

## PETROLIA BOUNCE



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Petrolia's Brayden Kominek celebrates as the puck bounces past Mooretown's Nolan Beaudoin as the Oilers draw first blood in the 6-1 win at Petrolia Regional Silver Stick Dec. 27. The U18s bowed out of the tournament in the semi-finals.

## Wyoming baby greets 2023 early

Heather Wright  
The Independent

Wyoming's Sarah and Micah Wallace were planning on ringing in 2023 playing a few board games with friends. But their daughter, Zoey, had other ideas.

The Wallace family welcomed Zoey at 12:02 am New Years' Day, becoming the first baby born in 2023 in Lambton County.

Zoey's grand entrance came more than a little early. Dad, Micah, says they were expecting their second child Jan. 19. But that changed on New Years' Eve.

"My wife had gone into some contractions earlier in the day on New Year's Eve, and just we were keeping an eye on whether it was going to progress further or not. And by later that evening, it was definitely progress-

ing further. So, we went into the hospital and had her that night."

When it became obvious Zoey wasn't stuck to the Jan. 19 timeline, and the clock ticked toward midnight, the Wallaces made a decision. "She could have come a little bit earlier, but we were so close to the wire like 'ah- let's hold on until New Years' Day.'"

Zoey's early appearance not only means some extra hoopla - it makes her an Irish Twin. Had she been born on her due date, Zoey and her brother would have been one year and one day apart. Now, they were born with less than a year.

Micah says the extended family is "super excited" to meet the latest member of the family.

"There is quite the little cousin crew and everybody is really excited."



BLUEWATER HEALTH PHOTO

Sarah and Micah Wallace shortly after their daughter, Zoey, was born. The Wyoming baby is the first Lambton County Baby of 2023.

## Calculating the cash losses, gains of Y deal

Heather Wright  
The Independent

Petrolia council is expected to extend the YMCA's contract to run the Oil Heritage District Community Centre this month, but it is difficult to tell if the first contract has met the goal of reducing the town's costs at the centre.

In 2017, the town struck a deal with the Y to run the community centre starting in 2018. At the time, taxpayers footed the bill for about \$450,000 per year more than the membership fees brought in to run the centre. The Y anticipated it could save the town \$600,000 over five years - about \$125,000 per year.

And from the data contained in budgets and reports to council analyzed by *The Independent*, there may have been some savings. In 2019 and 2020, the town anticipated it would cost about \$381,000 and \$371,908 respectively. That was down about \$75,000 to \$85,000 from the two previous years.

But what the Y - nor anyone else - could have anticipated was a world wide pandemic which closed the doors to the gym and pool for 30 months.

Town administrators and the Y forecasted higher costs as the impacts of the pandemic were felt. During the Nov. 2020 budget deliberations - six months after the facility first closed - the town anticipated paying out \$424,453 in 2021 to run the facility - a combination of the operation's deficit and the administrative fees it would pay. The 2022 budget reflected the same grim picture with taxpayers expected to pay about \$429,979 to run the facility.

What those actual deficits were can't be fully understood since the only available data showing what was actually paid is the accounts listings given to council. There are quarterly reports sent to the town by the Y, however despite requests for the information, the reports were never given to *The Independent* by the town.

And Petrolia also received COVID-19 grants to cover lost revenue at the Y, Victoria Playhouse and the local arena. It's unclear how much of the \$594,000 received over two years went to the Y.

SEE Y PAGE 2



We Deliver!  
order at: **pizzahut.ca**  
4495 Petrolia Line • Petrolia  
**226-738-0696**

SCAN FOR MENU





# Dream win

Blake Ellis  
Local Journalism Initiative

Mary Van Den Berge is still in shock more than a week after winning the top prize - \$1 million prize - in the London Dream Home lottery.

“I don’t feel any different. I am still me.”

Her and her late husband, Casey, have supported London’s Dream Home lottery since its inception in 1996. That first year the couple won a cordless phone. Two years ago, Casey was diagnosed with cancer and the couple would make the drive back and forth between Petrolia and London as he received treatment for three months before Casey passed.

The couple originally lived in St. Mary’s where they owned a retail store. They moved to Petrolia when they retired to be closer to their daughter and son-in-law, Katelyn and Shaun Bender.

