

Food bank use doubles

Blake Ellis
Local Journalism Initiative

The number of people looking for help from the Petrolia Food Bank has nearly doubled in the last two months. That from Sandra Hartman of the local food bank on the heels of a report from Feed Ontario which says the number of people needing help is soaring.

Feed Ontario says April 2021 and March over 587,000 people have accessed a food bank in Ontario making more than 4.3 million visits in a year. That is a 15 percent increase this year.

Feed Ontario says this is the sixth year of increasing food bank use - with a 42 per cent increase since the pandemic started.

In Petrolia, the food bank has seen the demand for its services increase in the last few months.

While the first half of 2022 was pretty steady, usage has increased by 35 percent between July and September and, in the last two months, the number of people seeking help has doubled.

In the last four weeks, a total of 213 people have come in, said Hartman. That's compared to between 100 and 120 clients for the same period in past Novembers.

Hartman says has seen people come to the food bank recently who have never used the service before, while others have come back to the food bank who have not used the services in quite some time.

SEE FOOD BANK PG 2

New funding needed: Ferguson

Blake Ellis
Local Journalism Initiative

It's a familiar story. Brooke-Alvinston is going to have to do with less funding from the provincial government.

And Brooke-Alvinston Mayor David Ferguson said the decrease in the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund is part of a planned effort by the provincial government to strip rural municipalities of funding and give it to areas of the province where population is growing.

Brooke-Alvinston will lose \$67,800 this year or 13 per cent less funding than last year. The municipality will receive \$453,900 - about 2.2 per cent of Brooke-Alvinston's entire budget.

For over a decade, Brooke-Alvinston and most of the small municipalities in Central Lambton have dealt with decreasing funding in the OMPF grants. Over 10 years, Brooke-Alvinston has lost \$1 million in provincial funding.

Dawn-Euphemia, Enniskillen and Warwick have also dealt with funding cuts over the past decade. This year, Dawn-Euphemia, Warwick and Enniskillen will get more provincial cash.

"We got a big increase. It won't even cover inflation," said Enniskillen Mayor Kevin Marriott, saying he had a brief conversation with Lambton-Kent-Middlesex MPP Monte McNaughton who recently asked about the issue.

Enniskillen will receive \$309,400 in 2023, an increase of \$23,100.

"I was happy when he asked," said Marriott. The MPP heard a lot of small municipalities received small increase. McNaughton couldn't figure out why the increases were so small.

"If you can figure out the formula, more power to you," said Enniskillen Clerk/Treasurer Duncan McTavish, emphasizing how complicated the funding formula for the grant entails.

Plympton-Wyoming Mayor Gary Atkinson would also like an explanation from the provincial government on why his municipality's funding was cut 9.7 per cent. Plympton-Wyoming will receive \$808,600 in 2023 - \$87,000 less than 2022. "We could always use the money," says Atkinson, saying it will make the budget process more difficult, especially with one of his major campaign promises being the replacement of infrastructure.

SEE FUNDING PG 2

SWORD JUMPERS



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Some of the youngest dancers from the Christine Neufeld School of Highland Dance were flying high at the St. Andrew's Society's 150th annual dinner. The Petrolia group has been meeting since 1871 to honour the patron saint of Scotland on Nov. 24. For the first time in the Petrolia society's history, women were invited and Catriona Belet became the first female officer of the society.



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SCAN FOR MENU



Petrolia splash pad, washroom to be built in spring

Heather Wright
The Independent

Petrolia parents who have been asking for a splash pad for years won’t wait much longer.

The town has given the green light to a plan for a \$150,000 play feature at the Oil Heritage District Community Centre. Construction is to start this spring.

The Petrolia Kiwanis Club offered to foot the bill for the splash pad in July 2021. The town later agreed to pay the full cost of the water feature with the club donating the money to the capital cost for the next 10 years.

Monday, Jane Elliott from the company Open Space, which will construct the splash pad, told council the it will be about 1,500 square feet - big enough for about 25 children according to the town or 100 children according to the company.

It will have eight different ground features, and six above ground features including a large oil rig in the centre which will spray water at passing children

and water spray nozzles

The municipality will be paying to bring the utilities to the splash pad location and for the yearly water use - estimated at about \$24,000 a year - and the closing fees - estimated at about \$900 per year.

But the town will be spending a lot more cash as the new splash pad goes up in the spring. Council Monday also gave the approval for a new 952 square foot building to house a washroom, change rooms and a concession stand.

Dave Menzies, director of community services and facilities, told council there was a washroom planned for the first phase of the backyard project, estimated to cost \$933,000.

“The washroom facility that in phase one was designed to move the project forward within the grant, straight washrooms to go with the soccer pitches,” says Menzies. “It’s now developed because of the splash pad to some universal washrooms, and change rooms. Those change rooms will cover the entire area, meaning that

somebody wanted to play tennis and then go change, they could use that; pickleball, soccer teams, so on and so forth.

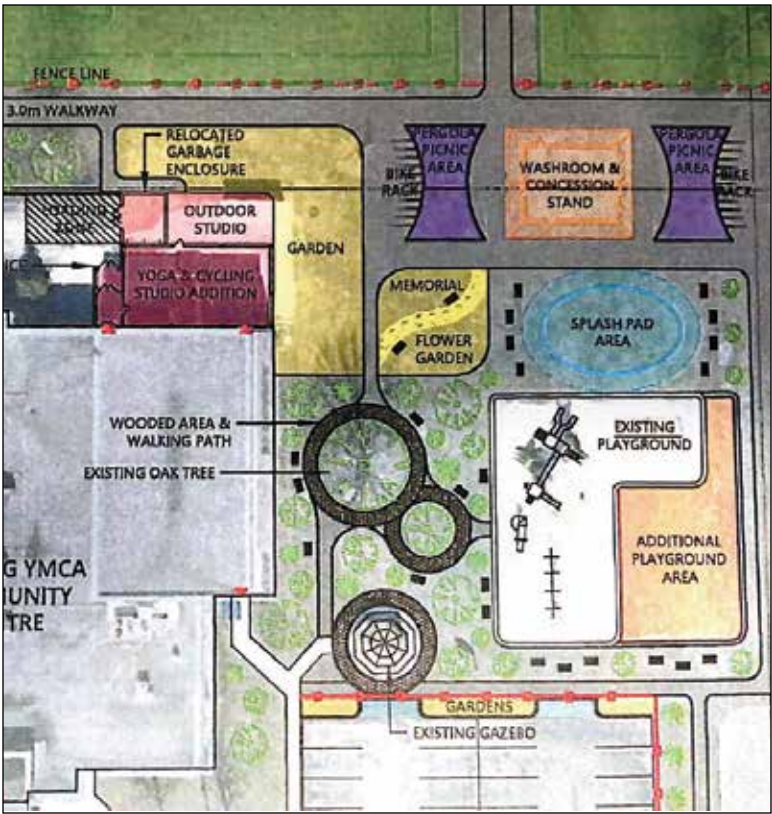
“It also shows in that design, the concession stand, which hopefully will be a new source of revenue for us.”

