

Fit Club looking for Petrolia members linked to white supremacists

Heather Wright
The Independent

A researcher with the Canadian Anti Hate Network believes the Fit Club looking for members in Petrolia has ties to the white supremacist movement.

Peter Smith, a reporter with the non-profit organization, spends his days researching hate groups across the nations. And the Fit Club, like the one advertised on posters near the downtown, has ties to the Vinland Hammerskins which brought the concept to Canada.

Last week, a family on James Street found photocopied posters “Calling all local patriots” to find out about the Lambton County & LDN Active Club. A QR Code on the poster led to the club’s Telegram account.

The family says patriot is often a term used by hate groups and they’re concerned.

“The idea that these groups are advertising recruitments right outside my house, right where my kids play, terrifies me. I have gay and trans family members. My neighbours are refugees. I love my neighbourhood and want everyone to feel safe here. But they can’t if hate groups are allowed to post recruitment flyers and operate in secret like this,” they said.

SEE HATE GROUP PG 2

Voting underway

Heather Wright
The Independent

Even though the official voting day is still four days away, the ballots have been rolling in across Central Lambton in the 2022 municipal election.

In Petrolia, Clerk Mandi Pearson is releasing daily voter turnout numbers. By 4:30 pm Tuesday, about 16 per cent of eligible voters had cast a ballot online. This is the second time the municipality is using electronic ballots.

SEE VOTE PG 3

PUMPKIN FACE



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO

Two-year-old Merrick Hunter picked out his pumpkin on Saturday afternoon as part of the Great Pumpkin Giveaway put on by the Optimist Club of Lambton Central-Petrolia. Set up in the parking lot of Heidi’s Independent Grocer, there were 200 pumpkins to choose from. Local children were encouraged to pick up a pumpkin so they could carve them for a number of community events including community pumpkin carving, Fiery Faces Family Day and the pumpkin lighting display. Optimist organizer Carol Watt said the club decided to first do the giveaway during the COVID-19 pandemic and it has now become an annual event.



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SCAN FOR MENU





HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

The Active Club listed on a sign found on James St. is one of many waiting for entry into a white supremacy group according to an anti-hate researcher.

Hate group linked to Petrolia

CON’T FROM PG 1

The Independent found the small club bills itself as a fitness group. Text messages on Telegram show the owner of the group raising the issue of drag shows in local libraries. He presenting a video of trans youth, asking other’s opinions about trans youth and if they would be willing to “apply energy towards combating the above type of grooming of children.”

Later, the owner says “If you are in any way sympathetic to child sex change surgery, puberty blockers to prepubescent children or promotion of transgenderism to children your beliefs do not align with ours and you will be barred from membership.”

Crystal Fach of Diversity Ed is not surprised by the online exchange saying Diversity Ed gets people “coming at us in droves” saying they are “indoctrinating their children to become trans and that we are grooming kids.”

Smith, who has been investigating the Fit Clubs and their ties to white supremacy contacted The Independent after seeing our story.

Smith says the idea for the clubs came from a while supremacist in the US named Robert Paul Rundo. It’s meant to draw people into the movement.

“He is called this movement, white nationalism. 3.0 ... white nationalism 3.0 is this idea in a culture war...you’re prepared to defend yourself or commit violence. But you’re also well read... they encourage these people to do all kinds of positive things to be, physically fit, to engage with philosophy, to stay off drugs, to develop and work on yourself as an individual, but all of this is kind of underscored by a current of, you know, whites only white nationalism,” he says.

“When you when you look at the larger network that’s operating Canada of active clubs, it is run explicitly by a very old and international, white nationalist gang or a racist skinhead gang called the Hammerskins Nation, and specifically here in Canada, the Vinland Hammerskins.

Smith has found 38 different active clubs in Canada.

What raised suspicious with the photocopied poster in Petrolia was the symbolism.

“The symbol with a wolf’s head in it is a Celtic cross, which is a white

supremacist symbol... I’ve seen Hammerskins use it before.”

Smith says the Hammerskins espouse the Nazi ideology of a superior white race and have used violence in the cause including trying to blow up a Sikh temple.

The homo and trans phobia seen in the Petrolia chat room is also part of their belief system.

“Homosexuality, transgenderism - any type of different gender expression as a subversive element created by the Jews should destroy western society. Or at the very least, they’ll say it’s the type of immoral degeneracy which is part of what they try to reject about modern society.”

At first Smith said it appeared the Petrolia group could be linked to the Hammerskins Active Clubs. After doing some research, one of the organizers of the Lambton group was found on the white supremacist group’s website in a cue to be vetted for entry.

Smith says the method the Petrolia group used - a photocopied poster pinned to a hydro pole - is typical.

“The purpose is (to get) that picture and to get it online, where it will be seen and shared by many, many more people and get things like media attention that displays these URLs or displays the ways to find them,” he says.

The Independent cropped the QR code in the photo to stop people from using it online, which is a good practice, according to Smith.

“That is what they hope - that it gets put up somewhere. It doesn’t matter what the article says it matters that the website is displayed. The QR code is displayed.”

And while the group attempts to use media to spread its message of hate, Smith says it is important to bring the groups to light.

“We have to consider how large things will grow if we ignore them, versus how large things will grow,” he says noting how fast information can move on the internet. “People need to know what, who, and what is being organized in that town... having something that is called an active club sounds very innocuous...but when you when you talk with these individuals, when you’re in their online spaces, when you’re in a physical spaces, it is unadulterated hatred towards people who are not European people are not perceived as white.”

re-elect

JOEL FIELD

Councillor
Town of Petrolia

Voting Election Day is Monday October 24, 2022, concluding at 8:00 p.m. Ballots must be cast by the close of polls October 24th.

Who can Vote? To vote in the municipal election, you must be a qualified elector. That means you must be:

- a resident of the Municipality in which you are voting or a non-resident owner or tenant of lands in the Municipality or the spouse of such non-resident owner or tenant;
- a Canadian citizen;
- at least 18 years of age; and
- not prohibited from voting by law

If you live in a Municipality and own or rent more than one property in that same Municipality, you must vote where you live. You can only vote once per Municipality regardless of how many properties you own.

Advance Voting and Proxy Voting
Municipalities using Vote by Mail and Electronic voting methods for the 2022 Municipal Election. These systems replace the traditional polling place method and eliminates the need for advanced polls and proxy voting.

Vote by Mail:
Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston
Township of Dawn-Euphemia (school board only)
Village of Oil Springs (school board only)
Township of St.Clair

Voting Kits will be mailed to all electors on the Voters List on or about September 26th, 2022.

Electors will be able to cast their vote anytime following receipt of their voting packages, up until the close of polls 8:00 pm on Voting Day October 24th, 2022. Ballots must be received by the close of polls October 24th. The last day recommended for mailing back ballots with Canada Post is October 13th, 2022.

If you are an eligible elector and do not receive your Voting Kit by October 5th, please contact your municipal office.

Electronic Voting:
Town of Petrolia
Town of Plympton-Wyoming
Township of Warwick

Voter Information Letters will be mailed to all electors on the Voters List on or about September 26th, 2022. If you are an eligible elector and have not received the letter by October 13 ,2022 please contact your municipal office.

Electors will be able to cast their vote starting at 9:00 am on Friday, October 14, 2022, up until the close of polls 8:00 pm on Voting Day October 24th, 2022.

Traditional Ballot exclusively
Township of Enniskillen (school board only)

Electors will be able to cast their vote in person on the Advance Voting Day, Saturday, October 15, 2022 from 12'noon to 5:00 pm and on Election Day, Monday, October 24, 2022 from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm at your Municipal Office.

2022 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS
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Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (s. 40)

Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston	Township of Dawn-Euphemia
Vote By Mail	(ALL ACCLAIMED)
MAYOR 1	MAYOR 1
COUNCIL MEMBERS 4	COUNCIL MEMBERS 4
Janet Denkers, Clerk	Donna Clermont, Clerk
Township of Enniskillen	Village of Oil Springs
(ALL ACCLAIMED)	(ALL ACCLAIMED)
MAYOR 1	MAYOR 1
COUNCIL MEMBERS 4	COUNCIL MEMBERS 4
Duncan McTavish, Clerk	Martha Gawley, Clerk
Town of Petrolia	Town of Plympton-Wyoming
On-Line/Paper Ballot Voting	On-Line/Telephone Voting
MAYOR 1	MAYOR 1
COUNCIL MEMBERS 6	DEPUTY MAYOR (ACCLAIMED) 1
Mandi Pearson, Clerk	COUNCIL MEMBERS 5
	Erin Kwarciak, Clerk
Township of St. Clair	Township of Warwick
Vote By Mail	On-Line Voting
MAYOR 1	MAYOR 1
DEPUTY MAYOR 1	COUNCIL MEMBERS 4
COUNCIL MEMBERS:	Amanda Gubbels, Clerk
Ward 1 3	
Ward 2 2	
Jeff Baranek, Clerk	

For General Election Inquiry:

- Contact your local Municipal Office by phone or stopping in.
- Visit your local Municipalities website.
- Municipalities conducting Electronic Voting will have "how to" videos posted on their individual websites.

To check that you are on the Voters' List:

- Contact your local Municipal Office by phone or stopping in.

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NORTH LAMBTON: Lambton Shores, Plympton-Wyoming, Warwick.

CENTRAL LAMBTON: (1) TRUSTEE
St. Clair, Brooke-Alvinston, Oil Springs, Petrolia, Enniskillen.

SOUTH LAMBTON/NORTH KENT: Dawn-Euphemia, Chatham-Kent. (1) TRUSTEE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT (1) TRUSTEE **(ACCLAIMED)**
NORTH & CENTRAL LAMBTON: Brooke-Alvinston, Enniskillen, Petrolia, Oil Springs, Plympton-Wyoming, Lambton Shores, Warwick.

SOUTH LAMBTON/EAST KENT: (1) TRUSTEE **(ACCLAIMED)**
Dawn-Euphemia, St. Clair, East Kent.

FRENCH LANGUAGE PUBLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD (1) TRUSTEE **(ACCLAIMED)**
Conseil Scholaire Viamonde - Area 8
geographic area 8 comprised of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, and Counties of Elgin, Haldimand, Lambton, Norfolk, and Oxford

FRENCH LANGUAGE SEPARATE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD (1) TRUSTEE
Conseil Scholaire Catholique Providence – Area 1
geographic area 1 comprised of the Counties of Bruce, Grey, Huron, Lambton, and Perth



Candidates running for Petrolia council took centre stage at the Victoria Playhouse Petrolia Oct 12 for the only debate of the 2022 municipal election.

Housing, splash pad talk dominate debate

Heather Wright
The Independent

Questions about housing and homelessness and the proposed Kiwanis splash pad dominated the only All-Candidates Meeting of the Petrolia municipal election.

A group called PACE - the Petroliia All Candidates Evening - organized the Oct. 12 event at Victoria Hall. PACE Committee Chair Bob Maniuk moderated the event, with questions from the crowd being screened before being asked to the candidates.

Each person had a few minutes to introduce themselves, and a minute at the end of the debate to make a final pitch. In between, there was about 50 minutes of audience questions.

Two - answered by almost all the candidates on the podium - dealt with the homelessness and housing crisis. Mayoral candidate Richard Poore called it a "complex issue" that could only be solved if all levels of government worked together.

Brad Loosley, who is seeking reelection as mayor, touted the development taking place in Petrolia saying it will bring more living spaces to the community. He added Lambton County was in charge of subsidized housing.

But councillor candidate Liz Welsh said there were things the town could do to improve the availability of housing, including allowing homes to have “granny suites” on their grounds for their parents or even children.