On the morning of the draw, Dec. 21, Van Den Berge and her daughter were set to go to a fitness class at the YMCA in Petrolia. She had a feeling that morning and made sure to take her phone with her.

The class was at 9:15 am and the 50/50 draw was to take place at 9 am with the Dream draw set for 9:15 am.

When her phone rang at 9:13 am, her heart started beating faster.

“I just won,” she told her daughter. “Put this stuff away. We are going to London.” The pair did not stay for their class.

Van Den Berge had the choice of a 3,254 square foot home in Talbotville, a 2023 Ford F-150 and \$750,000 in cash, a \$250,000 gift certificate to Can-Am RV Centre or \$1 million in cash, as the grand prize winner. She took the \$1 million, noting only three winners have ever taken the home.

Her plans for the money including doing some renovations on her Petrolia home. “I want to make this house mine,” she said, as she has only lived in the house for a year. She will also share some of her winnings with her family.

“When you lose a partner, life is not about stuff. It is about experiences and memories,” said Van Den Berge. She is humbled by all the well wishes from people. “People are so kind.”

And while Van Den Berge has already won big, she’s also entered in the local hospital draw. She has bought a ticket to the Bluewater Health Foundation’s Dream Home Lottery to take place later in 2023, and she will be buying another ticket for the London Dream Lottery, as she feels it is important to provide support to the local hospitals.

- THE INDEPENDENT



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO  
Mary Van Den Berge, standing with the nutcracker on the porch of her Petrolia home, won big in the London Dream Home Lottery over the Christmas break.

## 43K birds destroyed in Lambton Avian Flu outbreak

Heather Wright  
The Independent

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency says 43,000 birds on three Lambton Shores farms have been destroyed due to Avian Flu.

CFIA announced an outbreak in Lambton Shores – around the Arkona area – Dec. 15 and placed a wide swath of land in a primary control zone. That limits how poultry and eggs can move in the area. Farmers must obtain permits from CFIA to move animals in the area.

It’s a move, CFIA says, to try to stop the spread of the highly contagious pathogen which kills birds.

CFIA, in an email to *The Independent*, now says three farms were affected by Avian Flu and in all 43,000 birds have already been euthanized.

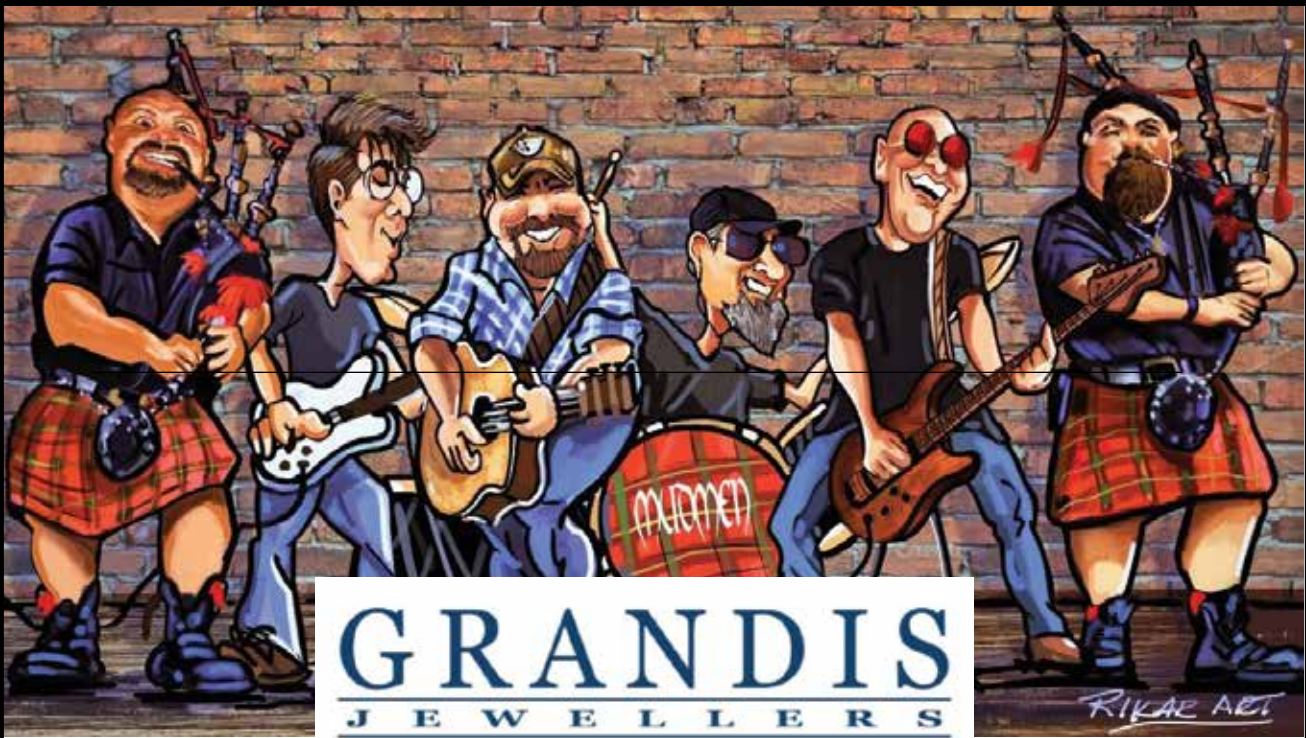
The poultry industry has been watching the spread of Avian Flu since March when four Ontario farms became the first to find the disease in its birds.

