

ICE RESCUE PRACTICE



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Petrolia/North Enniskillen firefighters were at Bridgeview Park in Petrolia Sunday practicing ice rescues. The specialized team of 10 has to be recertified each year in ice rescue. The protective suits worn keep the firefighters dry, but the work is still chilling. The SORT Team was on hand with a heated tent to help them reheat between drills. Deputy Chief Brian Clark says the search for a young Mitchell girl whose body was recover Monday after falling through nine days earlier reinforced the need to be prepared even though Petrolia has never had to rescue someone from icy waters.

The end of an era in Plympton-Wyoming

Heather Wright
The Independent

After 30 years serving the people of Plympton-Wyoming, Mayor Lonny Napper is stepping down after the October election. He made the announcement at Wednesday evening's council meeting. Napper first served on the council of Plympton Township and then as councillor of the newly amalgamated Town of Plympton-Wyoming council. He became the deputy mayor during the town's second election and then the second mayor of the community when Pat Davidson was elected Member of Parliament for Sarnia-Lambton. He's served as mayor ever since.

"I did have a lot of encouragement to run this time again, I just think it is time. There have been a lot of changes in my life ... I just think it is time to look after Lonny now," Napper told councillors. His wife of 53 years, Carolyn, passed away in January. She had lived at Lambton Meadowview Villa in Petrolia for several years, living with Multiple Sclerosis. The mayor will be living at the Lambtonian next to Meadowview and plans to volunteer at the home which he says took such good care of his wife over the years. Napper also plans to spend time in Wisconsin with his daughter and son-in-law.

SEE NAPPER PG 2



In Feb. 2015, Mayor Napper honoured former mayor and then MP Pat Davidson during his Mayor's Luncheon.

Rombouts cleared by Integrity Commissioner

Mayor's vocal support of convoy 'inappropriate' as a mayor but was her personal opinion says IC

Heather Wright
The Independent

Warwick's Integrity Commissioner says it may have been "inappropriate behaviour" for the mayor to publicly voice her support of the convoy, but she did nothing wrong. The township council sought the opinion of Robert Swayze after Mayor Jackie Rombouts visited a friend in Ottawa who was part of a three-week demonstration and publicly supported the protests which called for the end to all COVID-19 mandates. The protests are organized by Canada Unity, a group calling for the removal of the present government without an election. A smaller protest also blocked Highway 402 at the same time, sending thousands of transports down Warwick roads. That led to frustrated residents calling the township and denouncing Rombouts support of the people causing the blockade. Councillors publicly denounced the protest and voiced concern the mayor had "gone rogue" making it appear the municipality approved of the actions. "There's been a total disregard of our council, of the staff of Warwick Township, of the community through this; a person's actions who are in a place of leadership within a community do matter. I am appalled," said White at the time. Council unanimously voted to ask Swayze for an opinion on whether Rombouts broke any rules in the Code of Conduct. In a letter to council, Swayze says "the vast majority" of the feedback the municipality received were against Rombouts comments. "These are complaints to council and not to me as Integrity Commissioner," he wrote. SEE ROMBOUTS PG 2

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George sentenced to two months house arrest

Blake Ellis
Local Journalism Initiative

A 38 year-old Kettle and Stony Point First Nation woman will serve two years of house arrest for the death of a Warwick man.

It has almost been four years since 29 year-old Jesse Storr died in the early hours of April 29, 2018 in his home on Egremont Road after a night of drinking and drugs. Tina George was arrested and charged with second-degree murder, but plead to the lesser charge of manslaughter last October.

Justice Bruce Thomas in his ruling Tuesday, said having George serve her sentence in the community “would not pose a danger to public safety.”

Crown Attorney Melanie Nancekievill wanted a jail sentence of two years less a day, while Defence Lawyer Richard Braiden thought the sentence could be served through house arrest or a suspended sentence.

One of the main reasons for Thomas’ ruling was George exclusively cares for her 10 year-old son, who is developmentally delayed.

“Separating them would only contribute, in my view, to the further intergenerational dysfunction in the community,” he said.

The judge remarked Storr had assaulted all three of the George sisters at various times, especially when he was high on drugs.

Storr had three children with one of George’s sisters but after a divorce,

was dating another one of the sisters at the time of his death.

The relationships with Storr and George’s sisters were described as “tumultuous,” marred by both verbal and physical abuse.

Storr’s girlfriend at the time of his death says he was “abusive, controlling and threatened to kill her if she ever left him,” court heard during the sentencing hearing earlier this year.

The root of Storr’s issues were attributed to addiction. He was once convicted of assault in 2016 for pushing George down a flight of stairs during a fight.

“No one deserves to die,” emphasized Thomas, adding that no sentence can restore Storr to his family.

The night before the violent incident, Storr, George, her sister and a few friends were drinking at bars and house parties in Sarnia and Forest, where they had all been getting along.

Storr was consuming cocaine and crystal meth, while they all drank alcohol.

The partying ended by the early morning leaving the George sisters and Storr alone in his apartment in Warwick where they went to sleep.

After waking up, Storr had a violent fight in the bedroom with his girlfriend where he had punched, bit and had thrown the woman against a wall. She came out of the bedroom and her right eye was swollen shut.

The fight woke Tina George, who

decided to leave the apartment, walking with her sister down Egremont Road.

Storr chases them before he broke George’s phone when she tried to call her mother for help.

He ripped his girlfriend’s shirt before dragging her back inside his home.

He tried to prevent George from getting back into his apartment, pushing her down the stairs and slamming the door on her arm before she forced her way inside.

While Storr sat on the couch with his girlfriend, George went to the kitchen and returned to the living room. George then drove a steak knife into his chest and stabbed him twice in his legs.

He managed to stand up, take a few steps before collapsing.

In a report read at her sentencing hearing, Tina George said she wished she had never gone out that night but “then what would have happened to my sister.”

George’s two-year house arrest sentence will be followed by three years of probation. She also will have a lifetime ban on possessing weapons.