Grant Purdy voiced concern if council approved development charges it could make homes unaffordable. The council has been grappling with the issue for the past year, recently deciding to let the next council deter-

mine whether a study should move ahead on the charges placed on new homes to pay for the growth of municipal services they bring. "It's been proven that they do get passed on to homeowners," he said. "The key that we can really have to make the difference is not to have development charges."

Incumbent councillor Joel Field says the municipality does have a role to play to “encourage developers to move forward” with more affordable housing and to partner with the County of Lambton to do it.

Council candidates also fielded questions about the proposed Kiwanis Splash Pad. The service club has offered to raise money for the much wanted amenity, however it is concerned the operating costs, which include tens of thousand dollars in water and sewage charges, will be too big of a burden for the club. Councillors were asked if they would work with the club to reduce the fee. All said that was possible.

The candidates also faced a question about holding the line on taxes, particularly now that federal and provincial governments are not giving out as much grant money; all committed to keeping taxes as low as possible.

Because the chair of the event allowed each of the 13 candidates to answer each question, and three questions were also posed to the candidates for trustee up for election Oct. 24, there was limited time for questions about municipal issues.

There was some surprise in the crowd of about 250 people when one trustee candidate, Heather Skolly, perpetuated an urban myth that children in schools are presenting as “furries.” You can read the full story on page 20.

Voters go to the polls in Petrolia, and across Ontario, Oct. 24.

ay in Central Lambton
always include the resident's post office
box. Canada Post won't deliver the voter
package unless that box number is on the
envelope.

“The municipality has done their best to work with everyone to keep our mailing addresses up to date. The list that came from MPAC did not include all those PO boxes, or some of them. So, we did our best to update, but it did create some challenges for people getting their voter cards,” she says.

But Gubbels says the township has made plans to make sure voters can come to the municipal office and get on the list, even at the last minute, and get help to vote online.

“That’s why we have our voter assistance center open at the municipal office and were able to take calls and answer emails and questions,” she says noting the office will be open Saturday to help voters. The voters can come into the municipal office on Monday -

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Editorial

We are horrified

The conversation *The Independent* had this week with the research from the Canadian Anti-Hate Network was chilling to say the least.

The researcher had seen the story we published about an Active Club recruiting members via a photocopied poster with a QR code nailed to telephone poles on James Street.

The Independent investigated and found the group had homophobic and trans phobic views and was looking for people willing to take action against the group. That was disturbing enough on its own.

The story didn't garner as much attention locally as we expected, but the Anti-Hate Network - a non-profit which exclusively investigates hate crimes and those who do - them took notice. It was the Celtic Cross with the wolf in the centre which caught their attention. It's a symbol used by white supremacists.

They called and we talked. And what the researcher told us should send chills down every person's spine. Those who were trying to recruit your neighbours want to find people who will follow the views of Hitler where only white people have power, where Jewish people are eliminated and where anyone who doesn't fall into what they consider the norm is fair game for their sadistic form of hate.

The researcher told us later that the group recruiting in Petrolia was trying to become part of the Vinland Hammerskins, one of Canada's most notorious and vicious white nationalist gangs.

We are horrified.

Families in this community sent their sons to rid the world of this thinking. Those sons died in that fight.

We decry the loss of freedom because we had to wear a mask while groups like this plot to take away the freedoms and the lives of people just because they don't look or act like them.

We hope this horrifies you, too. We hope this moves you to talk to your kids and warn them about these dark corners of the internet which make hate their calling card.

We hope that you tell your children Canada, with all its flaws, is an inclusive country and the only thing that doesn't belong here is white supremacy.

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



DAVE BURWELL POSTCARD COLLECTION PHOTO

A post cart of Alvinston's River Street during its hey-day.

Disappointment as voters go to the Petrolia polls

I am disappointed with the election in my town. And I'm partly to blame.

Politics in Petrolia has always been rough and tumble - I attribute that to the Hard Oils mentality which has been bred into the residents. People work hard, they do things their way, and aren't afraid to get a little dirty while they're doing it. And that's pretty much how politics works in this town, too.

When the nominations closed in August, I was glad to see so many people put their names forward. There would be a race for every seat and it was bound to be interesting.

I took that feeling into the all-candidates meeting Wednesday at the VPP and that's where I was disappointed.

Over the last four years there have been a number of issues this council has dealt with; some well, some not. There has been lots of controversy and the fact this council abdicate its duties for the last two months of its term while continuing to be paid.

So I was expecting some good questions. But that didn't happen.

What happened was a number of questions about the housing situation - it's apparently complex - a gripping question about whether candidates

would keep taxes low - which of course they all pledge to do within their power - and about the Kiwanis splash pad. And there was a question about Meadowview Villa being replaced - it's not even in the town and is a county responsibility, but the mayoral candidates were asked anyway. In short, the questions wouldn't give most voters more clarity about how to cast their ballot.

So, I tried to organize a last minute virtual debate figuring - wrongly it appears - that people looking for your vote actually want to talk to you.

Brad Loosley was among the first to respond. He would not attend. There had been a debate. And voting had already started. Marty Souch oddly had a very similar answer.

That voting started is an absurd excuse to decline. There have been advance polls in every election and politicians don't stop campaigning. I did remind the pair that if they weren't willing to debate, they shouldn't be campaigning either. Oddly, no response to that. Richard Poore also decline - without an excuse.

Several other people had other commitments including work, so the whole thing fell apart. There would be no ac-

countability in a public forum. It's disappointing because I would have liked to know why councillors quit working in September, why the mayor and Marty Souch decided Souch should not be involved in in camera meetings for months - not doing the job we paid him to do. I'd like to know if the councillors are going to lower the mil rate when our property assessments finally catch up to market value instead of scooping up all that cash for their pet projects.

I'd like to know why, as a taxpayer, I paid for a road Goldleaf needed for its residents to get onto their private road. And why don't we have development charges to pay for that.

And I'd like to know the candidates have even read the Municipal Act, because with the way councillors conduct themselves and the lack of knowledge of some of the candidates, I'd say no.



Heather Wright

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Opinion

Unanswered questions after all-candidates meeting

EDITOR:
The interviews with all candidates were well covered and helpful, as published in the October 6th issue of *The Independent*. I was disappointed that the questions chosen for discussion at the ‘All Candidates Meeting’ held on Oct 12th did not assist me in determining the position of the candidates on major issues.
For example, the mayor (Brad Loosley) stated in his interview that he is in favour of development charges. However, he and the present council have deferred the preparation of the necessary engineering report to next

year. This will result in missing the boat for financial contributions from new developments presently in the works. I, and others, would like to know their rationale for this decision.
Four councilors indicated, in their interviews, that they are not in favour of development charge for new developments. This means that all the additional infrastructure and services required for these new subdivisions must be paid for by ALL taxpayers in the Town of Petrolia. How do they justify this, particularly since most municipalities have implemented development charges?

It is my understanding that since the YMCA took over the management of the Petrolia Community Fitness Centre, membership has increased, and several new programmes added. One council member wants to turn management back to the town? Again, it would be helpful to know the rationale for this.
I suggest that all eligible voters take the time to peruse the interviews in the October 6th issue of *The Independent*. It would be very helpful.

Norm Sutherland
Petrolia, ON

Reader decries electioneering online; reveals his vote

EDITOR:
Well here we go again! They are trying to get the clique back again. They tried four years ago, but the people of Petrolia could see through them and they lost. Now they are trying again.
Have you read what he has been putting on Facebook? He wants all of Petrolia Council replaced, except Joel Field. What does that tell you? Now he wants Liz Welch back so she can reduce council to four members instead of six. With the clique now, all he needs is one more vote.
In my opinion, there should be five

members reelected, including Brad Loosley. He has the experience, the knowledge and is not part of the clique. The following councilors are Ross O’Hara, Marty Souch, Wade Deighton and Grant Purdy. There are enough new people running that will more than fill in the other two seats.
As for the person he picked to be the new mayor, Richard Poore has been preaching transparency. Ask him why he left the Imperial Theatre in Sarnia under a cloud with no news outlets attached.
He claims to have knowledge and experience. Where did he get this,

other than through John McCharles?
You have to wonder who is running for council? Is it Joel Field, Liz Welch, Richard Poore, or is it John McCharles?
I would hope the people in Petrolia have the insight to finally get rid of this bunch, who thinks they can run this town behind the scenes. I, for one, will be voting for six councilors and Brad Loosley for mayor, not just the three that McCharles put on Facebook.
Glen L. Lapointe
Petrolia, ON

Reader voices concerns about graphic prolife pamphlet

EDITOR:
Recently a pamphlet containing graphic photographs of two aborted fetuses was left on the porches of several homes in Petrolia.
The unnamed pro-life organization has certainly achieved all it hoped for and more! Residents were shocked,

horrified and concerned for both their elderly neighbours and those grieving the loss of a child or family member.
Without compassion or tolerance for fellow human beings, it is difficult to imagine that such an organization would have anyone’s well being at heart. This anonymous group does

suggest that anyone with questions could call a 1-800 number.
Who would make such a call? No one I know!
Karen L. Wood
Watford, ON

FOREST - LONDON LINE COLLISION



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO

There has been another crash at the corner of Forest and London Lines. Three vehicles were involved in the accident Tuesday afternoon. Four ambulances were called to the scene taking people to hospitals in both Sarnia and Petrolia. One of the ambulances taking victims from the scene was also involved in an accident at the corner of Oil Heritage Road and London Line en route to hospital. Lambton OPP are investigating the crash and have yet to release any information. The intersection has been the site of dozens of serious accidents and three deaths in the last 10 years. In 2021, Lambton County council approved flashing stop signs there hoping to improve visibility .

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CAO apologies for lack of lease info

Heather Wright
The Independent

Warwick’s CAO says she is to blame for the lack of transparency about the cost of the township’s new municipal building.

Amanda Gubbels issued a public apology Monday night during a council meeting after reports of the 25 year lease for the Nauvoo Road building became public and caused council members confusion during an all-candidates debate.

The township is leasing the building for over \$13,000 a month. It can purchase the building four years into the 25 year lease. If it continues to lease the building for the full term, it will pay over \$4 million in rent.

The council candidates were asked at the all-candidates meeting earlier this month how much it is costing taxpayers.

“Under the Municipal Act, cannot comment on a deal with a landlord,” Incumbent Councillor Wayne Morris told the crowd “I don’t know exactly, but we can’t comment... We were told in camera that it’s confidential. We weren’t allowed to say anything.”

But The Independent had reported the information that day. Morris was unaware the CAO had released it after advising councillors not to under the privacy rules of in camera meetings.

“I’d like to just emphasize that ever since the lease agreement was signed with the developer for the municipal office in July of 2021,” said Gubbels Monday.

“I was always under the understanding that the details in the agreement, including the financial provisions related to the lease were confidential.”

So, she advised council not to release the information.

But Gubbels said as taxpayers began to ask, she sought further advices from the township’s lawyer.

“The volume of requests recently has

increased and prompted me to consult with our legal counsel again, on the release of information related to the lease. I was provided updated legal counsel, which clarified that well the full lease agreement itself It was considered confidential as it does contain a specific confidentiality clause.

“The information on the lease payments and terms could be released. Legal explained to me that this was because the financial data was included in our public budget and financial reporting and as such as considered public information.”

So Gubbels released the information to those who asked for it.

“I did neglect to tell counsel, I had released this information. As such counsel continued to be under the impression this information was to be kept in confidence,” she added. Several community members voiced concerns at the meeting that the financial information was being withheld by council.

“I do want to express my sincere apology to all members of council for this error in communication. And to publicly correct the record on this issue. I understand that this mistake makes it appear to the public that counselors were lacking transparency by not providing lease information intentionally, when in fact councils unwillingness to provide this information that was directly a result of the guidance they received for municipal staff,” she said.