Since then about 750,000 birds have been destroyed in an effort to stop the spread of the disease.

There was an outbreak in nearby North Middlesex in November, but CFIA says there is no evidence to indicate that the outbreaks in Lambton Shores are related to them.

“While we do know that Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza is highly transmissible and could move barn-to-barn, either directly (bird-to-bird contact) or indirectly (contact with contaminated feed, water or equipment), evidence continues to show that the primary source of infection of farmed birds across Canada is most likely through contact or contamination from the wild bird population where the virus circulates naturally,” says CFIA.

Farms which have been found to have Avian Flu go through rigorous cleaning of their barns and it can be upwards of a year before birds can be brought back into their barns.



Presents

## MUDMEN IN CONCERT

SATURDAY

25  
FEB  
2023



\$30

ALL AGES

8 PM

DOORS OPEN @ 7:30

VICTORIA HALL, PETROLIA, ON

TICKETS AVAILABLE: [WWW.THEVPP.CA](http://WWW.THEVPP.CA) 519-882-1221

Ron MacLean Loves 'Em. You Should Too!

THIS IS A MUDMEN INC. EVENT

[WWW.MUDMEN.CA](http://WWW.MUDMEN.CA)

## Were there Y savings?

CON'T FROM PG 1

The 2022 actual costs are incomplete - the Y has three months to submit its bills so the information provided to council doesn’t include much of October, November and December.

Until October 2022, the town paid out around \$289,000 for administrative fees, operating losses and capital projects.

The losses recorded in the accounts payable listing were higher in 2021, despite long layoffs of staff because of the pandemic and funding from the federal government because of lost revenue. *The Independent* calculated about \$326,000 paid out in 2021.

In 2020, another year marked with layoffs and extra federal government COVID-19 relief, the town paid out \$204,234 in administrative fees, operating losses, capital expenses.

The Y recently told town council it is back to more than 80 per cent of its pre pandemic members - the best recovery of all the YMCAs in southern Ontario.



CELEBRATING 2023



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO

Petrolia Mayor Brad Loosley, Sarnia-Lambton MP Marilyn Gladu and Petrolia Legion President Dennis Laker toast the beginning of 2023, at the New Year's Levee - a military tradition - hosted by the Petrolia Legion and Ladies Auxiliary Monday. The local legion has hosted the event, where citizens and politicians wish each other the best in the New Year, since 2019.

Inflation, Line 5 among Gladu's 2023 concerns

Blake Ellis  
Local Journalism Initiative

Cost of living, health care and affordable housing will continue to be major concerns for Sarnia-Lambton and its Member of Parliament Marilyn Gladu.

Gladu, says inflation was a concern for most of 2022 as everyone dealt with rising costs. She said there are things, which can be done to help curtail inflation, the first being suspending the tax on essential items like home heating and groceries. "The Liberal government can also stop its inflationary spending which has driven inflation," she said. Inflation around the world has skyrocketed in wake of the pandemic. Canada has the 12th highest inflation rate, including below Britain, Australia and the US and sits around seven per cent.