Menzies says the 28’x 36’ building would be made for year-round use. “With the development of trails that will connect with the backyard (four phase project), snowshoeing, whatever those washrooms will be available 12 months of the year.

Menzies’ report to council says the \$105,000 it will cost to prepare the site for the splash pad and washrooms - including hydro and water - will come from the grant for the project.

The town will have to set aside another \$125,000 for the building in the 2023 budget, Menzies added.

Menzies says the work will begin in the spring. “The splash pad is so quick and easy to build it will probably be in place as the wash-room walls are going up.”



SUBMITTED PHOTO

The map shows the placement of the new splash pad and washroom and concession stand

Food bank use in Petrolia doubles

CON’T FROM PG 1

One in three coming into food banks in Ontario have never used a food bank before, according to Feed Ontario. One new client arrived in tears recounted Hartman.

The bulk of the people needing help are the working, pensioners and on the Ontario Disability Support Program. There is also a small number of people who rely on the Ontario Works program.

The price of groceries and cost of gas to get to and from work are two of things, which are stretching the budgets of those who are using the food bank. An increase in utility costs will further put pressure on household budgets, as we move into the winter months. Canada’s inflation rate sat

at 6.9 percent in October, unchanged from September.

Rising inflation has also limited the food bank’s stock. Hartman said the food banks supplies are dwindling fast. She purchased \$500 worth of meat on Friday and it was gone Monday.

The food bank has been purchasing food on sale. “I make every penny stretch,” said Hartman, as she said every effort is made to help anyone in need adding they “always find a way.”

At least for now. Hartman says people are stretched to the limit. “Something has to give,” said Hartman, as she looks to the future, and hopes some form of relief might be coming for those struggling day to day.

Petrolia Firefighter Food Drive during the Parade



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Province cuts some rural funding

CON’T FROM PG 1

Ferguson is also concerned about maintaining infrastructure. He pointed to the need for rural municipalities to maintain their roads, saying it is already difficult because inflation is pushing the cost of materials like asphalt up. In some cases, projects are taking two years or more to complete because of costs.

He said more development is beginning to come into Brooke-Alvinston, because of the high cost of development elsewhere. Brooke-Alvinston doesn’t have the same level of services larger centres have, which is keeping the cost down. This will lead to population increases but it takes time. “It doesn’t happen overnight,” said Ferguson.

The mayor would like to have some frank discussions about the decreasing provincial support but that hasn’t happened.

“They don’t want to talk about it,” said Ferguson about Sarnia-Lambton MPP Bob Bailey and McNaughton. Ferguson says municipal leaders can only ask questions about the fund if they’re already in a meeting about another subject. He says if you just want to talk about OMPF; they will not meet with you.

In the past, McNaughton committed to doing a review of OMPF, but he is not sure whether this has taken place yet.

Ferguson believes the province has to create new funding for rural municipalities with populations under 6,000.

OMPF BY THE NUMBERS

Brooke-Alvinston	\$453,900 down \$67,800
Chatham-Kent	\$19,126,600 down from \$20,019,000 892,400
Dawn-Euphemia	\$247,400 up \$3,900
Enniskillen	\$309,400 up \$23,100
Lambton Shores	\$1,800,900 up \$200,000
Oil Springs	\$180,900 down \$3,900
Petrolia	\$879,900 up \$15,600
Plympton-Wyoming	\$808,600 down \$87,000
Point Edward	\$700 down \$100
Sarnia	\$3,601,400 down \$22,200
St. Clair	\$972,100 up \$21,800
Warwick	\$418,000 up \$17,900

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Back to new classrooms for Brooke Central students

Heather Wright
The Independent

It's back to the classroom for Brooke Central Public School students - but which classroom will depend on the grade they're in.

The students have been at home since Nov. 21 after the Lambton-Kent District School Board's engineers preparing for a summer roof project found the roof might collapse under the weight of more than 12 inches of snow. The students didn't return to the Alvinston school - learning online until Tuesday.

Wednesday, the students headed back to their new classrooms in Brooke-Alvinston, Enniskillen and Petrolia. The board originally planned to bus kindergarten to Grade 5 students to Lambton Centennial where there are empty classrooms. Students in French Immersion from K-6 would go to East Lambton Elementary and all other Grade 7 and 8 students would be using the now vacant third floor of LCCVI until the repairs were complete. The plans didn't sit well with many of the parents. They were particularly concerned about sending the Grade 7 and 8 students to LCCVI.

Since the engineer's report was only on the older part of the school building, several parents suggested the Grade 6, 7, & 8s remain at Brooke Central and use the newer part of the

building.

Wednesday morning, the board released a new relocation plan. All of the Grade 7 & 8 students will be staying at Brooke Central in the newer part of the building. The Grade 6 students in the English Language program will also be there. Kindergarten to Grade 6 French Immersion students will transition to East Lambton Elementary School. Students in Kindergarten to Grade 5 English Program will transition to Lambton Centennial Public School. Splitting the students up into three different schools will mean some adjustment.

Children from kindergarten to Grade 5 in the English program will be going to Lambton Centennial - the bell there will ring at 9:30 am and they'll leave at 3:50.

French immersion students from kindergarten to Grade 6 will have a bell times of 9:20 am and 3:40 pm at East Lambton. And the students remaining at Brooke Central in the newer portion of the building will begin at 9:10 am and be dismissed at 3:30 pm according to a letter sent to parents.

And the board promised the students would have some help figuring out where to go in the first days at their new schools.

"Communications will be shared with each school site, signage will

be placed on the busses and student transportation staff will be on site at Brooke Central Public School for the first few days of the transition. Staff will be available to support student bus transfers to ensure students are loaded onto the designated buses and transferred to the appropriate location."