“I also want to apologize to members of the community of Warwick Township, I would never intentionally guide counsel to keep information confidential, if it was not my understanding that it was required to be and I understand this has created a lack of trust. And I’m committed to doing my part to correct those areas as best I can.”

Mayor Jackie Rombouts thanked Gubbels for issuing the apology adding the municipality tries to be “as transparent as it legally can be.”



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Enniskillen recycling in limbo

Blake Ellis
Local Journalism Initiative

Changes to the Blue Box program in Ontario, could mean an end to the recycling program in Enniskillen Township.

It all comes down to the where the transfer station that will handle the recyclable material will be located.

Right now, township residents use the now closed Petrolia landfill owned by Waste Management as a depot for garbage and recyclables. They bring the items to the centre themselves and WM takes care of the items, usually taking them to the Twin Creeks Landfill in Watford.

In the past, the township looked at building its own transfer site for the waste and recycling, however to follow the Ministry of Environment’s environmental assessment process for approval of the transfer station was expected to cost over \$100,000 at the time.

So, the municipality struck another deal which would allow residents to continue to have access in Enniskillen at the local landfill.

“I hope it won’t change,” said McTavish, as it has not yet been announced where the material will need to be hauled.


The township would be responsible shipping the material to the transfer station. If the municipality needs to ship the material to a transfer station in London for example, that could be too cost prohibitive. The Township of Enniskillen collects 100 tonnes of recycling each year.

The discussion came after a letter about the Continuous Improvement Fund came forward at the Enniskillen Township Council meeting, Oct. 17.

The fund will cease to exist after the restructuring of the recycling program in Ontario. McTavish said the Continuous Improvement Fund has approximately \$9 million in its reserves. He speculated the municipality would get about \$1,000 back from the fund.

The province is to transition to the new recycling program by July 1, 2023.

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Please join us in Honouring
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Saturday November Fifth
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Limited Tickets Available
Tickets: \$25.00 per person

30 - Lambton’s oldest weekly closes

Heather Wright
The Independent

The oldest weekly newspaper in Lambton County is closing.

The owner of The Lambton-Middlesex Standard, Dale Hayter, told his readers via email Tuesday they would no longer be producing what had become a PDF of the newspaper mailed to homes each week.

The Standard is the amalgamation of four community newspapers in the region.

In the 1970, the Glencoe Transcript purchased the Alvinston Advocate. That Glencoe newspaper later merged with the Watford Guide in the 2000s.

Hayter took over The Forest Standard, which he purchased from the Boyd Family in 1990s. After some financial struggles, the Guide Advocate and The Standard merged into the Standard Guide Advocate. Four years later, the Parkhill paper - which his family owned for decades - merged with the group and it became known as the Lambton-Middlesex Standard.

Hayter says even then, times were tough for newspaper as social media and the Internet expanded rapidly.

“When I bought for standard 1990, we were 36 to 40 pages religiously every week. But that’s before the internet really took off.”

Things got worse during the pandemic. Hayter immediately began delivering the news to his customers via email, concerned about the spread of the virus and the lack of sales to pay for rising print costs.

The decision was originally “just to get help get through the COVID situation because I knew that, you know, you can’t blame these small businesses, (who normally bought advertising) they were shut down. Why would they advertise? I think at the end of the day it was the perfect storm.”

The economics of printing a newspaper grew worse in 2021 as print prices shot up during a shortage of paper. And some of his oldest readers stopped subscribing, not wanting to adjust to using a computer.

As the paper struggled both financially and with trying to cover news in a very broad region with limited resources, Hayter, who had a kidney transplant just before the pandemic, started asking some tough questions about his business.

“At my age, I’m not going to keep funding



The last edition of The Standard, Oct. 6, 2022

this with my own money. It’s just not paying for itself ...Well, it may pay for itself, but I’m not getting anywhere... So at the end of the day I just said, that’s enough. You know what I mean, I just pulled the plug.”

Hayter says the decision to move away from print in the pandemic, and then to close were gut-wrenching.

“I’ll be honest with you that one of the hardest things I ever had to do...My mom and dad owned the Parkhill paper.

“I mean, I grew up around the newspaper. I have the ink running through my veins. And the hardest thing to do was there two or three years ago, when COVID hit that I decided to get out of print - that was even harder.”

The closure of The Standard Guide Advocate leaves only two community newspapers which serve Lambton County, *The Independent* and Post Media’s *Sarnia This Week*. Post Media also serves the Grand Bend area with a weekly based in Exeter.

Last month, *The Sarnia Journal*, which began publishing in 2014, moved away from print as well and became an online publication.

Town to pay for splash pad; Kiwanis to pay it back

It appears Petrolia taxpayers will be on the hook for the splash pad - at least for a while.

The new Petrolia Kiwanis Club offered to pay the \$150,000 cost through fundraising. But what wasn’t said at the time was the club required the town to pay the initial cost and the club would reimburse the town over a number of years.

During the all-candidates meeting Oct.

12, a Kiwanis member in a question to the candidates, said an agreement had been reached with the town on the issue. Dave Menzies, director of community services, says there isn’t a formal agreement yet approved by council.

The club is expected to be at a November council meeting to speak to the issue.

Another internet project in Dawn-Euphemia

Heather Wright
The Independent

Another internet provider is looking to improve service for Dawn-Euphemia residents. But the mayor says it will take much more to make sure the entire community is connected to the vital service.

Dawn-Euphemia has long been a difficult place to stay connected. Over the years, several internet projects were started with some successes. But Mayor Al Broad says there are still plenty of spots in the southern most municipality in Lambton where cell phone calls are dropped an internet is spotty to nonexistent.

Monday, a project by Xplornet Communications was reviewed by council. The company plans to build a 45 metre high internet tower on a private farm on Bentpath Line near Cairo.

It’s expected to serve the southeastern part of the township, Newbury and possibly Bothwell as well.

The company has completed its studies on the project and is now in a 20-day public consultation process where residents can call the company and ask questions and raise any concerns.

Broad says the township welcomes more service but he’s pessimistic the connectivity problems in his rural community will be solved in his lifetime.

That, Broad said, would a massive project to connect homes with a fibre network - which be cost prohibitive.

“That is no different than putting a municipal water line up and down our roads – it is a significant cost.”

Broad says the only other alternative is new technology which would not be limited by buildings and trees.



Happy Halloween



HALLOWEEN PARTY

SATURDAY OCTOBER 29
2-6 PM



Wear your Costume and bring in your Carved Pumpkin or just come as you are for the afternoon!

Join us at the Youth Centre on Victoria St after 2 pm

Judges will choose their top 3 favourite pumpkin carvings for 3 different age categories; 4-6, 7-9 & 10-12. Pumpkins must be clearly labeled with name and age on or under them for prizes to be awarded.

Judges will also choose one child for "Best Costume"!

@ 3pm judging starts

Candy Bags, popcorn and drinks will be provided.

...Movie "Hocus Pocus 2" will start @ 4pm

We look forward to seeing everyone there.



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SHOPPING MONEY



SUBMITTED PHOTO
The organizer of Shop Like Charlotte, Denise Thibeault, recently presented Owen Byers of the CEEH Foundation with the proceeds from the 2021 event. Over ten years, the event has raised over \$40,000 for equipment at the Petrolia Hospital.

Saving for a Big Mac: life on ODSP

Heather Wright
The Independent

Crystal Melnyk loves Big Macs. But living on the Ontario Disability Support Program means it is just not in the budget.

“It’s hard to wrap your head around that something as simple as a hamburger is something that you have to save for, for a few months.”

The Dresden woman is one of thousands across the province who are unable to work because of a medical condition.

Melnik worked hard her whole life, including at the Chatham-Kent Y where she was the membership secretary until her medical problems overwhelmed her and she had to stop working.

“This was not my life plan...I was hoping that the grandkids through school. I couldn’t even afford my own kids.”

Now it’s her full time job to afford to live on ODSP.

The provincial government provides just over \$1,100 a month to people who are disabled and can’t work.

Across the province, disability advocates have called for a massive overhaul of the system for years. During the election, the Green Party advocated doubling ODSP. The Conservatives won power and in September, increased ODSP five per cent - that’s about \$58 a month. Food cost alone have risen nearly 10 per cent in 2022. Housing costs have also soared

But as the pandemic drove up the cost of housing and food, the cries started to become louder.

There was a move to have the federal government create a disability benefit but so far it has yet to materialize.

She and her friend, Monique DeVolder, are among the 510,000 people in the province who rely on the benefit and are struggling as the cost of living rises.

Melnik secured her Dresden apartment when the rent was lower, so she has about \$400 to buy her food, pay her bills and any personal care products she might need for the month.

DeVolder rented her apartment in the same building at the height of the pandemic. “I think I have \$137 a month left,” she said as she and Melnyk went through the free clothing at the North Dresden Baptist Church recently.

It was a rare treat for the friends to shop for clothing.

“Everything is so expensive and even going shopping, you know, I can’t remember the last time I actually went into Walmart shopping bought something new...the only thing I buy new is under clothing,” says Melnyk.

She’s found some item she likes including a black turtle neck dress, slightly fade after being washed a number of times by a previous owner. Melnyk says she can’t afford to shop in thrift stores either because the prices there have risen.

“A dress like this will be \$12.99 - I can’t afford that.”

Melnik even had to forego visits to a doctor because she can’t afford the transportation costs.

“There’s no such thing as money leftover for a rainy day; every day is raining.”

But the friends try to make the best of the daily struggle to make ends meet. They share meals and pass along opportunities for low cost food or free community events like the clothing giveaway.

DeVolder was searching, without success, for a new winter coat. And she’s been thinking about Christmas already.

“I can’t afford to buy anything for my grandchildren,” says DeVolder.

It’s not where she wanted to be but after years of manual labour to earn a living to support her family, she had no other choice to but to lean on the provincial system for help.

“It’s not my fault that my body gave up.”

And while the pair voice their frustration when asked about life on a disability pension as inflation rises, they don’t dwell on it. They try to make the best of what they have.

“It is my life and I’m making the best of it. And you know, I’m grateful every day that I wake up that I’m no longer bedridden. I’m better than that was. I’m healthier than I was, so I can’t complain because I’ve been worse,” says Melnyk.

“I’m thankful for good friends. I’m thankful that God wakes me up every day.”

Little has been said during the municipal election campaign about the state of Ontario’s social assistance plans, even though municipalities is a partner in delivering the service. Melnyk says it’s unfortunate people haven’t paused to think about the plight of their neighbours. “We live in Canada. We are not a third world country. How dare we live like this...I’m one month away from being homeless... That’s how close to the edge I am.”

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- jam
- ready-to-serve soups
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- Sidekicks - rice & pasta
- brown beans
- kidney beans
- canned stew
- flakes of chicken
- flakes of turkey
- salmon
- social crackers - ritz, triscut
- CheezWhiz
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HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Students from Petrolia Primary School try to follow Gurdeep Pandher’s movements as he brought his Joy, Positivity and Hope tour to Petrolia Thursday

Joy and positivity tour comes to Petrolia

Heather Wright
The Independent

Gurdeep Pandher says joy can be your best therapy.

The Sikh-Canadian who gained huge following for his videos on social media stopped in Petrolia Thursday to teach the traditional folk dance of Panjab – Bhangra. About 30 people joined him at the Petrolia Y for the hastily arranged session Friday where he urged people to embrace joy and happiness in their lives.

Pandher, who has 210,000 followers on Twitter and 112,000 on Facebook, is a teacher who has lived in Yukon for 11 years. He started sharing his philosophy about joy and positivity when the pandemic started.

“When the COVID was on its peak, I decided to make one video every single day to send a similar message through social media,” he tells The Independent.