Rising costs have made the physically challenged and seniors especially vulnerable, says Gladu. The cost of housing, including renting, has nearly risen sharply, Gladu says and she wants to see the federal government partner with the province and municipalities to continue to create more housing.

Gladu also wants the government to get more international health care professionals vetted to allow them to practice to help ease the crisis in health care. Across Ontario, small rural hospitals have closed emergency departments because of lack of staff and larger hospitals were pressed to the limit in the late fall when COVID, RSV and the flu hit children particularly hard. Gladu says there are doctors who have come to Canada who are driving taxis and doing other jobs because their credentials haven't been recognized in Canada.

"The provinces are doing the best they can," said Gladu. The federal government has provided 75 percent of the province's health care costs in the past. With inflation, that has dropped to 25 percent. "That is a huge gap." The federal government has said it will not increase funding to the provinces without guarantees of having the cash spent on patient care.

Gladu added it took the federal government far too long to respond to parents concerns about lack of basic children's medications. It was only after the Conservatives raised the issue - she says - that the government issued emergency orders to

bring more product into Ontario.

There were successes in 2022. Gladu's private members bill to protect employee pensions passed unanimously. The bill would prioritize pensions and protect the funds when a bankruptcy occurs. It's expected to pass in the Senate in February. She is especially proud of this accomplishment when it becomes law because only 40 members of parliament have had two private members bills passed and she will be among them.

Gladu was also pleased to see the use of the ArriveCan app to become optional when going through customs last September.

With her riding being along the border, she called the app discriminatory, especially for those who don't have a cell phone. She even knows of people who have received fines in error when those people were double and triple vaccinated.

Gladu was also pleased to see the ruling by Michigan Judge Janet Neff that the Enbridge Line 5 pipeline dispute as a federal case. This was also the opinion of the Canadian government and was a blow to Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer's attempts to have the pipeline shutdown over safety concerns.

The company wants to encase 6.4 kilometres of pipeline to replace the lines beneath the Straits of Mackinac. Line 5 runs between Superior, Wisconsin and Sarnia and carries crude oil and natural gas liquids used in propane and into Quebec. Gladu is hopeful the project will move ahead, however Michigan State officials are considering an appeal.

Gladu also made a submission to the Federal Riding Boundaries Commission in the fall. Under the riding redistribution, it is being proposed Sarnia-Lambton will be extended to include Walpole Island First Nation and the area of Chatham-Kent which will include Wallaceburg and the Dresden area, including Mitchell's Bay. This will add 20,000 people to the riding and change the name to Sarnia-Lambton-Bkejwanong.

Gladu said the existing riding already falls within the required population range and asked the riding boundaries not be changed. She said with the bigger riding she would need to have a second constituency office in Wallaceburg. The Federal Riding Boundaries Commission is to give its recommendations on any changes in February.

New Petrolia pitches won't be ready for 2023

The Independent

Young soccer players will be on the fields off of Edward Street for another year.

The Town of Petrolia is building new soccer pitches at the Oil Heritage District Community Centre as part of a four part plan to develop the land around the building. Some of the land has been graded but at the

Dec. 12 meeting, council approved a \$2,000 deal which would see the Edward Street land being used for the 2023 soccer season.

"This agreement will allow the full development of the new soccer pitches at the Y as time has not been on our side for the new pitches to be fully ready for the summer of 2023," said Dave Menzies, director of facilities in a report to council.



# PRO-TAX

(Pro-Tax is a division of Teogotha Inc.)

## Professional INCOME TAX SERVICES

### 519-882-2966

3927 Petrolia Line, Petrolia, ON

*Appointments \*\* Drop-Offs \*\* Contactless*

**MARK AND JOANNE JAMIESON**

jam\_jo11@hotmail.com | www.protaxpetrolia.com

## STAY STANDING THIS Winter!

Slippery sidewalks, driveways and icy parking lots can be risk factors for falls in winter. Avoid a bad fall with these top tips!

### WALK LIKE A PENGUIN

The penguin waddle helps you keep a centre of gravity over the front leg as you step, instead of split between the legs. Short strides also help keep your centre of gravity, which help avoid falls. Don't keep your hands in your pockets! Walk slowly, with short strides and try to land your steps with a flat foot.

### KEEP WALKWAYS CLEAR

Shovel snow and scrape ice as soon as possible. Liberally sprinkle ice melt product or sand onto walkways to provide foot traction and to make sure surfaces don't turn to ice. This is not only protects you and your family, but also postal carries and others when they're walking around your property. Where possible install or use handrails for extra support.