As they students head to their new classrooms which their teachers made ready during the online learning, there is no clear indication how long they will be there.

Director of Education John Howitt has said he hopes they'll be able to complete the reenforcement of the roof early in 2023. But he admitted problems with getting building materials like steel, might delay the project.

Wellington Builders has already been on site and plan to get to work as quickly as possible.

Parents had asked for a second opinion on whether the roof was a danger, but Howitt says with the engineer's report the board had to act.

The director of education says there will be a weekly update for students so they know exactly what is going on and how the construction is progressing. Activities planned for the entire school, such as the annual Christmas dinner provided by the Alvinston Optimists and a trip to a local tree farm, will go ahead.

Petrolia hikes water, sewer rates four per cent

Heather Wright
The Independent

Water bills in Petrolia are on the way up.

In it's first meeting, town councillors attended a mandatory public meeting for water and sewer rate increase and just over an hour later passed on a four per cent increase on both water and sewer charges.

Rick Charlebois, Petrolia's CAO, said rising inflation - which has been around seven per cent for the last three months - is driving up costs. Charlebois didn't give concrete examples of what projects would require more cash since the water and sewer budgets won't be available for councillors to read and approve until January.

Charlebois also pointed to increasing capital costs as an issue.

The town will be rebuilding the water

intake at the Bright's Grove Water Treatment facility in the next year. The project will cost about \$16.2 million. The federal and provincial government have contributed under \$12 million to the project, leaving Petrolia to find about \$4.2 million according to the CAO.

He added there needs to be \$5.9 million in capital projects above and beyond the water intake in the next 10 years. "We need money to pay for that." Under provincial regulations, water and sewer operations must pay for themselves out of user rates, however in the past, the town has secured loans to cover large capital projects, including for the recently completed sewage treatment plant.

Charlebois also pointed to changes in water use as a concern, saying High Park Farms - a cannabis operation in Enniskillen - has closed. It was a

significant water user. The CAO says some of that shortfall - estimated around 40,000 cubic meters by Enniskillen officials - will be made up by new homes being built in Petrolia.

Charlebois couldn't say how much water and sewer use would increase because of new residential construction.

Water rates bring in \$2.3 million yearly and sewer rates bring in \$1.7 million according to figures provided by the town.

Only one citizen came to the public meeting to voice concern.

Chantal Fortin asked how the town could justify a four per cent rate hike. "I think two per cent would be fair but four per cent would be extreme."

Mayor Brad Loosley noted if council wished, it could change the fee increase during budget deliberations in January.

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Applications are to be submitted by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, December 9th 2022

Please contact Erin Kwarciak, Clerk at 519-845-3939 or ekwarciak@plympton-wyoming.ca with any questions.

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Editorial

Staggering need

Two hundred families in Central Lambton needed help from the Petrolia Food Bank in November. That’s twice as many families as needed help last year, in a time unprecedented economic turmoil because of a pandemic. Sadly, it’s likely the tip of the iceberg. Not everyone in need goes to the Petrolia Food Bank. People in Alvinston, Watford, Oil Springs, Forest and St. Clair all have programs to feed people. Schools, like LCCVI, have programs which provide snacks. Kids get free food during nutrition breaks at school. And yet two hundred families - both big and small - can’t afford to buy the most basic item we need - food - right now. It’s staggering.

Central Lambton is not alone. A new report by Feed Ontario says 13 per cent more people needed a food bank this year. Since the pandemic began 42 per cent more people are walking through the doors in communities across the province. It’s obvious inflation is reeking havoc on people’s budgets. How can someone earning minimum wage working less than full time hours buy gas to get to work (up more than 50 per cent this year), pay rent (on average \$1,200 per month in Lambton) or a mortgage (21 per cent more now) and utilities and buy food which has also shot up nearly 12 per cent in September. Governments are talking about providing cash to help off set the cost of living increase and some of those measures will help, at least for the short term. But we - as a community, as a province, as a country - have to look for more than just half measures to lift those up who are increasingly falling further behind. If there was a simple formula, you can be sure we would have laid it out years ago. There is not.

So for now, we urge you to care for your neighbours; give to a local food program, volunteer to help if you can’t afford to give. And urge the people in the halls of power to stop using sound bites and platitudes and actually come up with a plan to help those among us who need it the most.

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



BRUCE MACFARLANE PHOTO

In this historic photo recently discovered by Bruce MacFarlane of Toronto, Dorothy Allred, stand at a taxi stand on what is now Petrolia Line near Victoria Park. The photo is likely to have been taken in the 1940s or 1950s. You can read the story of how they were discovered on page 10.

If the phrase from Mom fits, I’ll use it

My mom has a saying which has been running through my head today. I’ll have to paraphrase, because my mom can have a bit of a potty mouth. The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree. When someone seems to be doing something the wrong way, Mom calls it “a*# backward.”

I don’t use the expression very often, but after sitting through the first meeting of Petrolia council Monday, it struck me that it fit perfectly. Monday, councillors set the rates for rentals and permits in Petrolia for 2023. It’s done every year and it includes the water and sewer rate increases which we all complain about. But it seems to me, council is putting the cart before the horse. This year, council will be getting a look at the proposed 2023 budget in January. They’ll figure out how much

it cost to run each department and how the tab will be paid. But here they are, at least a month before hand, setting their revenue in what appears to me to be a vacuum. They don’t know what it will cost to run the arena yet this year or if they, as elected councillors, could find ways to keep costs down, but they’re raising ice time rates three per cent. And that’s the case for every department. Now you may argue that administrators know what the costs will be; and they likely do have a very good idea of what they believe the municipality should spend in 2023. The point is the administration is not accountable to the taxpayers in the same way the elected councillors are. And if elected councillors are making decisions on increasing fees without

having a clue if the extra revenue is needed - or if even more revenue is needed to keep the operation going - they’re doing their job a*# backward in my opinion. I’ve covered municipal council’s for 30-plus years. Most pass their fee schedules during budget deliberations. And frankly, most councils spend a lot more time trying to find solutions taxpayers demand to keep costs down. But perhaps they’re doing it a*#backward.