“I used to dance and I also used to combine these messages with my dances too and lots and lots of people across the country coast to coast to coast, they connected with my messages, they connected with my videos, they started sending me letters, handwritten letters, and many other artwork made by hand.

“That was quite uplifting, quite moving for me as well. So, at that time that I decided that ‘Hey, this, like dancing and these kinds of messages, they are not just entertainment, they serve as purpose of healing and after uplifting spirits in difficult times.’”

Pandher says he would meet people who would tell him how his videos and messages of embracing joy would touch them including one woman who was diagnosed with cancer in the pandemic. “She made it her ritual every morning, she would watch during that difficult time, my videos for positivity for hope or joy. And she went through a whole treatment when watching my videos... I get chance to hear from people and it makes me realize that hey,



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Gurdeep Pandher rolled into Petrolia Thursday and made a stop at the local grocery store before spreading his message of Joy, Positivity and Hope Friday at the Y.

even I didn’t know that it could go that far.”

Pandher decided to take his message on the road recently to “bring this message in person beyond screen.”

He’s driven his small van to the East Coast, Quebec and now Ontario, staying with people he’s connected with on Twitter and teaching classes wherever he’s asked.

Melissa Duquette of Petrolia is one of those people. She watched his videos and recently reached out to him to offer a place to stay if he was ever in Petrolia. Wednesday he called saying he would be in town soon. Duquette worked with friend Liz Welsh to find him a place to stay and to set up the class at the Y.

And while he taught them how to dance, he shared his message. “Joy can be your best therapy... We live in a world with so much pain... and then joy is just like sunshine in the darkness.

“What we say and what we think has an impact on our life... Enjoy the moment of being happy... You have to be open to joy.”



TODD WHITE CANDIDATE Warwick Township COUNCIL

Over the last 12 years on council, and as Chair of the Development Committee, I have learned that all councils build on the good decisions of the previous councils before them. Things take time and require a council that works together, as a strong team, all pulling in the community’s best interest while guiding staff to put into action the decisions of Council.

Our current council achieved many successes during this term. The build out of the Scenic Court subdivision, the redevelopment of the South end of Main Street, the continued development of our business park, the building of the East Lambton Community Centre and the interest of developers to invest in Warwick Township. *On behalf of my fellow councillors, I wish to thank staff for assisting us in delivering a successful mandate this past term.*

A focus of my platform is to continue to leverage income streams from Waste Management for the development of our community. Our agreement with them has generated significant funds thanks to the councils of the past. This has allowed the current council to have the confidence to make significant investments in the community during this term.

I have a passion for Finance and Development in Warwick Township. I have always had an entrepreneurial personality, and this led my wife Sandra and I to create Brookside Retirement over 20 years ago. We chose Watford because of our personal connection growing up in this community, its central location between London and Sarnia and our passion for small towns.

Having my own personal experience with development has helped me to understand the concerns and needs of developers in Warwick. As a councillor I will continue to work with council to address their concerns and support their developments.

An attractive downtown and new public resources like the East Lambton Community Centre, and the new YMCA, all support and help encourage additional residential development in our community. These things make a strong first impression for those looking to relocate to a new area.

As a taxpayer in Watford, I understand that the costs to run the township continue to increase.

With that, having more residents in the community, spreads those costs over a larger group of taxpayers over time.

For the upcoming term of Council, the following I believe should be top priorities:

- The renegotiating and Updating of the Community Host Agreement and emerging revenue streams with Waste Management
- The continued development of residential homes and businesses in Warwick Township.
- The continued updating and redevelopment of the Main Street of Watford.

A successful Council is the sum of many working parts. It takes for-sight, extensive planning, and financial security. The successes of Warwick Township have been years in the making and our future developments will take cooperation, dedication, and the follow thru of the next council and future councils to come.

Thank you.

Todd White Candidate for Warwick Township Council.



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTOS

Warwick residents had their first look at the new East Lambton Community Complex Oct. 12. Township staff and members of the fundraising committee were giving tours through the building just days after the contractor completed the majority of the work. One of the first stops for many was the Y which provide a gym and programs at the ELCC. The nearly \$11 million project included renovations and new change rooms at the arena, and the replacement of the community hall with a 400 seat gymnasium/hall.



Rood, Gladu have roles under new leader

The Independent

Lambton’s two members of parliament have new roles under the new leader of the Conservative Party.

Both Lambton-Kent-Middlesex MP Lianne Rood and Sarnia-Lambton MP Marilyn Gladu were named to Pierre Poilievre’s Shadow Cabinet.

Rood will become the critic for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Eastern, Central and Southern Ontario. Rood, in her news release, says she will meet with local businesses to find “the challenges disrupting business development” and decried the increasing carbon tax.

Gladu has been given responsibility for Civil Liberties. “This appointment is a recognition of the legitimate concerns Canadians have with respect to their freedoms, and I have been a stalwart supporter of Canadians’ rights and freedoms as both a citizen and throughout my time in Parliament,” she said adding she would try to make sure Canadians don’t face restrictions like during the pandemic.

Jamie ARMSTRONG

FOR MAYOR

About Jamie

PERSONAL

- Married to Vickie for 25 years.
- 5 children all attended Brooke Central School and participated in Hockey and Baseball in Alvinston/Inwood.
- 4 grandchildren.
- Cash Crop Farmer.
- Operations Coordinator at Suncor Sarnia Refinery for 32 years (retiring March 31, 2023).
- Owner of Armor’s Alehouse with wife Vickie since Dec 2014.

VOLUNTEER

- Coached Hockey and Baseball.
- Belong to Alvinston and Districts Optimist Club, Alvinston Pro Rodeo, Alvinston Ag Society and Alvinston Legion.

POLITICAL EXPERIENCE

- 1 term on Brooke Alvinston Council.
- 7 years as LKDSB Trustee.
- 4 years on the Suncor Employee Bargaining Association.


MAYORAL PLATFORM


- Fiscal responsibility.
- Continue improving municipal services.
- Improve communications to Council.
- Collaboration and clear communication between Council, staff, taxpayers, volunteer groups, stakeholders and neighboring municipalities.
- Propose to Council to plan projects (with stakeholder input) so we have them ready for Federal and Provincial grants, i.e. walking trails, main street improvements, arena upgrades, infrastructure projects.
- Represent and respect Council decisions on all votes and accept that they may differ from my own.
- Once a resolution has passed, ensure Staff moves it along in a timely fashion.
- Represent Brooke Alvinston at the County level.
- Propose to Council that Question Period is brought back in.
- Focus on Employee retention.
- More Council input on the budget (currently the budget is drafted and sent to Council for approval).
- Propose that we begin a Brooke Alvinston Inwood “Hall of Fame”.
- Communicate grant applications to Council prior to application.

BROOKE ALVINSTON MUNICIPAL ELECTION 2022

Emery Huszka

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FIRST LANDING



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The new \$1 million helipad is ready for business at Bluewater Health. The first Air Ornge flight landed at 9 am Friday as people from the hospital, local politicians and donors to the project looked on. Students from Hanna Memorial Public School – which is next door to the helipad – were also on hand to see the flight come in. Until now, critically ill patients who needed to be transported out of Lambton County were either take by ambulance to the local airport to be airlifted out or were taken by ambulance to their destination.

Keeshig dreamed of portraying First Nations war hero

Blake Ellis
Local Journalism Initiative

It has been one of Keenan Keeshig’s life long dreams to play Francis Pegahmagabow. “I manifested this,” he said of his role in The Ace and the Scout where he plays the legendary Anishnaabe sniper.

Despite being the mostly highly decorated Indigenous soldier in Canadian military history, Pegahmagabow is relatively unknown. He was an expert marksman and scout. He was awarded the military medal with two bars. He is credited with killing 378 German soldiers during the war, while also capturing 300 more.

The movie, which premiered in Sarnia and played to crowds at Victoria Playhouse Petrolia Saturday, centres around two Canadian privates who were inspired to enlist by the heroics of flying ace Billy Bishop. It is set in August 1918 on the Western Front in northern France and tells the true story of the turning point which led to the 100 Days Offensive, which led to the Armistice on Nov. 11.

The Canadian soldiers find themselves cut off from resupply after they take back a front line trench from the enemy. Pegahmagabow is among them as they fight to survive under these dangerous conditions.

“I have a lot of pride,” said Keeshig about taking on his first lead role in a movie. He hails from the same First Nation as Pegahmagabow, the Shawanaga First Nation. Writer and Director Aaron Huggett of Oil Springs consulted with Pegahmagabow’s family when he cast Keeshig in the role.

“It was a huge undertaking,” said Keeshig, a welder, steamfitter and father, who is currently studying social sciences in Indigenous studies at the Western University in London. His first acting role was as an extra in The Rez, which aired in the late 1990s. He was 11 years old at the time, but it gave him his first taste of acting.

Keeshig has been careful about taking on roles, not wanting to portray an Indigenous person in a negative stereotype. Since taking on the role of Pegahmagabow, he has been asked a lot whether the two are related as well, something that he just



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Keenan Keeshig plays Francis Pegahmagabow in The Ace and the Scout, a film by Oil Springs Director Aaron Huggett, which played in Petrolia Saturday.

learned is true.

Being a part of The Ace and the Scout has lit a spark in him. Before getting the role, it was an emotional time for him as Keeshig saw people around him struggling with drugs, suicide and family breakdown. The film has allowed him to go on a self healing journey, motivated him and given him new energy.

One of his future goals is to play Tecumseh, who he is an eighth generation descendent.

Keeshig would also like to study in the acting program at the University of Windsor in the future.

He wants to get into a mentorship role. He has been teaching a traditional land based program at Riverstone Resort near Durham. It is important for him to give back to the community.

- THE INDEPENDENT

MURIEL WRIGHT FOR MAYOR
Plympton Wyoming

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– Muriel Wright

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for MAYOR



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Integrity. Knowledge. Experience



As part of our election coverage, The Independent recently sent a survey to all candidates running for office in Warwick Township; the following are their answers.

2022 Municipal Election

Candidate Profiles - Mayor of Warwick Township

Todd Case

Todd Case, 58, wants to be mayor of Warwick again. The long-time municipal politician held the position for nearly two decades before stepping down in 2018. Now, he's running for the top job again.

What is the biggest issue facing Warwick Township and what should be done about it?

I believe the biggest issue is the potential expansion of the Twin Creeks Landfill. Council needs to deal with the current odour issues and ongoing environmental concerns first before moving forward with any expansion discussion.

Waste Management is working to expand its Watford site. The company is proposing building up by increasing the berms surrounding the landfill as much as 120 feet in some spots. Do you think council should support the expansion - why or why not? What are some of the positives or negatives to the plan in your opinion.

In my opinion council can not support any expansion until current environmental issues are dealt with. Only after those issues are addressed could I support discussion of any expansion. I would not settle for anything less than a full time Ministry of the Environment inspector on site as was the case previously. **In 2021-2022, Warwick, working with a local developer, built a new municipal office in Watford as part of the downtown re-development on the southeast side of Watford. The cost of the lease was not public until recently and was finalized after**

construction began. Please comment on whether moving the office is meeting the goal of spurring downtown development and was handled appropriately by council?

My issue with the lease is the lack of transparency. I also thought council should have had a signed deal before announcing it was happening. It was approximately three years after it was announced before a deal was formalized.

For the past two years, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and the provincial government have delayed adjusting the market value property values which municipal taxes are based on. In that time, the cost of housing has nearly doubled. If MPAC were to complete a reassessment in 2023, taxpayers would face crushing tax increases. Will you commit to lowering Warwick Township's mil rate to keep the tax dollars paid at current levels? Why or why not?

The responsible thing to do is to see what the new MPAC numbers turn out to be and evaluate at that time. There is no doubt that we are in for some tough economic times.