Jesse Storr

- THE INDEPENDENT



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Rombouts cleared but IC says acted inappropriately

CON'T FROM PG 1

“If council wishes to pursue this, I recommend that it obtain legal advice as to possible actions council can take,” he wrote.

But Swayze says it is clear the mayor was not speaking for council. “The correspondence refers to statements made by the mayor all in the first person and I am unable to find any direct statement by her that her policy was the policy of the township. In addition, the township has issued a statement denying that the Mayor’s opinions are the opinions of the township,” he wrote.

“While I readily agree that making these statements is inappropriate behaviour as a mayor and likely to lead to the wrong conclusion by the public, I must preserve freedom of expression for any member of council. I cannot find that they are contrary to the Code or the Social Media Policy.”

Councillors Monday accepted the opinion and asked the staff to draft a media release about Swayze’s conclusion.

“This needs to get across to the public there’s been no wrongdoings and that council is moving forward past this,” said Councillor Wayne Morris as he asked for the news release to be drafted. All of council agreed.

“I appreciate the response and I hope that

we, as a council, can move forward together and move on from this,” said Rombouts.

While the Integrity Commissioner said the vast majority of comments received were opposed to the mayor’s opinion, council was chastised by a resident at the same council meeting as he supported Rombouts. Brian Davies, in a 12-minute speech to council, said the issue shouldn’t have gone to the Integrity Commissioner because the mayor was only voicing the opinion of her constituents.

“So, when people talk about people who are not representing the township ... or bringing a bad reputation to the township, maybe they should check their own selves and their own motives because from anything I’ve seen in my 60, almost 64 years of life, I have never seen so many people in favor of what the convoy did,” he said.

Davies added council tried to take Rombouts “out at the knees” which he called “shameful.”

“This is no way for grown ups to act.”



Jackie Rombouts

Napper to retire after October election

CON'T FROM PG 1

Napper made the announcement now because he wanted give people enough time to mount a campaign for Plympton-Wyoming’s top job, saying he needed to “clear the tracks.”

“I’ll get out of the road and let you guys fight this one out,” says Napper.

“I have no regrets; I just think it is time. I wish you all well. I just hope you don’t screw things up and make me want to come back,” he joked.

Councillors gave the mayor a standing ovation after his announcement.

Napper will serve until after the October election.

MARCH 2022

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\$245 million distillery comes to St. Clair

Crown Royal’s parent company building carbon neutral plant

Heather Wright
The Independent

St. Clair Township Mayor Steve Arnold says the work to bring a new \$245 million carbon neutral distillery for Crown Royal has been going on for the past three years. Diageo announced March 9 it has purchased 400 acres in St. Clair Township at the corner of Highway 40 and Moore Line near Nova Chemicals to build the plant which will produce up to 20 million litres of alcohol annually. It includes a distillery as well as blending and warehousing operations. It’s part of the company’s plan to be 100 per cent carbon neutral by 2030. “A low-carbon world is essential for a sustainable future, so I am thrilled to announce our first carbon neutral distillery in Canada as we continue to build momentum in our journey to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2030,” said Perry Jones,

President, North America Supply for Diageo in a news release. Sales of Crown Royal have increased 12 per cent in the first quarter of this year. “Crown Royal is the heart of our whiskey business, as the most valuable whiskey brand. It’s critical when we extend our footprint, that we are committed to creating a more sustainable world,” said Sophie Kelly, Senior Vice President of Whiskies, Diageo North America in a news release. “We are thrilled by this new world-class distillery. It will enable us to drive momentum to 2030 and beyond to elevate Crown Royal as a best-in-class whisky brand that leads innovation in the industry.” Arnold says he became aware of the possibility of a new plant for St. Clair two years ago. By then, Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership had already put in a year of work to get Diageo’s attention. The township was on the short list for the new plant, and Arnold became involved in the negotiations about six months ago. The decision was made at the end of last year and he’s been waiting for it to become public. The plant, which expected to take three years to build will

employ “dozens” according to the company. Arnold believes it could be as many as 80 people. Diageo’s St. Clair Distillery will join the company’s existing Canadian manufacturing operations in Amherstburg, Ontario, Gimli, Manitoba, and Valleyfield, Quebec. Construction is anticipated to begin in the second half of 2022, and the distillery could be operational in 2025. Arnold expects up to 400 construction jobs will be created, adding the workforce Diageo needs is already here and that was one of the main attractions to come to Lambton County. “We have a tremendous amount of energy, power, electricity, we have a lot of natural gas around, we have a lot of experience with industrial facilities, which you know, let’s face it, that’s what this will be. And there’s a workforce that is second to none to build this plant and second to none in safety,” Arnold says. “A lot of the workforce is trained for industrial operations, and so you’re already 90 per cent of the way there for the people that they will need.” Officials from SLEP says the new plan fits with the type of investment Lambton is trying to attract.

HONOURING UKRAINE



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

The Town of Petrolia is showing its support for the People of the Ukraine. The clock tower on Victoria Hall in Petrolia will be illuminated this week in the national colours of the Ukraine, blue and yellow. The Peace Tower on Parliament Hill has also been illuminated in support of the war-torn country.

Four year contract OKed in Petrolia

Public works employees in Petrolia will be getting a two per cent wage increase after council approved a new four-year contract. There are 12 unionized staff at town

hall covered by the deal which also sees increases of two and three per cent in each year of the contract. Non unionized staff and council members will get the same increase.

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Yours to discover

Editorial

The danger of social media

The Canadian news media has moved on from the Freedom Convoy to the horrific war in Ukraine, but there is a common thread to both stories which should cause us concern.

This week, we were drawn back to the story of a group of people who used COVID-19 vaccine mandates for truck drivers to converge on Parliament Hill for three weeks. Many said they'd come because they were tired of COVID, while organizers expressed goal was to overthrow the current government.

So many of those people had been heavily influenced by misinformation - also known as lies - on social media about the virus and how the government and scientists tried to reduce deaths in the pandemic. They simply didn't believe the science, the government's desire to keep people alive nor the people that tried to explain the whole confusing mess those they called the "mainstream media."