Heather Wright

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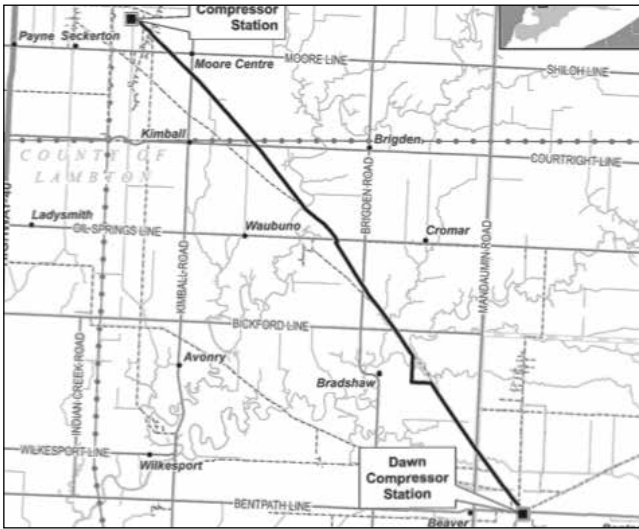
Canada

Enbridge \$251 million project to start this spring

Heather Wright
The Independent

The \$251 million project which will see Enbridge replace seven compressors at Corunna to feed the Dawn Natural Gas Hub has been given the green light. The Ontario Energy Board gave approval for the project earlier this month. The energy company says seven compressor units located at its Corunna Compressor Station in St. Clair Township which date back to the 1960s and 1970s will be replaced by installing approximately 20 kilometres natural gas pipeline from its Dawn Operations Centre in Dawn-Euphemia to the Corunna Compressor

Station. The project also includes work at the Dawn Operations Centre and the Corunna Compressor Station. Enbridge Gas Spokesperson Andrea Stass says the company believes the compressors have to be replaced because of their “unacceptable reliability, obsolescence and safety concerns.” “The project helps us maintain the safe and reliable operation of the natural gas system and to continue to meet the natural gas needs of our existing customers,” she says. Enbridge Gas says it will use as many local resources as practical to build the pipeline and where possible



SUBMITTED PHOTO
The \$251 million Dawn to Corunna Project by Enbridge has been given the green light. will buy materials from the local community. Construction on the project is expected to begin in the spring with work completed by November.

Water rates climb 5.4 per cent in Enniskillen, Oil Springs D-E

Blake Ellis
Local Journalism Initiative

Sewer and water rates are increasing in Enniskillen Township. Residents in Oil City will be paying \$2 more a month on their flat rate and an increase in the cost for the water they use, as Enniskillen Township Council approved the increase at its meeting on Nov. 21. This is the first time the flat rate has been increased since 2019 and will put the monthly cost at \$31.50. Enniskillen Township Clerk Duncan McTavish suggested the rate be increased by \$1, but Councillor Wally Van Dun felt it was appropriate to increase it by \$1.50 or \$2 instead. Deputy Mayor Judy Krall agreed with a \$2 a month increase.

Van Dun suggested the rate be increased a little bit at a time each year from now on, given the maintenance the township has to do on the sewer system. This flat rate generates \$36,816 a year and by the end of 2022, there will be a reserve of \$80,196. The money helps pay for a number of items including improvements to the driveway of the facility. There is currently a review of the cost and method of removing sledge from the lagoon. McTavish said the reserve sitting at \$80,000 would address the normal maintenance of the sewage system. Enniskillen Township’s water rates will also be increasing as the agreement the township has with the Town of Petrolia permits a rate increase based on the consumer price

index. The water rate would increase by 6.9 percent, based on the consumer price index for August 2022. Petrolia has agreed to reduce 2023 rate increase by 1.5 percent due to Enniskillen’s participation in recent capital grant application. This would reduce the hike to 5.4 percent. The price the township would purchase water from Petrolia will rise from \$1.54 a cubic metre to \$1.62. The increase also affects the municipalities which purchase Petrolia water from Enniskillen. Enniskillen informed the Village of Oil Springs and the Township of Dawn-Euphemia, their water rates would rise by the same amount. The new rates will take affect on Jan. 1.

- THE INDEPENDENT

No buyer yet for southwestern Ontario grain elevators

Blake Ellis
Local Journalism Initiative

Lambton grain farmers who had deals to sell to Sollio Agriculture are still being served - at least for now. Ontario Grains continues to honour the contracts with farmers, as it winds up its operations in Florence, Becher and four other grain elevators in southwest Ontario. Gary Martin, president of the Lambton Federation of Agriculture, has been talking with local farmers who say their contracts

end March 15. Farmers with wheat contracts for delivery next July are being cancelled, said Martin. Sollio Agriculture, a major shareholder in Ontario Grains, announced on Sept. 21, six elevators in southern Ontario will be closed and the company exit the grain market in the province. Ontario Grains was to honour all existing contracts and fulfil its obligations to farm customers, employees and business partners. It committed to continuing to serve its clients during the 2022 harvest season

at a reduced capacity. There is still no word on whether anyone is willing to purchase any of the six elevators, said Martin. If the elevators aren’t sold, Martin feared the closures would lead to greater transportation and trucking costs, which would especially be more of a concern for small farm operations, which don’t have access to semi-tractor trailers. The nearest options for farmers, who were customers at Florence, would be in Thamesville or Inwood.

\$20 million renos at county building in Sarnia complete

The Independent

After a year and a half of construction, Lambton County’s Shared Services Building is ready for use. The building at the Bayside Mall in downtown Sarnia houses a number of county services including social services, some public health programs and the provincial court as well as provincial and federal government agencies. The county signed a 20 year lease with new owners of the mall and the \$20 million renovation project began in the summer of 2021. They were expected to be done by April,

but shortages in the supply chain due to the pandemic put the work behind schedule. Social services staff have been working from the building since March and by October public health staff had settled in. The provincial court is expected to be back in the building by mid-December. A report to county councillors say the improvements have cost the county \$4,975,000 with other levels of government and the new mall ownership picking up the tab for the rest of the work. County officials, including Warden Kevin Marriott, reopened the building Wednesday.



SUBMITTED PHOTO
Sarnia Mayor Mike Bradley, Lambton Warden Kevin Marriott, and Michael Plain cut the ribbon to the newly renovated shared services building.

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ALVINSTON OPTIMIST

CHRISTMAS

CELEBRATION

SATURDAY DECEMBER 10TH

4:30 - 6:00 PM
DRIVE THRU OR EAT-IN
CHRISTMAS
DINNER

Homemade turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, vegetables, gravy, cranberry sauce, a bottled beverage and dessert.
Tickets available online at: www.alvinstonoptimist.com or at Three Maples Variety in Alvinston, Inwood Grocery & Variety, Wilson's Shell in Watford, Lizzy's in Thedford, or from any Optimist Member.