Warwick Township recently learned the cost of repairs to Zion Line has increased dramatically, in part due to extra traffic on the roadway during the 402 Convoy blockade. Should the municipality seek damages from those involved in the blockade to pay for the increased costs?

No. We as a community need to move on.

Jackie Rombouts

Jackie Rombouts, 45, has served Warwick as mayor for the past four years. She is seeking a second term Oct. 24.

What is the biggest issue facing Warwick Township and what should be done about it?

Warwick Township has made great strides over the past four years with the addition of a brand new, state of the art, community complex, downtown revitalization, improvements to our roads and infrastructure and so much more, all while maintaining the lowest tax base in Lambton County. Over the past term, our council has developed great relationships with our provincial and federal partners and even played a pivotal role in the passing of Bill 156 the Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act. This bill was designed to protect farm animals, the food supply, farmers and others in Ontario from risks associated when trespassers enter places where farm animals are kept or when activists engage in unsafe, unauthorized interactions with farm animals and transport vehicles. This bill has had a great impact on our agricultural community here in Ontario and has done a lot to keep our food supply safer. I have so many ideas for the next term of council and I am excited to start the planning process. I am looking forward to developing a strong partnership with the YMCA, creating new programming for all ages to enjoy and establishing an environment where we can continue to move forward as a community in a healthy and productive way. I am committed to stopping the expansion of the Twin Creeks Waste Management facility and ensuring that the municipality is treated fairly throughout the environmental assessment process. I will continue to advocate with Enbridge and our provincial partners to bring access to natural gas to Warwick Village and beyond and I am committed to consulting with staff, council and our community to develop another strategic plan for the next four years that will help us to continue to show that Warwick Township is a Community in Action! We have great momentum going here in Warwick.

Waste Management is working to expand its Watford site. The company is proposing

building up by increasing the berms surrounding the landfill as much as 120 feet in some spots. Do you think council should support the expansion - why or why not? What are some of the positives or negatives to the plan in your opinion.

I will not support the expansion and will continue to fight for a full time, Ministry of Environment daily inspector to ensure that Waste Management is doing a much better job to reduce the odour, litter, noise and traffic impacts we experience on a regular basis and to keep our community safe and prosperous moving forward.

In 2021-2022, Warwick, working with a local developer, built a new municipal office in Watford as part of the downtown re-development on the southeast side of Watford. The cost of the lease was not public until recently and was finalized after construction began. Please comment on whether moving the office is meeting the goal of spurring downtown development and was handled appropriately by council?

I am so proud of the public/private partnership agreement that allowed us to build our township office without the highly inflated building prices that are often seen when a public office goes to tender. I believe it is in the best interest of the township to purchase the building and I am sure that will come when the timing is right. By agreeing to be the initial anchor tenant, the township was able to take the very worst part of town and transform it into something truly amazing that has attracted a number of new businesses to our community and has spurred downtown revitalization and improvements as well as residential growth.

For the past two years, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and the provincial government have delayed adjusting the market value property values which municipal taxes are based on. In that time, the cost of housing has nearly doubled. If MPAC were to complete a reassessment in 2023, taxpayers would face crushing tax increases. Will you commit to lowering Warwick Township's mil rate to keep the tax dollars paid at current levels? (Answer pg 13)

Voter Information Letters have been mailed to every eligible elector in Warwick Township. These letters include your personal PIN and instructions on how to vote online. If you do not receive your letter by October 14, 2022, please visit or call the Municipal Office.

2022 Township of Warwick Municipal and School Board Election

The 2022 Municipal Election will be conducted using Internet Voting only. Residents can vote anytime between Friday, October 14, 2022 and Monday, October 24, 2022 until 8:00 p.m.

Voter Assistance Centre

If you do not have access to a computer to vote online, or if you require assistance with electronic voting, please visit the Voter Assistance Centre at the Municipal Office located at 5280 Nauvoo Road. The Voter Assistance Centre will be equipped with touch screens and staff who can assist you.

The Voter Assistance Centre will be available on the following dates & times:

Monday, October 17, 2022 to Friday, October 21, 2022 – 8:30 am to 4:30 pm
Saturday, October 22, 2022 – 9:00 am to 12:00 noon
Monday, October 24, 2022 (Election Day) – 10:00 am to 8:00 pm

Identification Requirements at Voter Assistance Centre

Your Voter Information Letter cannot be used as identification. Please ensure you bring with you a piece of ID that provides proof of your identity AND proof of residence. For a list of acceptable identification, please refer to your Voter Information Letter.

For Further Information:

For assistance with voting, or general inquiries, please contact
Email: elections@warwicktownship.ca
Phone: 226-848-3926



WILKINS FOR MAYOR PLYMPTON-WYOMING



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2022 Municipal Election

Candidate Profiles - Mayor of Warwick Township

Jackie Rombouts

CON'T FROM 12
Warwick Township proudly has the lowest tax rate in all of Lambton County and I committed to keeping our rates the lowest around moving forward.
Warwick Township recently learned the cost of repairs to Zion Line has increased dramatically, in part due to extra traffic on the roadway during the 402

Convoy blockade. Should the municipality seek damages from those involved in the blockade to pay for the increased costs?
Supply and demand issues, along with a lack of workers, has caused all projects to tender much higher than expected this year. Council decided to defer the Zion Line reconstruction in an effort to keep channels of

transportation open during the construction of the roundabout at Nauvoo Road and Egremont Road. No concrete evidence has been presented to council that the blockade had a direct impact on the increased costs. Seeking damages would set a dangerous precedent and only cause more division within our community.

Candidates for Councillor

John Couwenberg

John Couwenberg, 54, is trying to make a political comeback. The long-time councillor was defeated in the 2018 mayoral race. This time, he wants a job as councillor.
Warwick Township and what should be done about it?
One of the biggest complaints I have had brought up to me was how difficult it is to build or expand in our community. This needs to be addressed so there is less red tape and a stream lined process with the township and the county.
Waste Management is working to expand its Watford site. The company is proposing building up by increasing the berms surrounding the landfill as much as 120 feet in some spots. Do you think council should support the expansion - why or why not? What are some of the positives or negatives to the plan in your opinion.
Council should not support it entirely, but the Ministry of the Environment will say yes or no to the project. What council needs to do is ensure we are getting the best financial deal we can get. Positives are local employment and financial resources. Negative is the odour.
In 2021-2022, Warwick, working with a local developer, built a new municipal office in Watford as part of the downtown re-development on the southeast side of Watford. The cost of the lease was not public until recently and was finalized after construction began. Please comment on

whether moving the office is meeting the goal of spurring downtown development and was handled appropriately by council?
I do agree that the municipal office needed to move to town and I feel the re-development was a good decision; but I don't feel leasing was the best option.
For the past two years, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and the provincial government have delayed adjusting the market value property values which municipal taxes are based on. In that time, the cost of housing has nearly doubled. If MPAC were to complete a reassessment in 2023, municipalities could face a winfall of cash, and taxpayers would face crushing tax increases. If you are elected, will you commit to lowering Warwick Township's mil rate (the multiplier used to calculate taxes along with the market value assessment) to keep the tax dollars paid at current levels? Why or why not?
Taxes can never stay current as costs for everything are rising, but I would certainly try to keep tax rates as low as possible.
Warwick Township recently learned the cost of repairs to Zion Line has increased dramatically, in part due to extra traffic on the roadway during the 402 Convoy blockade. Should the municipality seek damages from those involved in the blockade to pay for the increased costs?
No

Bill Davies

Bill Davies, 64, who served in the military and worked with non-governmental agencies is taking his first run at politics.
What is the biggest issue facing Warwick Township and what should be done about it?
The expansion of the landfill. We must sit with the company and get the absolute best deal we can for the township first and foremost is the odours and the environment, and then financially.
Waste Management is working to expand its Watford site. The company is proposing building up by increasing the berms surrounding the landfill as much as 120 feet in some spots. Do you think council should support the expansion - why or why not? What are some of the positives or negatives to the plan in your opinion.
I think whether we support it or not, we are going to get it. So, instead of spending thousands on lawyers and courts, we need to sit down with Waste Management and get the best for our citizens.
In 2021-2022, Warwick, working with a local developer, built a new municipal office in Watford as part of the downtown re-development on the southeast side of Watford. The cost of the lease was not public until recently and was finalized after construction began. Please comment on whether moving the office is meeting the goal of spurring downtown development and was handled appropriately by council?
Because of the "in camera" it is hard to say about how "good" it is. It did come out that we are paying \$160,000 per year and that in my opinion, seems to be somewhat excessive.

Joe Manning and Todd White
did not submit surveys to The Independent

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2022 Municipal Election

Candidate Profiles - Councillor of Warwick Township

Colin Mitchell

Colin Mitchell, 41, is seeking his second term as a Warwick councillor.

What is the biggest issue facing Warwick Township and what should be done about it?

I think the biggest issue is keeping rate payers here in Warwick Township. To do this, we need to invest in our local families and youth especially, while also investing in growth in residential and economic development. We used to have a thriving downtown, with locally owned shops, restaurants and medical professionals. I would like to see a new doctor's office, lawyer's office, a sit-down restaurant and much more. To do that we need to grow.

Waste Management is working to expand its Watford site. The company is proposing building up by increasing the berms surrounding the landfill as much as 120 feet in some spots. Do you think council should support the expansion - why or why not? What are some of the positives or negatives to the plan in your opinion.

This township is already an unwilling host to WM, we hear that message loud and clear at our Public Liaison Committee meetings. Smell is a constant scourge, for ratepayers both in town and rurality. The PLC brings those concerns to WM and to the ministry during their quarterly reviews, where they and Warwick Council maintain

Wayne Morris

Wayne Morris, 64, is among the current members of council seeking a second term.

What is the biggest issue facing Warwick Township and what should be done about it?

The expansion of the landfill is the most pressing issue the next council will have to deal with. We have said that we are an unwilling host, and we need the experience at the table. I have that experience. If the Province forces us to except the landfill, we need to get the best deal in all of North America for Warwick Township. We need to get back to basics now that the community center has been build and get more roads in the township paved or at least tarred and chipped

Waste Management is working to expand its Watford site. The company is proposing building up by increasing the berms surrounding the landfill as much as 120 feet in some spots. Do you think council should support the expansion - why or why not? What are some of the positives or negatives to the plan in your opinion.

same as above
In 2021-2022, Warwick, working with a local developer, built a new municipal office in Watford as part of the downtown re-development on the

pressure in asking for a full time Ministry of Environment Inspector to be on-site. This expansion, I fear, will be just like the inception of WM years ago. We will once again be an unwilling host. We will want to have strong negotiations moving forward, to ensure Warwick Township is adequately compensated for something WE don't want.

In 2021-2022, Warwick, working with a local developer, built a new municipal office in Watford as part of the downtown re-development on the southeast side of Watford. The cost of the lease was not public until recently and was finalized after construction began. Please comment on whether moving the office is meeting the goal of spurring downtown development and was handled appropriately by council?

Our downtown was in a state of decay that had been stagnant for many years, and recently attracting nefarious individuals that were an added risk to community safety. This council took the opportunity to rid our community of such slum lords and act as an anchor tenant for four years in order to make a positive presence over the bridge. After four years of leasing, the township can buy our building. This was a long term investment for the betterment of our community.

For the past two years, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation

southeast side of Watford. The cost of the lease was not public until recently and was finalized after construction began. Please comment on whether moving the office is meeting the goal of spurring downtown development and was handled appropriately by council?