Even this week, as Warwick Mayor Jackie Rombouts was cleared of any wrong doing for giving voice to those thoughts, one of her constituents came to council in her defence. He believed science - just not the government's science. And he felt the majority of Canadians agreed with the convoy even though polls - which he called rigged - and vaccination rates prove otherwise.

And now, we watch as Russia manipulates its own people to believe they are doing the right thing by bombing Ukraine beyond recognition. And the scary part is, some people in the rest of the world believe Vladimir Putin's blatant lies, too.

This is power and the danger of social media. Studies show Facebook and Instagram are designed to draw people into an echo chamber of conspiracy. And people seem to be unable to step back and see they are being suckered in. And social media giants make big money doing it.

It's a complex problem but the solution starts with people education people about how they're being used by social media. It also requires some regulation of how these massive platforms work -still allowing free speech while making sure they see more than just "their truth."

It's a tall order, but we must tackle it for the good of our communities and our democracies.

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



Watford Fire Chief Rick Sitlington recently shared this photo of the members of the Watford Volunteer Fire Company in 1883. The men became famous over southern Ontario and Michigan by winning almost every Firemen's celebration - similar to the fire competitions held today. The crew were experts in running, connecting hose and 'playing a stream of water' according to the description beneath the photo that hangs in the fire hall in Watford. The team was usually among the winners at every event. If you look closely, you can see some of the awards the group won on their uniforms. Pictured are; in the front Tom Roche, Dick Roche, Franklin McLeay, Charlie Roche, Dave Roche and Jack Roche. In the middle row was Davis Hamilton, Fred Restorick, George Mansfield, TB Taylor, JB Brown, Mr. Spurway, and Jim Hamilton. In the back were Jim Miller, Joe Williams (known as The Old Pioneer), Malcom Campbell and Joe Cook.

Purple may help the world see past the Chemical Valley

When the news broke that Crown Royal will be setting up shop in Lambton County, I saw a few eyes light up. After all, Crown Royal is a Canadian favourite of adults and kids - practically everyone I knew as a kid had one of the little purple bags to store their marbles or toy cars.

But the new \$245 million plant being built in St. Clair Township is about more than the iconic purple bag; it's about progress. And I'm not just talking about the money.

While the investment is big, it is dwarfed by the cash which has poured into Lambton County as Crown Royal's now neighbour - Nova Chemical

- builds is \$2 billion plant. This is about progress as a community. For decades, Sarnia and Lambton by extension has been know because of the petrochemical companies here and the environmental damage they have done. As a reporter, I still find myself wanting to say Chemical Valley even though I know the connotations of the word and that the industrial hub of Lambton is now about more than chemicals.

While people here try to shake the name, it is still used across the country. That's despite the fact this community is on the leading edge of new carbon neutral technology and biochemistry.

Not many people notice that. And that may be the power of purple. Crown Royal - owned by Diageo - is something different - distinctly not a chemical. And the plant will have clean, green technology.

Even though Lambton has in many ways has grown past the Chemical Valley, the investment of this company may make the rest of the world see something fresh and new here, too, making purple the new green.



Heather Wright

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Charges against Petrolia woman dropped over charter issues

Blake Ellis
Local Journalism Initiative

A Petrolia woman who was arrested in a Sarnia drug investigation won't face charges in the incident.

About 20 charges against Caylie White and Garrett Prail, who was arrested with her, were dropped over concerns the search didn't hold to the standards of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

In September 2021, Sarnia Police were watching the Quality Inn on Christina St., looking for a person wanted on a drug warrant. White and Prail were seen leaving the hotel and getting in a car believed to be linked to

the wanted woman. Police boxed in the car in the parking lot but didn't find the woman in it.

White and Prail were patted down and were about to leave when police saw a 22-calibre sawed off shotgun tucked between the passenger seat and the car door. A black bandana was draped over it with only the tip of the barrel showing. It was loaded with a single round.

Drugs including meth, fentanyl, crack cocaine as well as rounds of ammunition were found in the car.

The pair were arrested and charged. Prail plead guilty March 14 to possession of a prohibited firearm. But White's lawyer was prepared to argue

the search was not legal under the Charter. The crown agreed. All charges against White were dismissed and all other charges against Prail were dropped.

On the possession of the weapon, the crown suggested a 75 day sentence. "He was not the target of the investigation," said Assistant Crown Attorney Ryan Jaquinta, as he presented the plea deal for Prail. "That detention would have been arbitrary."

Justice McFadyen agreed and added Prail cannot own weapons for the next 10 years.

Both White and Prail will remain in custody on unrelated charges.

- THE INDEPENDENT

Petrolia library getting a \$100,000 facelift in April

Heather Wright
The Independent

Petrolia's public library is getting a facelift, but it means patrons will have to go somewhere else for their book fix for five weeks.

Darlene Coke, manager of library services in Lambton, says the county and the Town of Petrolia will be renovating the children's library, improving accessibility and making it easier to move around the library for both patrons and staff.

There will be new shelving, flooring, paint, upgraded access to technology and a new Early Literacy Station in the children's library.

There will also be a new accessible service desk when the current desk is

relocated.

"We're looking to make some of those kind of just customer traffic flow improvements part of the project as well," says Coke adding the former train station is not always easy to navigate for users.

"That's the beauty and the challenge of working from a historic building; we do have some limitations in terms of the type of the space but it's also what makes the space unique and special to people who use the library there and have fond recollections and that take great pride in the history and heritage of the community."

The town will take time during the five week closure to refinish the hardwood floors throughout the library and repair exterior doors and the

electrical system.

The repairs are being made possible through a bequest of Otto and Kathleen Morrow Shuldt which was made two years go. Kathleen, a former teacher, grew up in Petrolia and was heavily involved in the community.

"The money was earmarked for things with a library that would be of benefit to the children that are served there," says Coke.

The renovations are expected to cost up to \$100,000.

The library will close April 3 and is expected to reopen May 7.

All due dates for materials take out there will be for May 7, but Coke encourages patrons to use the branches in surrounding communities until the work is complete.