\$25/MEAL
ADVANCED
TICKETS ONLY

6:00 - 7:30PM
DRIVE THRU PARADE

This years theme is "It's a Gingerbread Christmas"

From the comfort of your vehicle enjoy our Santa Claus Parade!
NEW! One Way Parade Route on River St. off of Courtright Line only. **FREE** candy canes, popcorn, chocolate bars and pop for all ages! Register your float/display for free, by Wed. Dec. 7, 7:00pm at www.alvinstonoptimist.com
1st Place \$500.00 | 2nd Place \$300.00 | 3rd Place \$150.00

ELITE PARADE PERFORMANCES

We have confirmed 10 bands including 2 Pipe & Drum, so keep your windows down to enjoy the music along the route. Plus NEW LED performers, stilt walkers & fire acts back by popular demand

7:30 - 9:30PM

PUBLIC SKATING & COLOURING CONTEST

FREE public skating for everyone at the arena - **FREE** coffee, hot chocolate and hot apple cider!

***PLUS PHOTOS WITH SANTA CLAUS**
AND MASCOTS

Such as Marshall, Chase, Micky Mouse & Olaf

HAY WAGON & HORSE AND CARRIAGE RIDES

View the parade from a horse & carriage or on a hay wagon. Load & unload at the Arena. First come first serve basis.

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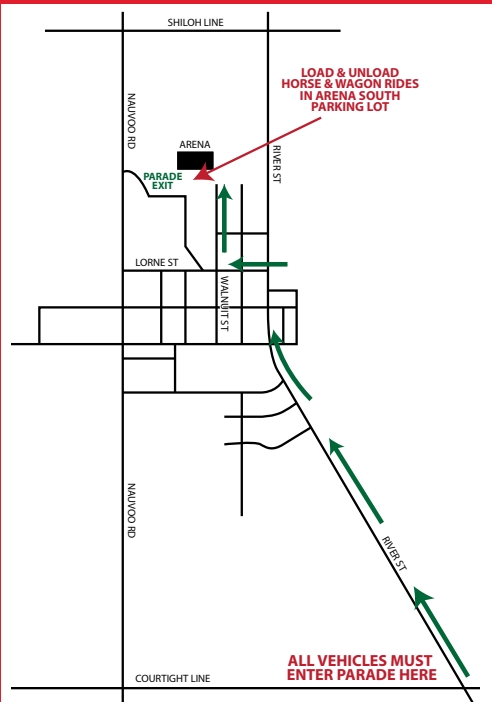
Show off your Christmas Lights in our Home Lighting Competition
Register by Sat. Dec. 10, 6:00 pm @ www.alvinstonoptimist.com

1st Place \$500.00 | 2nd Place \$300.00 | 3rd Place \$150.00
PLUS - \$100.00 "Peoples Choice Award"

Peoples Choice voting runs from Sat. Dec. 10 until Wed. Dec. 14
vote at
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Santa's Nice List		
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Heather Wright
The Independent

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Thursday, Friday & Saturday
Dec 1-3 – 10am - 4pm

Christmas

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will be accepted at
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E-mails to Santa
are being accepted at
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Town of PETROLIA

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6 PM

CHILI
6 PM

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bring a homemade/non-returnable ornament to hang on the tree

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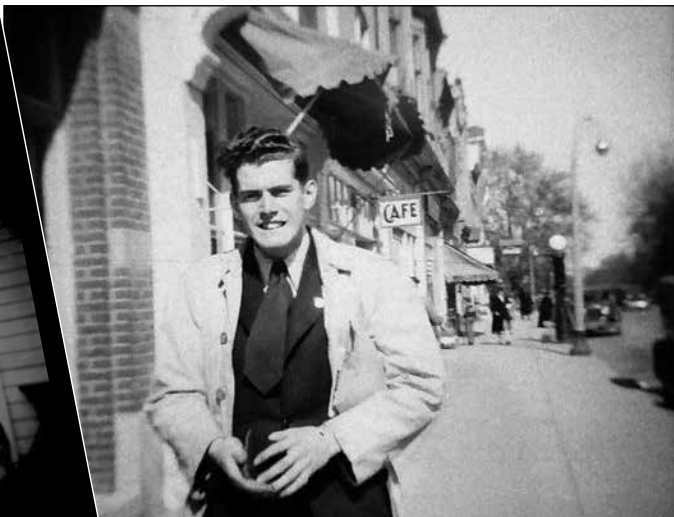
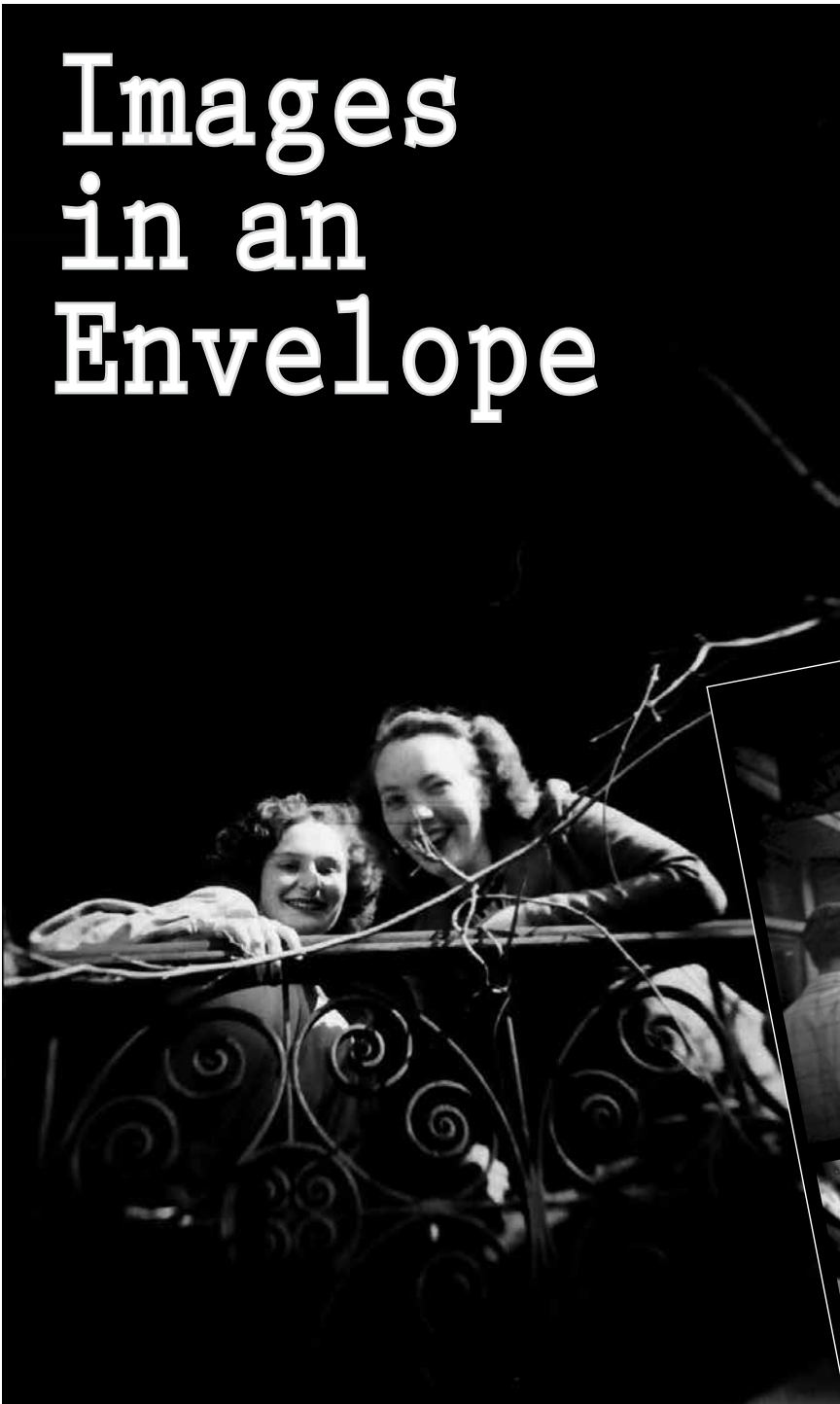
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Images in an Envelope