The fact that the cost was never released because it was always in camera is upsetting to me. I stated at the open house the in-camera rules that I had been told we had to deal with. To my surprise the numbers were released just before the all candidates to *The Independent*. I always thought the numbers for many in camera decisions should be in open council but that is the CAO's decision and I have to live with it. I am deeply sorry to the public and I will not let this happen again if I am re-elected.

Editor's Note: Oct. 17, the CAO issued a public apology to the citizens and the members of council saying she advised council not to release the information. She later sought further legal advice and found the information could be released since the money for the lease payment was in the budget.

For the past two years, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and the provincial government have delayed adjusting the market value

and the provincial government have delayed adjusting the market value property values which municipal taxes are based on. In that time, the cost of housing has nearly doubled. If MPAC were to complete a reassessment in 2023, taxpayers would face crushing tax increases. Will you commit to lowering Warwick Township's mil rate to keep the tax dollars paid at current levels?

This housing market is like nothing Canadians have ever seen. My family currently lives in a home that we could not afford should we be looking to purchase in today's market. We want people to live here, move here and flourish here in Warwick Township and I will certainly commit to lowering the mil rate, and leverage all we can to keep housing affordable here in Warwick. **Warwick Township recently learned the cost of repairs to Zion Line has increased dramatically, in part due to extra traffic on the roadway during the 402 Convoy blockade. Should the municipality seek damages to pay for the increased costs?**

The costs of illegal activities should be shouldered by those perpetrating such activities. If there is recourse to recoup such funds then Warwick Township should seek that out without question. Freedom of speech does not include breaking the law and placing people at risk, or costing innocent rate payers.

property values which municipal taxes are based on. In that time, the cost of housing has nearly doubled. If MPAC were to complete a reassessment in 2023, taxpayers would face crushing tax increases. Will you commit to lowering Warwick Township's mil rate to keep the tax dollars paid at current levels? Why or why not?

The way I understand the process is that the township needs a fixed amount to pay for operations. If all the market values, go up proportionally I'm hoping the mil rate will show this. My main goal is to keep Warwick Taxes the lowest in Lambton.

Warwick Township recently learned the cost of repairs to Zion Line has increased dramatically, in part due to extra traffic on the roadway during the 402 Convoy blockade. Should the municipality seek damages from those involved in the blockade to pay for the increased costs?

I made the motion to delay the reconstruction of Zion Line for 2 reasons. The first was the cost was way over budget and secondly, we needed the road to stay in service due to the closure of Egremont and Nauvoo due to the round a bout construction



Re-Elect

Ross O'Hara
for Petrolia Town Council

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17 years - Petrolia Town Council
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2022 Municipal Election

Candidate Profiles - Councillor of Warwick Township



As part of our election coverage, The Independent recently sent a survey to all candidates running for office in the Warwick Township; the following are their answers.

Sharon Plunkett

Plunkett, 51, is making her first attempt to be elected as councillor. Plunkett sent the following email in response to our survey. With respect, I will not be answering any of the questions in the survey. I am not someone who ventures an uninformed opinion. I do not know anything about the finances, contracts, pros and cons of the landfill, the new buildings and the Municipal Property Assessment. If I am successful; once I have completed the training for new incumbents, and have sat on the council for at least 6 months, I will then be in a better position to answer your question in an informed manner. I

think it would be much more effective and much more socially responsible to give you my opinion once I actually know a little bit about what I am talking about. False information based on hearsay; particularly in light of the new disinformation and misinformation trends in society; is dangerous and counter productive, especially to municipal situations. As to the first question, my opinion on what the biggest issue is irrelevant. This is a question which should be posed to the residents of Warwick Township. My role as a councillor, should I be effective, is to represent what the residents think, not what I, as one individual resident, thinks.

Mike Van Gorp

Mike Van Gorp, 44, who has been active in local service clubs is making his first attempt to be elected to council.

What is the biggest issue facing Warwick Township and what should be done about it?

The biggest issue I feel facing Warwick Township is the amount of red tape that small businesses and industries have to go through in order to build here. It is just not ideal and way to long of a process that I feel deters the average business owner. If we want to revitalize the downtown, we need to allow for these businesses to build in a timely manner.

Waste Management is working to expand its Watford site. The company is proposing building up by increasing the berms surrounding the landfill as much as 120 feet in some spots. Do you think council should support the expansion - why or why not? What are some of the positives or negatives to the plan in your opinion.

If elected I would investigate every aspect and angle of the landfill expansion and after that I would make the decision that best serves every Warwick resident. The landfill does generate a lot of revenue for Warwick Township and helps lower everyone's taxes but the extra traffic and smell on certain days can be a bit much for the average citizen of Watford.

In 2021-2022, Warwick, working with a local developer, built a new municipal office in Watford as part of the downtown re-development on the southeast side of Watford. The cost of the lease was not public until recently and was finalized

after construction began. Please comment on whether moving the office is meeting the goal of spurring downtown development and was handled appropriately by council?

Revitalizing the downtown is always important in any small town. Driving through town it does look nice with the new buildings. But this seems to have come at an alarming cost to the taxpayers and why not buy the property instead of a very long lease agreement is something that needs answering.

For the past two years, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and the provincial government have delayed adjusting the market value property values which municipal taxes are based on. In that time, the cost of housing has nearly doubled. If MPAC were to complete a reassessment in 2023, taxpayers would face crushing tax increases. Will you commit to lowering Warwick Township's mil rate to keep the tax dollars paid at current levels? Why or why not?

If elected I would work hard for the homeowners and taxpayers of Warwick township to ensure our taxes stay as low as possible.

Warwick Township recently learned the cost of repairs to Zion Line has increased dramatically, in part due to extra traffic on the roadway during the 402 Convoy blockade. Should the municipality seek damages from those involved in the blockade to pay for the increased costs?

Zion Line was a terrible road and needed resurfacing well before the 402 Convoy blockade.

Jerry Westgate

Jerry Westgate, 73, has served as Warwick's deputy mayor for the past four years in a political career which has spanned nearly three decades.

What is the biggest issue facing Warwick Township and what should be done about it?

The biggest issue for next council will be the proposed expansion of the landfill. Council should work to stop or reduce the expansion and if they can not stop it, make sure it is well run and impacts the community as little as possible. Council will also need to make sure the community gets as much in host fees as we possibly can.

Waste Management is working to expand its Watford site. The company is proposing building up by increasing the berms surrounding the landfill as much as 120 feet in some spots. Do you think council should support the expansion - why or why not? What are some of the positives or negatives to the plan in your opinion.

Waste Management is proposing to expand the landfill by raising the landfill footprint by more then 120 feet, the berms around the outside will remain as they are. I do not believe council should support this expansion. If the landfill is expanded it will be much more noticeable in the community and I believe the odour, noise, dust and traffic impacts will be increased. On the positive side the income from the community commitment agreement helps to keep taxes down. There can also be the opportunity of using methane from the landfill to support businesses such as a greenhouse. We may also be able to attract businesses that support the landfill or relate to recycling.

In 2021-2022, Warwick, working with a local developer, built a new municipal office in Watford as part of the downtown re-development on the southeast side of Watford. The cost of the lease was not public until recently and was finalized after construction began. Please comment on whether moving the office is meeting the goal of spurring downtown development and was handled appropriately by council?

I believed by working with the developer and moving the Township Office to Watford helped to spur the development of the downtown. Warwick had out grown its previous office and had no appropriate place to hold council meetings as a result, something had to be done. I do not support renting the office and hope that it will be purchased soon.

For the past two years, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation and the provincial government have delayed adjusting the market value property values which municipal taxes are based on. In that time, the cost of housing has nearly doubled. If MPAC were to complete a reassessment in 2023, taxpayers would face crushing tax increases. Will you commit to lowering Warwick Township's mil rate to keep the tax dollars paid at current levels? Why or why not?

As long as I have been on council we have worked to keep our taxes in check. I am proud to say that we have the lowest taxes in the area. When MPAC does change the assessment on properties, taxes should stay close to what they are unless a lot of improvements have been made on your property. I will work to try and keep our taxes the lowest in Lambton County.

Warwick Township recently learned the cost of repairs to Zion Line has increased dramatically, in part due to extra traffic on the roadway during the 402 Convoy blockade. Should the municipality seek damages from those involved in the blockade to pay for the increased costs?

I believe the tender for the repairs to Zion Line was issued before the blockade and so did not contribute to the increase in cost. But COVID, general increases to fuel, construction products and labour did.

I do believe that the township should receive compensation from the province when the 402 is detoured on to our roads and also when we need to send the fire department out to traffic accidents. A new council should continue to lobby for compensation from the province for these cost.

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RE-ELECT SOUCH



Marty Souch

FOR COUNCILLOR OF PETROLIA

Sports

BEES STING DELHI IN HOME OPENER



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO

Petrolia’s Carson Perry scored twice and had an assist and ex-Sarnia Legionnaire and Chatham Maroon goalie Nolan DeKoning made 36 saves to lead the Alvinston Killer Bees to a 5-2 win over the Delhi Flames in Western Ontario Super Hockey League action Saturday in Alvinston. Robert MacLean had a goal and three assists for the Bees with Derek Shaw and Tyler Winquist adding the other Alvinston goals. DeKoning was chosen as the Player of the Game. Alvinston is now 1-1 on the young season.

Squires tied for first place early in season

Barry Wright
The Independent

The Petrolia Squires are tied for first place in the Western Ontario Athletic Association senior AA hockey standings after an overtime win in Palmerston.

Steve Farlow had the game-winner in overtime to give the Squires a 5-4 victory over Minto and improve Petrolia to 2-0 on the young season.

Zach VanEyck, Connor McCormack, Corey

Pawley and Kraig Wright also scored for the Squires who trailed 1-0 after one period and led 4-1 after two.

Petrolia has back-to-back home games this weekend at the Greenwood Recreation Centre. They host Ripley on Friday at 8:30 and entertain the Durham Thundercats on Saturday at 7 pm.

The Thundercats are one of the two other teams tied with the Squires for the league lead in the standings.

Petrolia lost two, 1-8 on the PJHL season

The Independent

The Petrolia Flyers continue to have trouble finding the back of the net. They lost 10-2 to Port Stanley and 6-2 to Exeter to fall to 1-8 on the PJHL campaign.

The Flyers have lost four straight games and have only scored more than two goals in one of its nine games this season.

Things started with a bang last Thursday at home when Daniel Gibson gave Petrolia a 1-0 lead at 18 seconds of the opening period before the crowd of 300 was even comfortable in their seats. After the Sailors tied the contest, Colby

Ackworth regained the Flyer lead with a goal less than eight minutes into the first period but then the visitors rattled off nine straight goals for the victory.

Joseph Malinowski allowed four goals on six shots for the Flyers and was chased before the midway point of the first period. He was subsequently traded to the Dresden Jr. Kings for cash.

A night later in Exeter, the Flyers could only capitalize on one of 11 man advantage opportunities in a 6-2 loss to the Hawks. Noel Sanderson and Kyle Flamminio scored for the Petrolia.

Mooretown Flags give up 10 goals in loss

The Independent

The Mooretown Flags spotted the visiting Wheatley Sharks a 1-0 lead through 20 minutes of action at Walpole Island before the Sharks struck for four goals in the second period and six more in the third for a 10-3 victory.

It was the most goals given up by the Flags since a 12-5 loss to Lakeshore at the Moore Sports Complex last February.

Ethan Kerry, Ryan Vidler and Tristen Konrad scored for Mooretown who is now 3-3 on the season.

John Chartrand and Malcolm Verstraten combined to make 33 stops as the Sharks outshot the home side, 43-22.

The Flags are at home to Dresden on Saturday at Walpole Island at 7:30.

They take on the Blades in Blenheim on Sunday night.