Alvinston Optimist planning for phase two of arena renos

Heather Wright
The Independent

Brooke-Alvinston council is meeting with the Alvinston Optimists Thursday to map out the next phase of the club's building project at the local arena.

In 2017, the club unveiled a plan which would have extensively renovated the entire Brooke-Alvinston-Inwood Community Centre. The club started fundraising and when enough money had been amassed, they put up an outdoor pavilion with washrooms beside the arena. That project was completed over the summer.

Recently, members of the club came to council asking to move forward on the next phase of reconstruction. Andy Triest and Hannah Symington asked council to contribute up to \$15,000 so new engineering plans could be drawn up.

In a report to council, Administrator Janet Denkers said new drawings would be necessary to attract grants for a large project such as the Optimist are suggesting. The club has plans to raise between \$300,000 to \$500,000 for the next phase. Some of that money will come from government grants, making the new plans necessary.

Council meets with the club at the Thursday to understand what the project might include.

WHERE THERE IS SMOKE



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Petrolia/North Enniskillen firefighters were looking for smoke after being called to a Petrolia Line home near First St. Friday. The homeowners saw smoke in the basement however firefighters were not able to pinpoint the cause of it. The main street was blocked for about an hour while fire crews made sure there was smoke but no flame.

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Warwick agrees to funding plan for \$135 million in regional water projects

Heather Wright
The Independent

The Lambton Area Water Supply System says it needs \$135 million in upgrades to the local water system in the next 20 years. But it’s not expecting water users to foot the entire bill. Under provincial law, municipal water systems in Ontario must be fully funded by water rates. But LAWSS is a regional system which brings water from Lake Huron in Point Edward all the way to the southern edges of Lambton County. Clinton Harper, the general manager of LAWSS, and Pt. Edward Mayor Bev Hand, who is the chair of LAWSS board, are making

the rounds to the municipalities involved in the regional water system to gauge the support for funding a long term capital plan. Harper says there is one large projects on the books, twinning a water line from Sarnia to St. Clair Township which serves the petrochemical industry. It’s valued at \$75 million. “There are several large industries that depend solely on this watermain for potable and emergency service water. While breaks along this section are infrequent at this time, a break’s impact can be catastrophic,” Harper told Warwick council - LAWSS latest stop on its tour of users. A pumping station on Indian Road in Sarnia also has to be

replaced in the next 20 years, at a cost of \$15 million. There are some repairs coming to the systems directly serving Warwick, Harper said. Warwick will directly benefit from the construction of a new pressure zone near Wyoming and the installation of a new local distribution water standpipe in the area. That along with the twinning of the water line in St. Clair, should provide more water pressure and volume to the Warwick area at a time when hundreds of housing units are being planned. LAWSS is asking its member municipalities to agree to pay for some of the capital costs. Harper says the plan in to ap-

proach upper levels of governments for grants to invest the \$135 million in the system in the next 20 years. Harper says they’re looking for grants above and beyond those available for municipal government water systems. “The plan is not to impact you,” Harper told Warwick councillors. “We realize that ... it’s really difficult for municipalities like you to put your locally significant needs behind the these regional projects. So, the goal is to find funding that isn’t accessible municipalities, to not impede your ability to apply for the same kinds of funding.” And Hand says there will be no initial cash outlay for municipalities.

“This doesn’t mean anything in dollars at this point. It’s simply supporting the project,” says Hand. “We’re at the point where the equipment is aging, we need all of this work for long term planning. We have never got grants to my knowledge since the beginning but this is trying to go out and get something.” Warwick council agreed to endorse the plan which would see the municipality contribute about \$1.125 million to the projects over the next 20 years, should federal and provincial funding be found. “Without this kind of collaboration, we’re not able to get a hold of those grants. And it’s imperative that we do,” says Warwick Mayor Jackie Rombouts.

No cost rebate necessary says auditor

Heather Wright
The Independent

Brooke-Alvinston’s auditor says it did not need to pass along savings to Dawn-Euphemia because it used grant money to pay for renovations of the Brooke Fire Service Hall. The two municipalities and Southwest Middlesex have recently disagreed about the cost sharing for a \$119,000 renovation project. The project came in \$35,000 over budget. Since Dawn-Euphemia contracts fire services from Brooke-Alvinston, their contract states they will pay a percentage of the cost to run the department based on usage. Dawn-Euphemia council says the cost it has been assessed “does not accurately reflect the reality of the customary cost-sharing arrangements” because Brooke-Alvinston secured an \$85,000 grant for their share of the project. Dawn-Euphemia council argues the benefit of the grant should be shared, reducing the cost of the projects and

then splitting up the true cost of \$34,280. That would save Lambton’s southern most municipality about \$9,300. Southwest Middlesex agreed and is also looking for a reduction. But Brooke-Alvinston sought out advice from the municipal auditors. Officials from Baker Tilly said the grant should not make a difference in what the other municipalities pay. “From the wording in the agreement, each Municipality must contribute their share of the operating and capital costs. This would suggest that the annual expenditures for operating and capital costs are to be shared, not the source of the funding used to pay for the expenditures,” the firm states in a letter. It goes on to say “any source of funding” including taxes could have been used to fund the project and that would not have resulted in lower costs to the user municipalities. Brooke-Alvinston is forwarding the opinion from the auditor to the other municipalities.

OPP asks municipalities to share COVID cash

Blake Ellis
Local Journalism Initiative

Lambton municipalities are looking for more information after the OPP’s police board asked for money to cover COVID-19 cleaning expenses. Municipal governments pay the OPP for services. In Lambton, there are two extra offices that municipalities also provide cash to run. During the pandemic, Board Chair Murray Jackson writes, there were extra cleaning costs - although he doesn’t say how much. The board noted municipalities

were given money from the upper levels of government and it asked they would considering giving some of the provincial money to the board to cover the deficit. That left Brooke-Alvinston Deputy Mayor Frank Nemcek confused. “We paid \$35 to \$40,000 a month for policing but now they’re wanting to help clean the floors?” he asked noting COVID is “not our fault.” Both Brooke Alvinston and Dawn-Euphemia have received the letter and want more information before replying.