Toronto's Bruce MacFarlane uncovered a treasure trove of Petrolia history when he purchased an envelope of negatives at the Old Book and Paper Show. He's been posting the images on Lost Lambton, Found, a Facebook page which highlights local history.

'Incredible world inside' negatives

Heather Wright
The Independent

When Bruce MacFarlane of Toronto picked up an envelope of negatives he was curious to find out "what an incredible world there is inside."

MacFarlane - a long-time volunteer with the Scarborough Archives - went to the Old Book and Paper Show in Toronto recently and found a vendor selling a few envelopes of old black and white negatives inexpensively. He bought them out of curiosity. "When I picked up the negatives besides being inexpensive I also saw that there was potentially a greater value, but nothing to do with money."

Among the negatives was an envelope marked Petrolia. MacFarlane began pulling out the negatives and looking at photo after photo of young people in a downtown setting.

"A lot of history is mystery and I love that the negatives provide a good puzzle. In the past the cost of photography was prohibitive making it a hobby for just a few," he tells *The Independent*. But he needed help to fully understand the mystery. So he went to social media to find some history groups in Petrolia.

MacFarlane got to work creating images he could share using what he calls a

"simple and crude way" - putting negatives on a light table and then taking a photo with his iPad. "This method does not provide the best quality photos but rather gives some sense of what the negatives contain."

And some of the people photographed have been identified. The young woman seen in many photos is Dorothy Allred. MacFarlane believes the images may have been taken by a friend.

In one, she pushes a butter churn down what is now Petrolia Line to the local creamery. In another, she's at the White Rose Gas Station at the corner of Petrolia Line and Princess St. In another, she and a friend appear to be posing on a balcony at Fairbank House.

"I hope that more can be identified as they provide an opportunity for people to have a snapshot of the past and for some to catch a glimpse of townsfolk or a family member in their youth or old age from eighty and more years ago," says MacFarlane.

The historian is pleased his find has created so much interest in Petrolia. And it has sparked an interest in him to learn more about the town. "I hope to one day be able to visit the town (to answer) the question of who took the photos, the outside of the envelopes were simply marked 'Petrolia.'"



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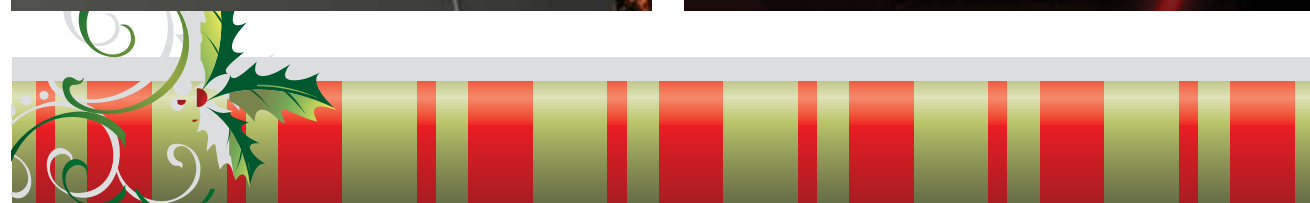
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Sports

Gold for Lambton runners

Barry Wright
The Independent

North Lambton grad Connor Black his first national title taking the men’s 10K race by 11 seconds over a competitor from BC.

Black, from Forest, and his London-Western Track and Field teammate also won the team gold. Davies and his mates from the Harbour Track Club in Hamilton were second in the team standings.

With his victory, Black will represent Canada at the World Cross Country Championships in Australia next year and he’s looking forward to the challenge.

“Yeah, I’m very excited,” he said in post-race comments. “I’m stoked,”

Northern alumni Andrew Davies was sixth.

Charlie Shaw of LCCVI and Ryan Davies of Northern were 37th and 58th respectively in the boys’ U18 race featuring 262 runners.

And Gabby Jones used a late race kick to pass the defending champion from BC and win the women’s U18 title at the Canadian Cross Country Championships in Ottawa on the weekend.

Jones, from Northern, won the 4K race by two seconds.

“I just tried to keep a good mental attitude throughout



Connor Black at the Canadian X-Country 10K

the race, keep that positive mindset I think is the biggest thing,” said Jones in a post-race interview with Athletics Canada. She is coming off a provincial high school cross country crown last month for the Vikings.