### TAKE ALL PRECAUTIONS

Be extra cautious walking after a storm. Tap your foot on partially icy areas to see if it is slippery. Hold a railing while walking on icy steps. Stay steady by wearing proper winter footwear. lightweight boots with a thick, non-slip tread sole will provide good traction on ice. If a sidewalk is icy down the missile, walk on the snow beside it to avoid slips.

### Lambton Chiropractic Centre

431 King Street, Petrolia | 519-882-1880

Dr. Derek Martyniuk

Dr. Kevin Storozuk

[www.lambtonchiropractic.ca](http://www.lambtonchiropractic.ca)



# Editorial

## Petrolia crosswalks need second look

It is time for the Town of Petrolia to take a second look at the pedestrian crosswalks on Petrolia Line.

In 2018, the town paid a consultant to give advice on pedestrian crossings in the downtown. Greenlight Consulting was paid around \$3,400 to give recommendations on making sure people could cross the busy roadway safely. It looked at the six places people cross - Princess and Kerby, Queen St., King Street, Wingfield, Greenfield and Oil/Tank Street. Just one of those crossing has flashing lights and signage; Greenfield Street. All the others have painted hash marks on the roadway but no signs or lights.

The consultant recommended pedestrian crossover controls - flashing lights - at Greenfield as well as Queen and Princess Streets, where students are now guided across the road by a crossing guard. It also recommended those painted crosswalks be removed so pedestrians would be directed to crossing areas where lights would alert drivers.

Council didn't act on those recommendations and in the last two years, all those painted crosswalks have been repainted. Only one sign has been placed at the hill on Petrolia Line entering the downtown warning drivers to be careful for people crossing the street.

As we have seen time and time again, including Dec. 22, this isn't adequate.

A woman in a wheelchair was hit by a car while crossing the road at the painted crossing in the dark. It's tragic but not surprising. Several people have been hit at that crossing and there have been countless near misses as pedestrians step out from behind cars to hoping to catch the eye of the drivers so they won't be run down.

It's not enough to hope there will not be an accident at these ill-equipped crossings. Councillors should re-examine the report and figure out some way to provide signals for safer passage.

If we are truly serious about becoming a more active community and providing trails for people to walk as the was suggested Community Wellbeing Master Plan and the Recreation Master Plan, we need to make the downtown safer for pedestrians.

## Letters to the Editor

*The Independent* welcomes Letters to the Editor. Our preferred methods to receive letters are via email to [news@petrolialambtonindependent.ca](mailto:news@petrolialambtonindependent.ca) (please use Letter in the subject line) or through our website [www.petrolialambtonindependent.ca](http://www.petrolialambtonindependent.ca). You can also deliver letters to *The Independent* at 4156 Petrolia Line, Petrolia or drop them in the mail at *The Independent*, Petrolia, ON, N0N 1R0. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit letters for brevity and clarity. All letters need to be signed and must have a phone number for verification.

## Our Story



LAMBTON COUNTY ARCHIVE PHOTO

This is Oil City's SS #7, later known as SS #17. It came into existence in 1878 although some sources note it was possibly 1882. The earliest structure of the school is unknown however this two-story wood structure once located on McMillan Street served the community from 1882 until 1968.

[www.petrolialambtonindependent.ca](http://www.petrolialambtonindependent.ca)

# The Independent

*Serving Petrolia and Central Lambton*

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

**Subscription Rates:** \$55.00/year within 50 kms of Petrolia Post Office  
\$65.00/year outside of 50 km radius \$75.00/year other provinces  
(HST included on all prices) *Subscriptions are non-refundable*

 News Media Canada  
Médias d'Info Canada

*The contents of this newspaper are protected by copyright. No material from this edition may be reproduced without expressed written consent of The Independent of Petrolia & Central Lambton* 

Publisher / Editor: **Heather Wright**  
[news@petrolialambtonindependent.ca](mailto:news@petrolialambtonindependent.ca)

L.J.I. Reporter: **Blake Ellis**

Sales Associate: [sales@petrolialambtonindependent.ca](mailto:sales@petrolialambtonindependent.ca)