Drug impaired driver apologizes to cyclist he hit


A man high on fentanyl while driving has apologized to the cyclist he hit. Kyle Flynn plead guilty to impaired driving in Sarnia court March 9 after hitting a cyclist in May 2020 in Corunna. Court heard the driver had a hard time focusing when being questioned by police. He fell asleep within three minutes of being put in a police cruiser. He had been using crystal meth the previous night and was smoking


fentanyl that morning. A meth pipe and burnt tin foil was found in his car. “I am deeply sorry for what happened,” said Flynn in court as he apologized to everyone involved. Flynn is now in treatment for his addictions. “Thankfully no one was injured to any great degree, but a cyclist was struck,” said Judge Deborah Austin. Flynn is to pay a \$2,000 fine, is not permitted to drive for one year and will be on probation for six months and he has to continue his addiction treatment.


- THE INDEPENDENT


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Additionally, in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, event attendees are asked to follow physical distancing protocols, including the following:

1. Package materials in disposable containers (i.e. cardboard boxes) as they will not be returned;
2. Place materials in the trunk or back of their vehicle to maximize distancing for event staff when collecting items; and
3. Remain in their vehicle at all times, as event staff will be removing materials from their vehicle.



ALSO ACCEPTED: Sharps (Hypodermic Needles)
NOT ACCEPTED: PCB's, commercial, industrial or radioactive wastes, tires, explosives (flares, ammunition), electronics.
PLEASE NOTE: For safety reasons, residents are asked to segregate lithium batteries from all other battery types prior to drop-off.


2022 Household Hazardous Waste Depot Schedule

March 26	April 30	May 28
June 25	September 24	October 29


9:00am - 2:00pm
4090 Telfer Road, St. Clair Township, ON

Services paid for by the County of Lambton. Waste management collection services provided by Clean Harbors Canada Inc.

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St. Clair Township, Ontario



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County of Lambton
Public Works Department at
519 845-0801 / 1-866-324-6912
or visit www.lambtononline.ca



Masking ‘a choice’ Monday

The Independent

By March 21, wearing a mask in Ontario will be a choice not a law.

Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Keiran Moore, March 9 announced the mask mandates are being lifted in all public places including schools. Mask mandates in long term care congregate living spaces and public transit will be lifted April 27.

Moore says the protocols to slow the rate of COVID-19 have worked to protect the health care system.

But he faced criticism as news of the end of the mask mandate came out. The head of the Ontario COVID-19 Science Table said they were not consulted and the decision appears to be politically motivated. The provincial election is in June.

Moore says he personally be wearing a mask on public transit and in busy public spaces like malls.

He adds the province will continue to provide free masks and rapid tests to schools this year. Under the new rules, publicly funded elementary and secondary schools may not impose their own mask mandates.

Moore says that while the mask mandates are being lifted now, they could return if the virus flares up in the fall.

Would be paver sought in Wyoming

The Independent

Lambton OPP are looking for clues after a man posing as a driveway paver was caught going through a home in Wyoming.

Police say March 10, around 11:30 am, a man was confronted by a Confederation St. homeowner when he was found in a bedroom. As the man tried to get away in the homeowner’s vehicle he claimed he was there to offer driveway re-sealing services.

Police are looking for a short, white man in his 60s, He had a Ford F150 with FX4 in red on the box.

LIBRARY OPENS



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO

There is a new place for Watford residents to get a book. The Watford Rotary Club worked with Literacy Lambton to build a Little Library at the Sunset Ave. Park in Watford. The concept of every Little Free Library is ‘take a book and share a book.’ Watford Rotary President George Noll said ‘A book house in the middle of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life raft and a festival. It provides cathedrals of the mind; hospitals of the soul; theme parks of the imagination.’ The Watford library is being placed on Little Library smartphone app so anyone can find it. Seen here at the opening Tuesday are Wilma Aarts, Rick Hollingsworth, Warwick Township Councillor Wayne Morris, Noll, and Marianne Cundick, and Trudy Morris of the Rotary as well as Tracy Pound, executive director of Literacy Lambton. And at the right is Hollingsworth, who built the library.



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Past conviction means stiff fine

Blake Ellis
Local Journalism Initiative

It has been years since a Corunna man has had a drunk driving conviction, but his past came back to haunt him last fall.

Sarnia court heard Monday, a vehicle was swerving all over the road on Highway 402 just after 8 a.m. on Oct. 30. It turned off on Modeland Road and police found it again on Wellington Street in Sarnia.

The 72 year-old driver had slurred speech and a strong odor of alcohol. He was unsteady on his feet. An opened can of beer was found in the vehicle. He was found to be just over the legal limit of alcohol-blood level.

Wayne MacDonald plead guilty to drunk driving. Court heard he has a related, but dated, criminal record. His last conviction for impaired driving was in 2001, but he has several convictions in the 1970s and 1980s.

MacDonald was fined \$2,500 and given one year probation.

Judge Ann McFadyen said the stiffer penalty was justified due to the man’s past convictions with drunk driving. His probation will include counseling for his alcohol addiction. He will also not be allowed to drive for one year.

- THE INDEPENDENT

Sobriety ‘silver lining’ to arrest

Blake Ellis
Local Journalism Initiative

A St. Clair Township man says he likes his new sober life and plans to stick to it.

At least, that’s what he told Justice Deborah Austin in Sarnia Court March 9.

Lambton OPP stopped Jeffrey McClinton’s vehicle in St. Clair Township on Sept. 20, 2020. A slight odor of alcohol was noticed. Police received a call from a family member who was concerned about McClinton’s well being, especially because of his alcoholism and his access to firearms. There was no threat to the general public said Assistant Crown Attorney Ryan Iaquina.

McClinton plead guilty to careless driving. He was sentence to two years probation to include counselling for his alcohol issues. “I have been sober since Sept. 20, 2020 and I like this” McClinton said. “I like my new life and I plan to stick to it.”

“This may be the silver lining to these matters coming before the court,” said Judge Austin urging him to stay on a healthy path. He was also fined \$2,000 and banned from owing weapons for four years.