Flyers earn point in Aylmer

Barry Wright
The Independent

Evan Morningstar’s goal in the waning seconds earned the Petrolia Flyers a 4-4 overtime tie with the Spitfires in Aylmer.

The Flyers came back from three, one-goal deficits Sunday to earn the point.

Noah Harse, Kyle Flamminio and Joey Hayter also scored for the Flyers. Maddox Nazwaski made 22 saves in the Petrolia goal.

Saturday, the hometown Port Stanley Sailors scored four times with the man advantage in a 4-3 win over the Flyers.

Dylan Campbell, Daniel Gibson

and Flamminio scored for Petrolia. Elijah Grant made 44 saves in taking the loss.

The Flyers hit the halfway point of the 40-game regular season with a home game against Lucan at 7:30. Petrolia is at Thamesford Friday.

The Flyers are 4-12-3 and in eighth place in the PJHL’s Yeck Division, three points back of Lucan.



Chartrand notches shutout for Mooretown

The Independent

John Chartrand blocked 24 shots, including 10 in the second period, for his first PJHL shutout in Mooretown’s 5-0 win over the Admirals in Amherstburg on Sunday.

Logan Gardner, Tristen Konrad and Brody Genyn each had a goal and an assist for the Flags.

Jack Dupuis and Brett Vince had the other for Mooretown.

The Flags snapped a mini two-game losing streak and are 10-6-1 overall.

Mooretown is in fourth place in the Stobbs Division just a point back of third place Blenheim and three points back of second place Lakeshore.

Flags host division-leading Essex on Saturday at 7:30 at the Moore Sports Complex

Squires on three game skid with Durham loss

The Petrolia Squires have now lost three games in a row following a 6-4 setback to the Thundercats in Durham Saturday.

The home team won the contest with two unanswered goals in the third period.

The Squires are now 5-5 on the season.

They host Milverton at Greenwood on Friday at 8:30 and travel to Ripley for a contest on Saturday.

Thunder shakes Killer Bees, Tilbury in town next

The Tillsonburg Thunder scored 23 seconds into its home game against Alvinston and coasted to a 12-4 win over the Killer Bees in Western Ontario Super Hockey League play.

The Thunder had a 4-0 lead after one period Saturday and extended their lead to 9-0 until

Scott Case scored for the Bees with just under seven minutes to play in the second period.

Matt Stevens, Dawson Winchester and Avery Antone also scored for the Bees.

Alvinston is in seventh place in the nine-team league with a record of 3-5-1. They are

just a point back of sixth place Plattsville and three points back of the Strathroy Jets for fifth place.

Alvinston has three games in hand on the Jets.

The Killer Bees host Tilbury this Saturday in Alvinston for Farmer Appreciation Night.

Former Petrolia Flyer released by Legionnaires

Wil O’Leary-Dilosa has been released by the GOJHL’s Sarnia Legionnaires to continue his career with the North Middlesex Stars of the PJHL.

The former member of the Petrolia Flyers had played in part of four seasons with the Legionnaires. He had four goals and eight assists in 24 games this season. He was named captain of the team in August.

O’Leary-Dilosa was held off the scoresheet in his first game with North Middlesex on the

weekend.

The Parkhill-based Stars are second in the PJHL’s Yeck Division with a record of 12-3-3.

The Legionnaires are mired in a seven-game winless streak. They take on the Nationals in London on Wednesday and entertain St. Marys on Thursday.



Wil O’Leary Dilosa

McGregor’s four point night leads Canada at Para Cup

Forest’s Tyler McGregor had two goals and two assists to lead Team Canada to a 5-0 win over Czechia at the 2022 Para Cup in Nova Scotia.

The Lady Flags won all six of its

He also scored twice in Canada’s opening win over Italy on Sunday.

Canada is now 2-0 and will close out the preliminary round

games, not allowing a single goal in the process.

Mooretown defeated the Windsor Wildcats, 6-0 in the final on Sunday.

of the four-team tournament with a game against Team USA on Wednesday. The Americans are also 2-0.

Meantime, the Lady Flags and Lambton Attack made it to the playoffs in the U15 and U18 divisions respectively but fell short in the semifinals.



“BEE” IN THE KNOW!

ONE FREE ADMISSION
(with one paying adult)

Sat. Dec. 3rd @ 6:30pm - Alvinston Arena

Your Alvinston Killer Bees host Tilbury for the ‘Farmer Appreciation Game’, first 40 farmers through the gate will receive a free touque compliments of game sponsor Wanstead Farmers CO-OP – 2 performances by the Alvinston Ice Angels plus it’s a Killer BEES 3 night - \$3.00 Beer (at our ice level bar), \$3.00 hamburgers & \$3.00 fresh cut fries! Back by popular demand – Alvinston Killer Bees mug including a ‘Queen Bee Special’ for only \$25.00!





FREE ADMISSION

if you bring a lightly used winter coat
(or ½ price admission if you bring a canned good)

Sat. Dec. 10th @ 1:00 pm, Alvinston Arena

The Bees take on the Bluebirds of Tilbury once again - brought to you by Munro Honey. You could win up to \$1000.00 in our first ever Turkey Toss, \$3.00 Hive & Harvest Coolers, plus Live Music by Chatham’s ‘Just Us’ band in the upper hall (Honey House Bar) after the game (the band will also play outside during the drive thru Santa Claus Parade at 6:00 PM)

Fri. Dec. 16th @ 8:00 pm

Don McGugan BMO Nesbitt Burns presents ‘Children’s Hospital Game Night’ when Erin comes to town to face your Alvinston Killer Bees - \$5.00 from all admissions will go to Childrens Hospital, plus on ice \$500.00 corn hole challenge golf challenge. Try our Egg Nog drink special too.



Children’s Hospital
London Health Sciences Centre

FREE ADMISSION FOR KIDS (3-18 YEARS OLD)

wearing a minor hockey jersey,
plus the first 50 kids through the gate will receive an official game puck on

Fri. Dec. 30th @ 8:00 pm

puck drop against Tilbury, brought to you by Kingswell Glen Golf Course & The Alvinston Districts Optimist Club. Free popcorn and pop.