Classifieds / Graphics: **Connie McFadden**  
[office@petrolialambtonindependent.ca](mailto:office@petrolialambtonindependent.ca)

Publications Mail Registration No. 42663514

Proud host of the Local Journalism Initiative

Funded by the Government of Canada  
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada





## PEDESTRIAN INJURED IN PETROLIA



DAWSON CURRIE PHOTO

One woman was injured after a pedestrian in a wheelchair was hit by a vehicle on King Street and Petrolia Line Dec. 22. Lambton OPP say the driver of the vehicle has been charged with failing to yield for a pedestrian. There are pavement markings at the intersection to indicate a crossing area, however a 2018 study by Greenlight consulting said the crossing warranted both amber lights and signage. The consultant suggested there should not be an enhanced crossing since it would interfere with the crossing at Albany and Petrolia Line.

## Bailey reflects on growth in Lambton in 2022

**Blake Ellis**  
Local Journalism Initiative

The announcement of a \$245 million Diageo whiskey distillery in St. Clair Township, a \$12 million investment for a withdrawal management facility in Sarnia, a commitment to twin 7.5 kilometres of Highway 40 from Indian Road to Wellington Street were just some of the successes Sarnia-Lambton MPP Bob Bailey is touted in 2022.

Bailey took the time to reflect on the past year and looked to the challenges 2023 might present.

All three project announcements were made before the provincial election in June. Bailey said the withdrawal management project is still in the planning and engineering stage. When the project was announced, it was estimated it would take two years before shovels were in the ground. The announcement came after local politicians advocated for a withdrawal management centre for over a decade and put up money from the County of Lambton for the building.

It's not clear when it will open. The twinning of Highway 40 between Modeland Road and Wellington Street - which has been a local priority for 37 years - is still a number of at least two years before the province starts looking for a contractor. That's how long it will take to complete a preliminary design and class environmental assessment

study, which was started by the province at a cost of \$2.65 million. Ministry of Transportation completed a preliminary design study in 2004 and pegged the cost then at \$80 million.

And Diageo is still in the planning stages of the Crown Royal distillery which is not expected to be fully operational until 2025.

The construction of the distillery, which will bring jobs to the area, will likely put a further squeeze on the housing market. Bailey says the government wants to see more than 100,000 homes built annually across the province over the next 10 years. This is why Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, was passed, which is hoped will speed up the process of building homes at the development stages.

Bailey said this is why the Strong Mayors Act was also passed, giving more powers to the mayor in Ontario's two largest cities, Toronto and Ottawa. In the case where the council is slowing a process for political reasons, there is a mechanism for the mayor to override the process. Bailey said Toronto Mayor John Tory welcomed the changes while Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe said he won't use his new powers. "The Ottawa mayor might find out he might need it," said Bailey.

The bill was widely criticized by municipal leaders, with former Lambton Warden Bill Weber noting it was "the end of democracy" when a

mayor could overrule the will of the majority.

Politicians were also concerned giving the powers to large city mayors was only the beginning. Bailey says if cities like London or Windsor can show they need it, the provincial government could look at it.

While the Ford government makes some big changes at the municipal level, small municipalities in Lambton voice concern about the possibility merging more local governments. Bailey hasn't heard any of this talk, saying he would not like to see any forced amalgamations, but if a municipality feels it would be beneficial, it is up to them.

The province's health care system has also been under scrutiny this fall. Dozens of hospitals have closed emergency rooms because of lack of staff.

Larger hospitals cancelled some elective surgery in the late fall because the hospitals were full of children with COVID-19, RSV and the flu. The problems were compounded by the lack of medications on pharmacy shelves for children.

Bailey said a lot of the problem is Canada is relying on foreign markets to produce many of these medications. He would like to see more being produced in Canada, or even in North America.

## \$2 billion NOVA project done

The Independent

NOVA Chemical says the construction of two major projects in St Clair Township is complete.

The company says the new facility on Rokeby Line and the Corunna Cracker Expansion Projects have been completed, however it will be a few months before the Rokeby site is operational. It's expected to produce about one billion pounds of polyethylene each year.

The Cracker expansion will provide the feedstock for the new facility.

The project was announced in 2017 and over 7,000 workers built the two units through the pandemic. Once the projects are fully commissioned - likely in the spring - an estimated 150 full time jobs will be added between direct hires to NOVA and to local contractors who serve the facilities.