- THE INDEPENDENT

THEY’RE BACK



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Tundra Swans have returned to Lambton County. Officials at the Lambton Heritage Museum said the massive birds arrived Wednesday. The Tundra Swans make an annual stop in this area during their 6,000 kilometre migration loop. In a good year, there may be 15,000 individual birds resting on the bog behind the museum. They are attracted by the melt water of spring and the remnants of the prior year’s corn crop.

Probation for a woman passed out from fentanyl while in the driver seat

Blake Ellis
Local Journalism Initiative

“You have no business being in the driver seat of a motor vehicle, never mind one that is running,” said Judge Krista Leszczynski to a 26 year-old Corunna woman who was driving while high on fentanyl and passed out in a twice.

Katherine Gibbs was in the driver seat of a vehicle which struck a parked car in St. Clair Township on Oct. 13, 2020. She took her foot off the brake

and her car did a slow roll into the other vehicle.

Two tinfoil wrappers with fentanyl were on the passenger seat. Her eyes were blood shot, her speech was slow and slurred and she had trouble opening her eyes when paramedics arrived.

Gibbs was again high on fentanyl, passed out in the driver seat of an SUV in Chatham-Kent on October 29, 2020. Like the first time, the vehicle was in gear.


She plead guilty to both counts of

impaired driving by drug in Sarnia court on March 2. She was fined \$3,600 and will be on probation for one year.

“I am very concerned when I hear about circumstances like this,” said Leszczynski. “The danger you posed was very real.”

“I am not going down this path again,” said Gibbs. She is in addictions counselling as a condition of probation.

- THE INDEPENDENT



Township of Warwick

Student Summer Employment Opportunities

Parks & Recreation Labourers

(up to 3 positions)

Parks and Recreation Labourers will assist with grass and grounds maintenance, cleaning and setting up facilities, special events, watering flowers and supporting summer programming. Successful candidates will work 30 to 40 hours per week and be required to be available during evening and weekends.

Position Requirements:


- Full time student in the past academic year and returning to full time studies in the fall of 2022
- Completed their 2021/2022 school term
- A valid Ontario driver’s license (Class G of G2) preferred
- Be between 15 and 30 years of age,
- Canadian citizens, permanent residents or have refugee protection status under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act
- Legally entitled to work in Canada
- Will not have another full-time job.
- Be able to work days, weekends and weeknights during the period May 9th to August 26th, 2022 (Dates subject to change)

Application Deadline: 4 p.m. on Tuesday, March 22, 2022.

Written resumes for all positions will be received until 4 pm on Tuesday, March 22, 2022 and should be addressed to: Township of Warwick, 6332 Nauvoo Road, RR#8 Watford, ON, N0M 2S0 or fax to (519) 849-6136.

E-mail submission of resumes and questions on positions can be submitted to the Township of Warwick at MEsselment@warwicktownship.ca or 519-849-3926.

www.warwicktownship.ca



Township of Warwick

Student Summer Employment Opportunities

Customer Service Assistant

Position will be responsible to assist with customer service at the Township Office, take payments and provide support for general reception. Work will also include various administrative duties such as research, filing and records management to support operations.

Requirements Are:

- Strong computer skills in Microsoft Office suite (Word and Excel)
- Experience with customer service in person and over phone
- Self-starter, dedicated to independent task completion
- Full time student in the past academic year and returning to full time studies in the fall of 2022
- Completed their 2021/2022 school term
- A valid Ontario driver’s license (Class G of G2) preferred
- Be between 15 and 30 years of age,
- Canadian citizens, permanent residents or have refugee protection status under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act
- Legally entitled to work in Canada
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THE VILLAGE OF OIL SPRINGS

Public Works and Roads Department

Invites applications for the position of

Permanent Part-Time Labourer

The successful candidate will work under the supervision of the Superintendent of Public Works and will perform road and public works duties as required.

Must have a valid Ontario Drivers Licence, Class G or higher and Grade 12 or equivalent. Experience with snowplow operation and other light duty equipment would be an asset, as well as being mechanically inclined. Successful candidate must be available for call-in during emergencies, inclement weather & weekends.

The position is permanent half-time (two weeks on / two weeks off), with a 40-hour work week.

Interested applicants should **submit a cover letter and resume by March 25, 2021**, outlining experience, education, and skills to:

Public Works Superintendent, Darren Morningstar
publicworks@oilsprings.ca

Village of Oil Springs

4591 Oil Springs Line, Box 22,

Oil Springs, ON N0N 1P0

Phone (519) 834-2939

Fax (519) 834-2333



The successful candidate will be required to provide proof of double COVID-19 vaccination, a satisfactory Driver’s Abstract and Police Background check.

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

Sports

Squires open series Friday in Petrolia

Barry Wright
The Independent

The first game of the WOAA senior A hockey finals between the Petrolia Squires and Shallow Lake Crushers has been rescheduled for this Friday night at Greenwood. Face off is set for 8:30. The series was to have begun Saturday, but the visitors were not able to get here due to inclement weather and road closures around the Owen Sound area so the game had to be rescheduled.



It will be a quick turnaround as game two in the best-of-seven final will be held in Shallow Lake this Saturday. The third and fourth games are scheduled for Saturday, March 26 in Petrolia, and the following afternoon in Shallow Lake. The Squires bring an 8-9 record into the playoffs and beat the Milverton Four-Wheel Drives to make it to the A final. They have yet to play Shallow Lake this season. Meantime, the senior AA final will have a local flavour with former Squire Brad Burton suiting up for the Clinton Radars against Seaforth. The series begins in Seaforth on Saturday. After limited play during the regular season, Burton had three assists in 10 playoff games for the Radars.

CRASHING THE NET



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Everett Parent crashes into Tyler Richardson during Thursday night's game in Petrolia. The Flyers had no more losses to give heading into game four of their PJHL divisional quarter-final Tuesday night at Greenwood. Essex took the first three games of the series but the score of the fourth game was not available prior to our weekly press time. If Petrolia comes up short against the 73's, the team has opted into a consolation playoff round implemented by the league this season, according to team general manager Dennis Meston.

