.E.E. Hospital Foundation (www.cee.hf.ca). **Memories and condolences may be shared online at www.needhamjay.com**

Answers to this week's


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

Death Notices
January 1 - January 9, 2022



SATURDAY, JANUARY 1
BOYD, Mary Jane
Age 81
Smith Funeral Home

SUNDAY, JANUARY 2
CURRAN, Raymond “Ray” Joseph
Age 91
Denning's of Watford
PALMER, Gordon James
Age 92
Smith Funeral Home
PETHICK, Donald Joseph
Age 72
Denning's of Watford
ROOT, Robert “Bob” Gordon
Age 75
Needham-Jay Funeral Home

MONDAY, JANUARY 3
CLARK, Krista Lynn
Age 38
Smith Funeral Home
HEWITT, Cyril
Age 97
Smith Funeral Home
KORDAN, Leo Patrick
Age 38
Smith Funeral Home

TUESDAY, JANUARY 4
CROMBEEN, Sharon (n King)
Age 66, of Oil City
Needham-Jay Funeral Home
DAWE, James Burnett
Age 97, of Sarnia
Knight Funeral Home
MILLER, Carol Helen
(n Walker)
Age 79
D.J. Robb Funeral Home
SHEFFIELD, Sadie
Age 71
Smith Funeral Home
ZINK, Larry Douglas
Age 74, of Mooretown
Knight Funeral Home

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5
MACDONALD, Sylvia Victoria (n Pamentor)
Age 74
McCormack Funeral Home

MCNEIL, Jennifer (n Ferguson)
Age 66
Needham-Jay Funeral Home
MORROW, Jean Mildred (n McCready)
Age 99
Smith Funeral Home
WESTENDORP, Lynn Sharon (n Murdock)
Age 71, of Forest
Gilpin Funeral Home

THURSDAY, JANUARY 6
ARNOLD, William John
Age 71, formerly of Wilkesport
Steadman Brothers Funeral Home
BAKER, Clifford Lyle
Age 70, of Brigden
Steadman Brothers Funeral Home
BARDWELL, Kenneth Gerald
Age 91, of Sarnia
Smith Funeral Home
BOWMAN, Beverly Ann
Age 64
D.J. Robb Funeral Home
BROWN, David Arnold
Age 72, of Town
McCormack Funeral Home
HOUSTON, David Ralph “Haircut”
Age 64, formerly of Dresden
Badder F.H. & Reception Centre

FRIDAY, JANUARY 7
CURRAN, Phillip “Phil” Wayne
Age 69
Smith Funeral Home
INGOLD, Jannice Elizabeth (n Marsh)
Age 60, of Forest
Gilpin Funeral Home
MOORE, Robert “Robbie”
Age 67, of Sarnia
D.J. Robb Funeral Home

SUNDAY, JANUARY 9
RUNDLE, Joan “Vanita”
Age 75
Needham-Jay Funeral Home

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

THANK YOU - Just a big shout-out to the honest, kind citizen who turned the \$\$ in at the hospital lab, on Wed Dec 29. Thank you so much, it has renewed our faith in human nature, you are a kind soul. RH



Church DIRECTORY

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christchurchpetrolia@gmail.com

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

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
416 Queen Street, Petrolia
(Behind the Post Office)
In Person Service now back Sundays @ 10:00 a.m.
Services also available online:
www.standrews-petrolia.ca
Pastor Katherine Hawley



ADVERTISING IS KEY

TOP REASONS to advertise frequently

1. People may not need your product or service today, but they may need it tomorrow.
2. Frequency builds trust.
3. Frequent advertising adds credibility to your message.
4. When an ad is seen frequently, it gets the consumer yearning for your service and they will take action to buy it.
5. Advertising frequently helps put your name out in front of the competition's.
6. Advertising frequently is a lot like repeatedly inviting a friend to come see you. One day, they are bound to visit!
7. Frequent advertising helps you build a steady source of incoming sales.
8. Out of sight, out of mind.
9. You make more money when you do! It's plain and simple.

The Independent
Serving Petrolia and Central Lambton

4156 Petrolia Line, Petrolia, ON N0N 1R0
Phone: 226-738-0728

email: sales@petrolialambtonindependent.ca



IDEAL PROTEIN

P O W E R I N G *l i f e* P O S S I B L E

**WEIGHT MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM**

Tony & Vicci
LOST 265 LBS.*



WE LOST THE
*“...we’ll
start
tomorrow!”*



*“Ideal Protein is
really about science.
You’re actually fat-burning,
rather than ingesting it.”*

- **LOOK BETTER**
- **FEEL BETTER**
- **GAIN ENERGY**

**GET STARTED
TODAY AT:**
Call (519) 882-1840
or visit 4177 Petrolia Line

Hours: Mon-Fri: 9am-9pm | Sat: 9am-6pm | Sun: 10am-5pm

*Results of individual. Typical results vary up to 6 and 8 pounds lost during the first two weeks and up to 2 pounds per week thereafter when the Ideal Protein Weight Loss Protocol is followed properly. Consult your Healthcare Professional before starting this or any other diet program.