Re-Elect
WAYNE MORRIS
FOR WARWICK COUNCIL

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RICHARD POORE for Mayor of Petrolia

I’ve never learned anything by listening to myself talk. I learn by listening to others, hearing and engaging. My view of the mayor’s role is that it’s not about me and what I want. It’s more about speaking with and listening to residents and Municipal staff to find out what THEY feel is important for the overall health and wellbeing of our community. One of the major roles of the mayor is to be the bridge between Council, the CAO and staff, and the citizens to ensure we’re all working toward common goals.

As I’ve listened to our citizens over the last several months, Petrolians are telling me what they feel is important to the health and wellbeing of our community: responsible financial planning, more affordable housing, responsible development, and a desire for change and better leadership from our elected officials, to name a very few. Having attended the majority of Council meetings over the past four years, I share these views.

I have strong leadership skills and a willingness to serve ALL the citizens of Petrolia to address all of these issues, challenges and opportunities. My operating principles are a strong belief in collaboration, participation, listening, collective wisdom, and building creative partnerships. I believe in always working in an environment of mutual respect, trust, diversity and civility.

I will bring 29 years of broad-ranging leadership experience to the mayor’s position, with proven skills in facilitation, budgeting and strategic planning which are all necessary for this role. As a Director for the Town, I sat at the table with the Council of the day for the better part of 2 terms. Specifically, those 7 years gave me a strong working knowledge of each department and program, and of complex municipal rules and procedures. I have extensive knowledge and experience in Petrolia’s budget processes, as well as the many strategic-type plans that should lead the vision for our Town. I both served the public, and supported Council in their decision making, so am intimately aware of the role.

ENGAGE, COLLABORATE, RESPECT, TRUTH.
These are the pillars of my approach to leadership.

I wouldn’t be running for Mayor if I didn’t feel we need a change.
I’m Richard Poore, and I AM that change.



Sports

It’s Lancer vs Lancer in the Red and White game

Barry Wright
The Independent

The LCCVI Lancers host Chatham-Ursuline Lancers Friday afternoon in high school junior football action in Petrolia. The Chatham school is 2-0. LCCVI is 0-3 following a 13-6 loss at CKSS last week for the Red and White game at 3 pm

Elsewhere, the Lancer junior and senior girls’ basketball squads are at North Lambton and Northern respectively for 5:30 tip offs on Thursday. Both LCCVI teams lost to Great Lakes last week. Petrolia’s baseball team beat Great Lakes, 9-2 and lost 15-0 to Pain Court. The boys junior and senior volleyball sides are at Great

Lakes and CKSS respectively Wednesday at 5:15 and the junior girls’ soccer squad was at Northern on Tuesday in a sudden death semifinal contest but the score was not available prior to our press time. The Lady Lancers blanked Great Lakes, 3-nil behind a three-goal performance by Rowan Moffatt, and played to a 2-all draw with Northern.

CROSS COUNTRY DETERMINATION



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Khloe Baron, of Queen Elizabeth II Public School didn’t let the cold or a coat slow her down as she ran to a first place finish in the Grade 6 Girls Cross Country race at Bridgeview Park, Petrolia Oct. 13. Lambton Centennial had a strong showing, particularly in the Grade 6 boys category where the school swept the top four spots in the category. Rhys Marriott won the event. Liam Beveridge took second, Emerson Piggott came in third, Lochlan Irwin placed fourth. Coach Steve McGrail says this is the first time in at least two decades that one school had the top finishers in one category. Lambton Centennial claimed the team title at the local event. The winners of this cross country meet will go on to the regional meet at Canatara Park in Sarnia Oct. 26.

SPORTING HONOURS



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Two Central Lambton athletes were honoured over the weekend at the Sarnia-Lambton Sports Hall of Fame dinner. Marathon Mom Krista Duchene who hails from Alvinston was inducted into the Hall of Fame. She represented Canada at the 2016 Olympics and placed third in the Boston Marathon. Cash McKinnon of the Oil Springs area was given the Joe DeRush Memorial Award. The Lambton Centennial Student is involved in cross country, sledge hockey and challenger baseball. The award recognizes athletes with physical disabilities.

Corunna wrestler on the big stage

Brianna Fraser is part of Team Canada for the World U23 Wrestling Championships in Spain this week. Fraser, a St. Pat’s grad from Corunna will compete in the 72-kg. class. She wrestles for the famed Brock University program in St. Catharines. The qualification round in her weight class begins Thursday (Oct. 20) morning.

Corunna’s Thomson, Phillies advance to MLB conference final

The magical ride for Rob Thomson continues with the Philadelphia Phillies knocking off the defending champion Atlanta Braves in the National League Divisional Series in four games. They are now playing the San Diego Padres for the right to represent the NL in the World Series. Game two in the best-of-seven is Wednesday in San Diego. The series opened in California Tuesday, but the score was not available prior to our press time. The series will shift to Philly for games on Friday and Saturday night and Sunday afternoon. The Phillies, under the Corunna native, are now 5-1 in the postseason.



Rob Thomson

Aces fastball champions

The Alvinston Aces are the 2022 Southwest Middlesex Fastball League champions defeating Glencoe 9-2 in the deciding game of their best-of-five final in Alvinston. Tyler Huff went two-for-four at the plate for the Aces with a homer and three RBI. Kole Keating also went yard for the winners on Oct. 11. Bryan Johnson was three-for-three, including a homer and triple for the Astros. Nick Ford was the winning pitcher. Taylor Degraw suffered the loss. It was Alvinston’s first title since 2018.

Ex-Flyer leads Legionnaires past Maroons

Former Petrolia Flyer Wil O’Leary-Dilosa had a goal and two assists and ex-Flyers Landon Marcy also scored to lead the Sarnia Legionnaires to a 5-4 win over the Maroons in Chatham. Corunna’s Dylan Dupius had two assists for the winners and Wyoming’s Jace McGrail also added a helper Saturday. Sarnia is now 6-6-1 on the season

and tied for fourth place. They lost 8-2 to London last Thursday in Sarnia. The Legionnaires host St. Thomas on Thursday before making a return trip to Chatham for a Sunday night contest. Elsewhere in the league last week, Petrolia’s Andrew Jaques and Oil Springs’ William Hull both drew assists in Strathroy’s 7-3 win over Komoka on Saturday.

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

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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Oil Springs Optimists'

Meat Bingo

Thurs., Oct. 20 @ 7pm
at the Oil Springs Youth Centre



To Enter and Play, you must be
18+ years of age

All proceeds go
to local youth

Lambton County Library, in partnership with The Canadian Great War Society, is hosting **MILITARY HISTORIAN** and author Andrew Robertshaw for a **Talk and Film Screening** event at the Sarnia Library Theatre on **Wednesday, November 2. Starting at 7:00 p.m.** Robertshaw will discuss his experience as a historical and military advisor for films including War Horse, 1917 and They Shall Not Grow Old. The talk will be followed by a screening of Peter Jackson's 2018 documentary They Shall Not Grow Old.

Notices

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Answers to this week's
Sudoku

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

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**Deadline for submitting free
events is Friday @ 12 noon**

To have your event included in the
above Calendar of Events the following
information is required:

Date: _____
Time: _____
Town: _____
Event Title: _____
Phone # / website: _____

You can drop this off at our office or email
the information to us at
office@petrolialambtonindependent.ca

Calendar

PLEASE CALL AHEAD TO CONFIRM
DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE


Events are listed FREE for non-profit
groups in Petrolia and Lambton County (space permitting).
To be included in this listing email the required information to
office@petrolialambtonindependent.ca Subject: FREE EVENT LISTING.

CLUBS AND REGULAR EVENTS

DAY	START TIME	LOCATION	EVENT	CONTACT INFO
3rd Thurs	7p	Oil Springs	Optimist Meat Bingo @ The Youth Centre	519-834-2152
Mon	1:30p	Alvinston	Seniors Cards @ Alvinston Legion	519-898-2100
Tues	1p	Wyoming	Wyoming Fair Bd - Euchre + coffee & cookies	519-312-0578
Tues	7p	Petrolia	Petrolia Toastmasters @ Petrolia Lion's Hall	519-381-4910
2nd Wed	7p	Petrolia	Bingo @ Petrolia Lion's Hall	519-882-8728
Wed	7p	Petrolia	Euchre @ Petrolia Legion	519-882-1557
Wed	6:30p	Oil Springs	Legion Open for Cards, Cribbage, Pool, Darts and Social Time (3rd Wed open at 8:30 following meeting)	519-834-2537
Wed	7:30p	Alvinston	LA Cards @ Alvinston Legion	519-898-2100
Wed	7p	Forest	Darts @ Forest Legion	519-786-5357
3rd Wed	7p	Sarnia	Monthly Meeting @ Horticultural Society	519-332-5837
Thurs	1p	Petrolia	Pepper @ Petrolia Legion	519-882-1557
Thurs	7p	Alvinston	Pool League @ Alvinston Legion	519-898-2100
Fri	7:30p	Alvinston	Dart League @ Alvinston Legion	519-898-2100
Fri	1:30p	Forest	Shuffleboard @ Forest Legion	519-786-5357
E/O	4p	Oil Springs	Meat Raffle @ Oil Springs Legion	519-834-2537
Sat	6p	Alvinston	Catch The Ace @ Alvinston Legion	519-898-2100
Sat	3:30p	Forest	Meat Raffles @ Forest Legion	519-786-5357

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	START TIME	LOCATION	EVENT	CONTACT INFO
Oct7-29		Sarnia	Lawrence House Centre for the Arts 1st Annual Juried Exhibition, "The Power of Line and Colour". Artists from Lambton County are showcased. Exhibit runs until October 29, 2022. Free admission.	
Oct 20	7p	Oil Springs	Oil Springs Optimist Meat Bingo @ the Youth Centre.	
Oct 21	6p	Sarnia	Rotary's 10th Annual Trivia Night at the Dante Club. Register your team of 8 at rotarysarniaafterhours.org	
Oct 22	4p	Oil Springs	Meat Raffle @ the Oil Springs Legion. Everyone Welcome.	
Oct 29	9a	Wyoming	Vendor Show @ Wyoming Legion from 9a-2p. Great variety of vendors. FREE admission. Hosted by Wyoming Legion Ladies Auxiliary.	
Oct 30	2:30p	Sarnia	Lambton Concert Band presents Fright Night! @ Sarnia Library Auditorium. LambtonConcertBand.com	
Nov 2	5p	Alvinston	Hope United Church Dine-In or Take-Out Turkey Supper. Advance Tickets Only 519-847-5494, hopeunited1880@gmail.com	
Nov 2	10a	Sarnia	Lambton Remembers - Valour Remembered at Sarnia Library Theatre	
Nov 2	11a	Sarnia	Lambton Remembers - Researching Military History at Sarnia Library Theatre	
Nov 9	6p	Sarnia	Now Showing 1917 at Sarnia Library Theatre	
Nov 9	7p	Port Lambton	Lambton Remembers - Local Stories from WWI and WWII at Port Lambton Library	



Church DIRECTORY

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414 Oil Street, Petrolia
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Sundays
@ 10:00am
Everyone Welcome
Rev. Dave Hewett
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
fbcpetrolia@gmail.com
www.firstbaptistpetrolia.ca
Find us on Facebook!
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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

Immediately Needed Items









• soda crackers

• peanut butter

• jam

• ready-to-serve soups

• Kraft dinner

• Sidekicks - rice & pasta

• brown beans

• kidney beans

• canned stew

• flakes of chicken

• flakes of turkey

• salmon

• social crackers - ritz, triscut

• CheezWhiz

• taco kits

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Member Services Representative (MSR)

Are you, a strong communicator who uses those skills to build positive and strong working relationships. Are you, passionate about facilitation, coordination, and delivery of programs that help people feel engaged, aware of important issues, and ready to take action. Are you a fast learner with a growth mindset who focuses on the details and thrives at staying organized and completing high quality work. Sound like a great role to you? Keep reading to learn about the role's essential functions, and preferred skills and experiences:

We currently seek a Member Services Representative for the Lambton/Middlesex Region, to join OFA's Member Services Group.