Flags look to advance to second round

The Independent

The Mooretown Flags take a three to one lead in games over Blenheim into Wednesday's PJHL playoff contest at the Moore Sports Complex. Game time is 7:30. After Mooretown prevailed in the first three games of the series last week, the Blades rallied with a pair of unanswered goals in the third period and a 3-2 home ice victory last Sunday night to stave off elimination in the best-of-seven series. Nolan Farr has led the Flags with eight points through the first four games and Brodie Conlon and Greg Hay have both added seven.



PHOTO VIA FACEBOOK

Caleb Pinsonneault stops a shot by the Flags Ethan Kerby as Zach Moore looks on during the March 13 game. Nathan King has a .910 save percentage between the pipes for Mooretown.

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		2		1			6	

Here's How It Works: 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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Pick an adjustable chair that allows your lower back to rest against a lumbar support. Then tilt the back of the chair so it's very slightly reclined.

KEEP YOUR MOUSE CLOSE
Ideally, it should be placed right next to your keyboard so you don't overreach or twist your shoulder, arm, or wrist when clicking.

TAKE BREAKS
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Legionnaires battle for playoff spot

The Independent

It doesn't get any easier this week for the Sarnia Legionnaires as they scratch and claw for a playoff spot.

Wednesday, Sarnia takes on the Nationals in London and Thursday they host Chatham.

The Nats and Maroons are in second and third place in the conference while Sarnia is in last place, eight points behind Strathroy

for the final postseason berth.

Oil City's Carson Peer, former Flyer Wil O'Leary-Dilosa, and Ryan Richardson, the younger brother of Flyer goalie Tyler Richardson, all had three points in three games for the Legionnaires last week. Sarnia split overtime games with Komoka and St. Thomas beating the Kings but losing to the Stars and they lost 10-7 last Thursday to Chatham.

Forest's McGregor, Canada, win silver

Tyler McGregor and Team Canada won silver medals at the sledage hockey competition at the Paralympics in Beijing.

Canada lost 5-0 to Team USA in the gold medal game. It's the fourth straight Paralympic title for the Americans who edged Canada in overtime to win the gold four years ago in South Korea.

"It is always difficult to lose in a gold medal game. After everything our team has been through over the past four years, and especially over the past two years, we never stopped believing in each other," said McGregor in a postgame statement. "I could

not be more proud of every player in our locker room, as well as our entire staff, for the work we have put in to get to this point. It is tough to fall short of a Paralympic gold medal, but we need to hold our heads high and be proud of the way we competed and represented Canada."

McGregor, the team captain, a North Lambton grad and alumni of the Lambton Junior Sting, finished eighth in tournament scoring with five goals and three assists. That total included four goals and six points on his 28th birthday in a semi-final victory last Friday.

Wyoming's DeVlugt college volleyball all-star

For the second season running, LCCVI grad Chantal DeVlugt has been chosen for a yearend volleyball award by the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association.

The second year outside hitter with Windsor's St. Clair College has been named to the West Division second all-star team. She was named to the all-rookie team after the 2019-20 campaign.

Last year's season was cancelled due to

COVID.

The Wyoming product led the Saints this season in kills and total attacks and was third in solo blocks. She also ranked in the top ten in the province in kills and total attacks during the regular season.

St. Clair lost a five-set match to Niagara last week and was eliminated from the playoffs.

The Saints finished 6-4 on the season.

North Lambton falls short of basketball title

The North Lambton Eagles had a two-point lead at halftime but just couldn't hold on bowing 51-47 to Ridgetown in the Lambton Kent junior boys' A basketball final.

The Royals completed the season with an 8-0 record, including double-digit wins over

the Eagles earlier this season.

Tye Michelson and Adam Jackson led the Eagles with 15 and 14 points each.

Pace White Barr added eight. North Lambton advanced to the final with a ten-point triumph over Pain Court in semi-final action last Monday.

Black named to national cross country team

North Lambton grad to wear Canadian colours at international cross-country event.

Connor Black has been chosen to represent Canada at the Pan Am Cup Cross Country event later this month in Brazil.

Black, a North Lambton grad from Forest, was fifth at the 2020 event in British Columbia. The Canadian men's squad, including Black, won bronze in the team event.

Canada finished second to the US in the overall standings which included senior and U18 men's and women's races. The competition is scheduled for March 27.



Connor Black

BIG DREAMS



BARRY WRIGHT PHOTO

Some little hockey players were dreaming some big dreams as Petrolia Oiler Tim Bits were featured during the Sarnia Stings intermission game Friday night.

GUIDE RATES

Size	Rate
Full Page	\$900
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Located Across The Road From One Another

Obituary

SMIT
Adeline

Adeline Smit (nee Yeates), of Petrolia, passed away peacefully surrounded by her daughters on **Friday, March 11, 2022** at Lambton Meadowview Villa, Petrolia in her **74th year**. Adeline was predeceased by her beloved husband George (2019). She will be dearly missed by her daughters Sheila (Mike) Mankulich, Malissa (Paul Kinsman) Smit-Percival, and Marie Smit, her grandchildren Hunter, Hannah, Michael (Kate), Katie (Travis), Andrew (Heidi), Cree, Zoey, and Seth, and her great grandchildren Harper and Oliver. She is also survived by her sister Sharon Guthrie and was predeceased by older sister Judy Chrysler, and her younger sister Debbie Yeates. Her sister and brother-in-law, Marg & Pat Egan, will cherish her memory always. Her life-long friend, Donna LaPeare, will miss her dearly. Adeline was a long-term member of the Quilter's Guild. She loved camping, nature, crafting and spending time with her family. She will be missed by many cousins, friends, nieces and nephews. The family would like to thank the staff at Lambton Meadowview for their compassion and caring professionalism. **A funeral service will be held on Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at 1 pm from the Needham-Jay Funeral Home, 4059 Petrolia Line, Petrolia. Interment in Hillsdale Cemetery.** As expressions of sympathy, memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Society (www.alzheimer.ca). Memories may be shared at www.needhamjay.com.