The project cost NOVA upwards of \$2 billion.



Construction at NOVA's Rokeby site is finished.

- **Emery Huszka**  
Dealer - Florence ON,  
226-373-6244
- **Julie Maw**  
Dealer - Courtright ON,  
519-384-2281
- **Dave Foulon**  
Dealer - Tupperville ON,  
519-683-2136
- **Dave Emery**, Territory Manager  
South Lambton ON,  
519-360-6072
- **Kirk Van Will**, Territory Manager  
North Lambton ON,  
519-899-3255

**www.maizex.com**

4488 Mint Line,  
RR#2 Tilbury, Ontario  
N0P 2L0

### The Town Of PLYMPTON-WYOMING

#### Public Notice

Please be advised that the Town of Plympton-Wyoming

**2023 Draft Budget**

**and the Water/Sewer Rates By-law**

will be considered for adoption at the

**Special Budget Council Meeting to be held**

**Tuesday, January 17th 2022 at 5 p.m.**

If needed, a second date for further consideration will be

on Thursday, January 19th 2022 at 5 p.m.

Please monitor the Town's website for updates.

Members of the public are welcome to attend in

Council Chambers or watch a live stream of the meeting

via the Town's YouTube page using the following link:

**www.youtube.com/@townofplymptonwyoming**

*(Please note the meeting will be broadcast in real-time*  
*and will not be recorded.)*

Copies of the draft Budget and By-law will be made

available upon request.

For any questions or additional information,

please contact:

Erin Kwarciak, Clerk

Town of Plympton-Wyoming

(519) 845-3939 • ekwarciak@plympton-wyoming.ca

**There's a home for**

**healthy, attractive smiles**

**in your neighbourhood**

**Looking for a dentist close to home?**

Petrolia Dentistry offers dentistry for the whole family, from cleanings and exams to natural looking fillings, crowns, bridges & more.

With convenient hours and a clean modern office, you'll feel completely comfortable.

**Dr. Mike Hoben**

**Dr. Rudha Al-Rohani**

**Dr. Rebecca Phillips**

**519-882-0520**

430 Albany Street • petroliadentistry.com





Above, Deacon Rudy Terpstra was part of the crowd at a vigil for Ukraine after Russia invaded the country Feb. 24. Top center, Protestors who had blocked Highway 402 since Feb 9 left the highway six days later. Below, LCCVI's Tyler McGrail leaped into the provincial track and field championship with first place in the Jr Triple Jump May 28. Centre, Petrolia/North Enniskillen firefighters work to help a driver out of a vehicle on Petrolia Line in April. Dave Osborne holds on tight in Petrolia's July 1st Bed Races. Left, Meghan Hunter is honoured with a spot on Petrolia's Wall of Fame at the Greenwood Rec Centre where she grew up. She wore a sweater knit by Mary Freer for her when she was 11. Bottom left, Lambton's Rod Weese and Tyler Foster were crowd favourites at the Alvinston Pro Rodeo in June. And in Watford, Santa was sporting a firefighter hat for the annual parade in December.



# 2022: A look back at some of the moments in photos

2022: the pandemic rolled on and the trucks rolled out, events returned drawing big crowds and people where honoured both at home and across the globe - here are just a handful of some of our best photos of the year







# Hometown Silver Stick Champions

HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTOS

The East Lambton U11 Eagles are Silver Stick Regional champions. The team beat Ilderton Dec. 29 6-0 to claim the C Division championship at the Alvinston tournament. The Eagles lost their first game of the tournament 4-2 to Lambton Shores but came back with a vengeance beating Mooretown 20-0 en route to the quarter finals against Mt Brydges where they won 11-3. The Eagles defeated the Dresden Jr. Kings 5-1 in the semi finals Thursday afternoon before claiming the title later in the evening. Meantime, in the U11 B division; below right Colin Campbell scored with 21 seconds left in the third to give Petrolia a chance to win at Alvinston Silver Stick. But, Strathroy triumphed scoring the game winner with a little more than two minutes left in OT to lead the Jets to a 2-1 victory.