Applicants may submit their cover letter and resume, in confidence to hr@ofa.on.ca no later than Friday October 28th, 2022 at 12 Noon.



Ontario Federation of Agriculture

OFA Job Position Description

Title: Member Services Representative (MSR)

Territory: Lambton and Middlesex

Unit: Member Services

Reports to: Manager, Western Team Member Services Representative

Direct Reports: None

PURPOSE

The Member Services Representative (MSR) is responsible for the successful facilitation, coordination, and delivery of OFA programs to members within the region. As well, to increase retention of members and provide superior levels of service through relationship management, effective public relations and contributing to organizational and leadership development in the delivery of these benefits and services. The incumbent provides a key link between members, community and local boards and will endeavour to build and maintain the OFA as an exceptional service-driven organization.

KEY POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:

Member Relations and Services

- With support and direction of the Manager of Member Services for the region, and support from the OFA staff, provide and ensure consistent and coordinated services to the membership.
- Assist members with farm-related problems through investigation, providing access to information, collaborating with internal and external resources, and additional support as required to assist in effective resolution options
- Input and track member contact information via the OFA IMIS database
- Encourage and assist in the communications to members through Local Federation meetings, newsletters, and other forms of media where appropriate

Member Retention

- Receive and respond to member inquiries and concerns regarding registration under the Farm Business Registration Act.
- Develop and support programs to encourage and promote recognition and retention of members in the OFA
- Respond to individual farmer-member concerns and issues by providing information, consultation, potential solutions, and support to members and local organizations
- Promotion of OFA at Trade Shows, and events

Leadership Development

- Assist Local Federations with the recruitment for participation within their organization.
- Assist in training and development of members to take on leadership roles at the local and provincial levels of the Federation organization.
- Provide coaching and resources to leaders in the form of access to training and development programs and opportunities.

Organizational Development

- Assists in the development of the OFA organization at the local and provincial level through participation in meetings, development of effective local committees and local delivery of OFA programs and benefits.
- Assist County Federations to enhance and improve organizational effectiveness.
- Support local efforts to address broader issues and concerns within the farming community.
- Liaise with OFA Zone Board Director to ensure coordination of communication in response to emerging issues and OFA programs

Public Relations

- Encourage and assist in the development and execution of programs and activities to enhance the image of the OFA, farmers, and farm organizations (i.e., developing media relationships, partnership projects, participation at trade shows etc).

Support Functions

- Provide information and co-ordination for OFA led campaigns and events (i.e., lobby campaigns).
- Attend OFA functions and events including the annual meeting and convention.
- Provide an active and effective presence for members in the field area.
- Provide reports of updates on current issues directed by Management, such as, weekly reports, time tracker, County federation reports, etc

Operations

MSR's are required to follow all OFA policies, procedures, health and safety requirements.

Physical Requirements & Other Duties

- Ability to bend, lift at least 15lbs.
- Ability to assemble and take down display materials.
- Can operate battery operated drill for installation purposes.

QUALIFICATIONS

Education

- Completion of a minimum two (2) years' post-secondary education from an accredited educational institution or equivalent experience preferred.

Experience

- Experience and or training in the agriculture industry
- Experience in a service / volunteer driven organization is preferred

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Superior facilitative and organizational skills.
- Effective written, oral and presentation skills.
- Demonstrates a high level of initiative.
- Appreciation and understanding of agriculture in Ontario and the nature of the farming culture.
- Ability to work effectively unsupervised as well can collaborate within a team.
- Access to a reliable vehicle / transportation which meets OFA Vehicle Policy.
- Ontario (G) Driver's License.

Working Conditions

- Works in an office environment as well as out in the field- as required.
- Usually works a standard thirty-five (35) hour work week
- Will be required to work flexible hours (including evenings and weekends) to attend meetings or events and functions.
- May deal with conflict and member relations issues causing stress at times.
- Spends a frequent amount of time driving to events, meetings, and member venues.
- Must be able to manage frequent interruptions and multiple tasks daily.
- Travel required.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- **Accountability:** Takes personal ownership and responsibility for the quality and timeliness of work commitments. Follows organizational guidelines, professional standards, regulations and principles. Demonstrates reliability and integrity on a daily basis.
- **Adaptability:** Adapts and responds to changing conditions, priorities, technologies and requirements. Recognizes new information and ideas with a willingness to alter opinions and behaviors. Applies versatility, reasoning and innovativeness in the face of change. Able to comfortably collaborate in a variety of situations and with diverse individuals.
- **Communication:** Expresses and transmits information with consistency and clarity; using active listening techniques in order to effectively understand and provide feedback; summarizing information according to the audience in order to promote engagement and increase understanding.
- **Networking and Relationship Building:** Effectively builds constructive, friendly, professional relationships and networks of key contacts with people and colleagues, maintains partnerships that can provide information, assistance and support.
- **Problem Solving:** Demonstrated ability to break a situation down into smaller pieces, cause and effect, to identify key issues; figuring out cause and effect relationships in order to solve them using logic and analytical methods to develop and propose improvements for the organization and its members.
- **Service Orientation:** Gives superior service to both internal and external customers and stakeholders.
- **Teamwork:** Works cooperatively and effectively with others to reach a common goal.

BENEFITS & REMUNERATION

- Starting Salary: \$44,000/yr.
- Work week: Hours of work - 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.
- Benefits: OFA's group benefit program three (3) months upon their Start Date.
- Health care • Dental care • Vision care • Disability insurance • Employee assistance program • Company events
- Pension Plan: OFA defined benefit Pension Plan upon completion of six months (6) of employment. The OFA pension plan is shared 50/50 responsibility between the Employer and the Employee.
- Vacation: Two weeks (10 days) accrued monthly over the course of each calendar year.
- Sick time: Sick leave benefits earned over time, and personal time as needed, as outlined and limited by policy.
- Mileage Per/Km: Vehicle use will be compensated at a rate of 0.58 cents /km for work related mileage, which is recorded daily.

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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

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Candidate perpetuates urban myth about ‘furries’ in the classroom

Heather Wright
The Independent

Heather Skolly wants to understand and support students who “are presenting as cats” in Lambton schools.

The candidate for the Central Lambton trustee of the Lambton-Kent District School Board is perpetuating an urban myth that has been making the rounds for well over a year.

In August 2021, a US NBC News affiliate in Kentucky reported a grandmother’s concern that students at a local school were presenting as cats at school, hissing and scratching people. “The students are told they can’t wear hats or Budweiser shirts in school, but they can wear cat ears, cat tails, masks, leashes. It doesn’t make sense,” the anonymous grandmother is quoted as saying in the article. The idea was dismissed by the head of the school district who said a small number of people violated the schools dress code and were disciplined.

But, the story took hold on social media and last year, the director of education of a school board in Prince Edward Island issued a statement telling parents that the board was not about to put kitty litter boxes in the schools.

“I had a lot of concern about this because it was becoming a distraction to the learning and teaching at some of our schools,” said Norbert Bruce in an interview

with the CBC in October 2021.

Carpenter told the CBC he believed the myth was “rooted in hate. It seemed to me like it was a backlash against some of the progressive things that our schools are doing, and we would have many that would say this is rooted in hate and transphobia and homophobia and that message needs to be clear, it’s not acceptable.”

At Tuesday’s board of education meeting, Lambton-Kent’s Director of Education John Howitt dispelled the rumour now making the rounds in Lambton after being asked if the board of education is supplying kitty litter to schools for the students presenting as cats.

Vice Chair Derek Robertson raised the issue at the Oct. 11 School Board meeting. He asked administration to address the question about kitty litter boxes being placed in schools for those students who identify as furries.

“It is an absolutely ridiculous notion,” said Lambton Kent Director of Education John Howitt.

“It is not happening in Lambton Kent,” said Howitt. “It is 100 percent inaccurate. It is not happening.”

Superintendent Gary Girardi believes “it is backlash against progressive things,” going on to say it is rooted in hate and is particularly homophobic and transphobic.

Robertson has been approached

by individuals on the campaign trail as he vies to retain his seat on the Lambton Kent District School Board. They were adamant this was taking place in Lambton Kent schools, despite Robertson telling them it was not. He thought it would be better to have the rumour addressed at a school board meeting where the proper information could be revealed.

The myth was again raised as a question at the Petrolia All-Candidates Meeting Wednesday night.

The current trustee – Greg Agar – who is running for re-election – flatly rejected the claim.

“That story is not true,” he said. “It’s a complete lie...no, it’s not true. It will not happen ever in this province. I guarantee you.”

Kathryn Shailer of Alvinston, who is also in the running for the trustee position, agreed.

“This has sort of been a rumor out there in the States and in some parts of Canada for more than a year and it has been shown to be untrue anytime it has been investigated,” Shailer told the crowd.

But Skolly – a retired educational assistant and union leader who recently moved from Oxford County to Petrolia – bought into the urban myth.

“I hate to be the bearer of bad news but I did hear when I was out campaigning, that there are situations in our area that do have students who are presenting as



Candidate for Lambton-Kent District School Board in Central Lambton Heather Skolly.

cats, and they are in schools,” she told the crowd.

“I think first and foremost, we need to remember that these are children. And our goal is not to hurt or intentionally humiliate a child who is in the situation. I think it’s important that we take a look at why the students doing this, is the students suffering from some situations that are happening at home? Is this behavioral issues? Is this that they are lonely and they’re looking for some sort of somebody to give them comments and support and negative support is a form of getting support.

“I think first as an EA when we would find behaviors in the classroom, we would step back, take a look at what’s happening, assess what’s happening, and

then maybe make some moves into having some help given into seeing what’s going on.”

Skolly clarified later on social media that she had also researched the story but “At my campaign booth at the Brigden Fair a parent had shared that this was happening in their daughter’s class. I was quite surprised and it was a second time I had been informed of this. My attempt at answering the question Wednesday evening was to try to assure parents that when situations like this happen, school board staff deal with these types of situations, and other challenging behaviours, professionally, discreetly and without demeaning or humiliating the student.”

-WITH FILES FROM BLAKE ELLIS

Snow plow routes as good as they get

Blake Ellis
Local Journalism Initiative

The white stuff hasn’t hit Enniskillen Township yet, but council had its mind on snow in October.

Road Superintendent Mike Cumming walked the council members through the township’s software program which tracks what the public works department’s vehicles are traveling on any particular day at the Oct. 17 meeting. There are three snowplow routes within the township.

Council wanted to explore whether these routes could be changed to make it more efficient. Council often gets the angry phone calls or emails from residents when the weather plays havoc with driving conditions.

Cummings says on a day where salt was being spread on the roads and no snow plowing was needed, it takes two and a half hours for all three drivers to complete their routes. All drivers would arrive back to the shop within five minutes of

each other.

These two and a half hour routes cover all of the asphalt roads in the township, except for Courtright Line, Old Heritage Road and Mandaumin Road, which are under the County of Lambton jurisdiction.

Cummings could not think of how the routes could change without it adversely affecting another part of the township.

Mayor Kevin Marriott said Cummings had done this job enough that he would know if there was anyway to make the routes more efficient. Township Clerk and Treasurer Duncan McTavish said the only way to get the roads covered faster is to buy another snowplow and create another route.

After about 20 minutes of discussion, council decided to keep the routes at the status quo.

- THE INDEPENDENT

A SCENIC VIEW



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

This farmer on Lasalle Line south of Watford had a scenic view as he worked the field Oct. 11.

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