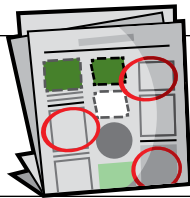
Come out to cheer on these local players from Lambton County:

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Monday @ 12 noon

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Obituaries / Death Notices



BROOKER
Joyce

Peacefully with family by her side on **Tuesday, November 22, 2022**, in Strathroy, **Joyce Brooker (nee Bird)**, formerly of Petrolia, was in her **88th year**. Joyce was the loving wife the late Robert Brooker (2010). She will be missed by her sons Robin and Elizabeth Brooker, Mark and Lisa Brooker, and Tim and Wanda Brooker, her thirteen grandchildren, and twenty-five great grandchildren. Joyce was the daughter of the late Henry and Joyce Bird, sister to the late Angela (the late Doug) Purton, Elizabeth (the late Bill) Carrell, the late Norah (the late Howard) Breen, Judith (Brian Wynn) Bird, and Brian (Sharon) Bird.

A funeral service was held on **Sunday, November 27, 2022** at **New Life Assembly, Petrolia**. Interment will occur at **later date in Resurrection Cemetery**. As expressions of sympathy, memorial donations may be made to the Canadian Cancer Society (www.cancer.ca) or New Life Assembly (www.newlifepetrolia.com). Arrangements entrusted to **Needham-Jay Funeral Home**. www.NeedhamJay.com.



ANNETT
Brian Carl

Brian Carl Annett – Age 57 of Petrolia, passed away unexpectedly at his residence on **Tuesday, November 22, 2022**. Loving son of Glen and Edna Annett (nee Simpson). Dear brother of Sandra (Peter) Welsh and Tracey (Todd) Annett. Cherished uncle of Miranda, Tiffany, Jim and Matt. Predeceased by his nephew Austin Palocz (2006). Brian was a member of the Operators Union and was an excellent welder. He worked hard as a truck driver and made frequent trips to Nashville. He was a quiet and private individual who loved his cats and farm equipment. **Family and friends gathered at Hillsdale Cemetery, Petrolia on Monday, November 28, 2022 for a graveside service at 11:00am**. Sympathy may be expressed through donations to C.E.E. Hospital Foundation or Sarnia and District Humane Society. Memories and condolences may be sent online at www.steadmanbrothers.ca. Arrangements entrusted to **STEADMAN BROTHERS FUNERAL CHAPELS**, Brigden 519-864-1193.



ADAMS
Richard "Dick"

Peacefully at his home near **Oakdale on Saturday, November 26, 2022 Richard "Dick" Adams, 80 years of age**. Dick was the loved husband of 60 years to Donna (nee Anderson). He was the proud father of Rob and Karen Adams, Cheryl and Ron Saunders, the late Brian (2011) and Becky (Al) Adams. He will be missed by his grandchildren Becky, Ryan, Andrew, Matthew, Tiffany Kristen, Brittany, and Brady and their families. Dick survived by his brother Ken Adams. Predeceased by his parents, Allan and Evelyn Adams. Dick retired in 1996 after working many years with County of Lambton Public Works Department.

Visitors were received on Tuesday, November 29, 2022, at the Wyoming Chapel of Needham-Jay Funeral Home, where a funeral service was held on Wednesday, November 30, 2022, at 11:00 a.m. Interment was in Oil Springs Cemetery. As expressions of sympathy, memorial donations may be made to the Heart and Stroke Foundation (<https://www.heartandstroke.ca/>) or Diabetes Canada (<https://www.diabetes.ca/>). Memories and condolences may be shared online at www.NeedhamJay.com

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Card of Thanks

Thank you, Thank you – family, relatives and friends for the flowers, cards, gifts and all the Best Wishes for my Birthday. Sincerely, Mildred Dodge

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But the tears that I shed in silence,
And breathe a sigh of regret,
For you were mine, and I remember,
Though all the world forget.*
Love Mom and Dad, and brother Jack
Krisie and son Josh
and Grandchildren
Ryan, Sarah and Jeremy

LOCAL MATTERS.

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Farm groups urge feds to return Russian tariff

The Independent

Farm groups are asking the federal government to make sure farmers who paid tariffs on Russian fertilizer get their money back.

Grain Farmers of Ontario, the Ontario Bean Growers Association, Ontario Canola Growers, the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, Atlantic Grains Council, and Québec Grain Farmers have been meeting with Members of Parliament to outline the impact the tariffs are having on the Canadian food system and the importance of refunding this money back to farmers.

In a news release, the Grain Farmers of Ontario say Statistics Canada estimates \$34 million in tariffs have been collected since the federal government placed a tariff on all Russian goods when Vladimir Putin’s first tank rolled into Ukraine.

But many farmers, including Kevin Marriott of Enniskillen, bought fertilizer for his Lambton County farm long before the Feb. 24th invasion. He purchased 40 metric tonnes of fertilizer for \$41,400 in November and then got the \$7,000 tariff bill in May.

“We need the government to return the money collected directly back to farmers who paid the tariffs on fertilizer,” said Brendan Byrne, Chair of the Grain Farmers of Ontario in a news release Friday. “Over the past two months, we have met with over a dozen Members of Parliament who have been very supportive of finding a resolution to this matter. We want to ensure decision-makers follow through to see this money is returned to farmers.”

“Forcing farmers to pay a tariff on a global product such as fertilizer just penalizes the farmer and adds additional costs at a time when input costs are already at an all-time high,” said Ryan Koeslag of the Ontario Bean Growers Association.

“Farmers continue to take the brunt of yearly rising input costs, and now with a new tariff added on top of that for a global product, such as fertilizer, is simply ridiculous,” added Thomas Tavani, General Manager of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario.



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTOS

The St. Andrew’s Society in Petrolia celebrated 150 years of gathering together to celebrate St. Andrew, Scotland’s patron saint and all things Scottish. Like so many other groups, the society had not been together in two years because of the pandemic, although members of the group took time on Nov. 24 to mark the day in a brief ceremony. But this year they gathered for the traditional haggis meal at the Petrolia branch of the Royal Canadian Legion Nov. 24. And the dinner marked an historic change. From it’s inception in 1870, the St. Andrew’s Society in Petrolia was a meeting of men in the community. Over the years, a few women have been invited to attend as speakers or dancers. For the first time in the 150 year history, women were invited to attend the dinner with their spouses. Town Crier Les Whiting noted Scots are sometimes resistant to change “One hundred fifty years of thought has led us to this change we sought! The progress that we know we need has come at Scottish lightning speed!” The Christine Neufeld School of Highland Dance entertained the crowd and Tom Rankin helped with the music and gave the Burns address to the Haggis.





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Farm groups urge feds to return Russian tariff

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