IODE Margaret Stokes Chapter

Famous Butter Tarts

Pre-Orders ONLY Pickup Dates: April 5, 6, 7, 12, 13 & 14
Pick Up Time Between 12:00pm and 3:00pm at the Petrolia Arena
To Order Call Carol at 519-882-1684 or contact an IODE member
No calls after 9:00pm

\$15 PER DOZEN

Coming Events

LAMBTON COUNTY BRANCH: ONTARIO ANCESTORS - Have questions about researching your Lambton County ancestors? Wondering what genealogy resources are available in Lambton County? Bring your questions as we talk genealogy in Lambton, on the last Monday of each month. Drop-in and Chat at our Zoom Webinar on **March 28, 2022 from 2pm-3:30pm**. For a link to the meeting, email lambton@ogs.on.ca

MARCH EVENTS @ FOREST LEGION - Darts - Wednesdays 7-10pm (Mar 16, 23, 30); Fridays - Lounge open 2-6pm (Mar 18, 25); Fridays - Shuffleboard 1:30pm; Saturdays - Lounge Open 2-8pm (Mar 19, 26); Saturdays - Meat Raffles 3:30pm. Join us at the Royal Canadian Legion Br 176 - 58 Albert St., Forest. 519-786-5357.

Wanted to Buy

The GOLD + COIN GUY - BUYING GOLD JEWELRY+ COINS: 54 years experience - serving Petrolia since 2004 - Please note: I did not send out a coloured brochure to your home. Before you sell take the time to get my offer (which is often double). **Next show date: Friday, April 8 at the Petrolia Lions Hall, 451 Hugard St., Petrolia.** House Calls Also available - **S Dan Jones B.A.B.Ed. 519-818-1805.**

Coming Events

OPEN DARTS - Every Tuesday at 7pm. All are welcome (not a league). For more information, call 519-882-0300.

HATCHERY OPEN HOUSE - Bring family & friends to see how we raise fish **Mar 19 & 20 - 10am-3pm.**

In Memory

In loving memory of
ROY L. CALEY
who passed away March 16, 1999.

Let this be a loving reminder
that someone is missing today.
Someone our hearts still hold on to,
as we travel along life's way.
Someone who made life so special,
for all those who gather here.
Someone who won't be forgotten,
but cherished from year to year.
And now, as we pause to remember,
let us fondly recall,
how dearly each of us loved him,
and oh, how he loved us all.

Lovingly remembered by Ann and Lyle
Moffatt, Joan and Doug Caley, Debbie
and Bert Bork, and families.

IODE Margaret Stokes Chapter

PLANT SALE

• Order Deadline April 1, 2022 •

For Sale

Geraniums pink, red, salmon, white, magenta	3/\$10 15/\$47
10" Baskets boston fern, fuchsia, million bells	\$17 ea
12" Mixed Patio Planter please specify either shade/sun	\$25 ea

PLANT PICK UP DATE
May 5, 2022
1:00-4:00 pm
Windover Nurseries

Gift Certificates to
Windover Nurseries
& DeGroot's Nursery
Available for Mother's Day
May 8, 2022

Safe Curbside Pick Up Available
To Order Wendy 519.882.2073 | Dawn 519.882.4919
Please no calls after 9pm

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

Coming Events

Sarnia Concert Association presents the "brilliant" **Cheng2 Duo** on **Wed Mar 23 @ 7:30 pm** at the Imperial Theatre. Tickets: \$40 adults, \$25 students, available at the Imperial Theatre box office.

EUCHRE - The Wyoming Fair Board is hosting 12 games of euchre **every Tuesday** from March 8 - April 27 starting at **1pm**. Coffee and cookies will be provided at halftime. Proof Vaccination will be required at the door.

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Church DIRECTORY

Christ Anglican Church

414 Oil Street, Petrolia

Join us for
In-Person Services
Sundays
@ 11:15 am

Everyone Welcome

Rev. Michelle Collins-Wongkee

Church Office 519-882-1430
christchurchpetrolia@gmail.com

St. Paul's
United Church

4169 Petrolia Line at Centre Street

In-Person Services

Sundays
@ 10:30 am

Rev. Carol Ferguson

Church Office: 519-882-1390
www.stpaulsunitedpetrolia.net

First Baptist Church

418 Greenfield Street, Petrolia

IN PERSON
CHURCH SERVICE

Sunday Mornings
@ 10:30 am

Pastor: Alex Craig

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

Find us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/First-Baptist-Church-Petrolia

Wyoming United
Church

730 Second Street, Wyoming

In-Person Services
taking place
Sundays @ 11 am

Those attending will be physically distanced,
must wear a mask and be fully vaccinated.

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
Sundays
@ 10:00 am

Services also available online:
www.standrews-petrolia.ca

Pastor Katherine Hawley



Canadian
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It matters to every patient across Canada.
Because it's something we can do today to help
others wake up healthier tomorrow.

Donate blood

Petrolia Blood Donor Clinic

Help Save a Life - Donate Blood

New Life Assembly Church Petrolia

421 Oozloffsky Street, Petrolia

Monday, March 21

1:30 pm - 7:30 pm

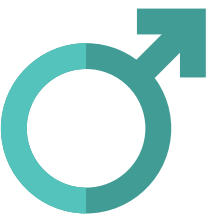
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every
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and platelets,
but only
1 in 81
does.

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necessary products for everyone else.

NEW Donors

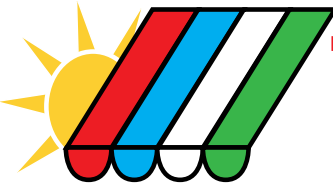
are critical
to meeting Canada's
future blood needs.

Lives depend on it.

Consider donating blood
with someone you care
about.

Encourage your family
and friends to donate.
Many first-time donors
bring a co-worker, friend,
or family member.

Since the pandemic began, the number of donors in Canada has shrunk!




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Save?



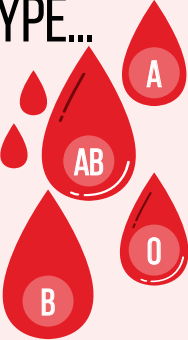
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