# Sports

## Flyers on the road to start 2023

Barry Wright  
The Independent

The Petrolia Flyers raise the curtain on the 2023 portion of their PJHL schedule with a pair of road games this weekend. They take on the red-hot Bulldogs in Mt. Brydges on Friday before skating up against the Irish in Lucan on Saturday. Mt. Brydges has registered a point in 15 straight games. The Flyers are in seventh place in the Yeck Division with a record of 5-18-3. They have lost four straight games. Petrolia's first home game of the new year is next Thursday (Jan. 12) against Port Stanley at 7:30. Daniel Gibson leads the Flyers in scoring

to this point in the season with seven goals and 18 points. Colby Ackworth and Evan Morningstar are next with 14 and 12 points respectively. Elijah Grant has played the third highest amount of PJHL goaltending minutes throughout the province this season and is second in saves with 672. Meantime, veteran rearguard Keegan Watson has announced his retirement from the Flyers to concentrate on his schooling and a new job. The Petrolia overager played 113 regular season and playoff games over three seasons for the Flyers registering five goals and 23 points, including eight points in 14 playoff games last season.

## Squires start new year on three game win streak

The Independent

The Petrolia Squires take a three game win streak into the first game of 2023. Petrolia entertains first-place Seaforth Friday at Greenwood at 8:30. Seaforth is 13-1-2 on the Western Ontario Athletic Association campaign while the Squires are 9-6. Both teams have won three straight contests with Petrolia outscoring its opposition 16-5 in the trio of wins just

before Christmas. It's the third meeting of the season between them. Petrolia won on the road in overtime in early November while Seaforth returned the favour with a 3-1 win at P-town less than a week later. Kraig Wright and Jesse Ferguson are tied for the team scoring lead for the Squires with 15 points, two points better than Corey Pawley.

## Round three of the battle of the Birds and Bees

The Independent

The league-leading Tilbury Bluebirds entertain the Alvinston Killer Bees this Saturday in the Chatham-Kent community in the third of four games between the Birds and the Bees over the past few weeks. Tilbury beat the Bees, 7-3 at home Dec. 10 before beating the home team, 10-1 Dec. 30 on Minor Hockey Night at the Brooke Alvinston Inwood Community Complex. The Bees are in Stratford a week from Saturday and skate against the Bluebirds in Tilbury again a week from Sunday before returning home to face the Plattsville Lakes on Jan. 21. The Bees are 4-11-1 for nine

points, a point back of the Lakers in the standings. Petrolia's Carson Perry leads Alvinston in scoring through the first 16 games of the season with six goals and 20 points. He is 12th in league scoring. Dawson Winchester and Bayly Fryfogle are second and third in team scoring with 12 and 10 points.



## Flags get extended holiday break; play 'Burg Jan.11

The Mooretown Flags have an extra week off to prepare for the stretch run in the PJHL's Stobbs Division. The Flags open the post-holiday portion of their schedule Jan. 11 at Wallaceburg. Mooretown hosts Dresden on Saturday, Jan. 14 at 7:30. The Flags are fifth in the division with a record of 12-11-1 after winning just twice in seven games in December.

Mooretown has eight players with a least 10 points through the first 24 games of the season led by Brody Genyn with 20 goals and 36 points. Blake Howard and team captain Logan Gardner are next with 31 and 26 points. John Chartrand has done the lion's share of the goaltending for the Flags with nine victories, including a shutout.

## HEADED FOR THE NET



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

The East Lambton U18s were swimming up stream at the Petrolia Regional Silver Stick. The Eagles made it to the semi-finals of the C Division after beating Dresden 6-3, Ilderton 3-0 and then thumping Dresden in the quarter final 9-0. But Hagersville topped East Lambton 2-1 and moved onto the finals.

## Syer seals the deal with Saint Xavier

LCCVI grad Trevor Syer has committed to play baseball for Saint Xavier University in Chicago. Syer who is entering his sixth and final season as a member of the Great Lake Canadians baseball program, recently signed his letter of intent to attend SXU beginning in September 2023. He will compete for a spot on the SXU Cougars pitching staff as a freshman. Syer began his baseball career with the Wyoming Wranglers, moving to Sarnia to play for the Sarnia Braves and eventually signed with the Great Lake Canadians during his 14U season. "This is a pretty exciting opportunity for me with SXU," says Syer. "I was pretty set on attending the school after my visit to their campus during the summer. It felt like a really good fit after my meeting with the coaching staff." Head SXU baseball coach Addison Rouse added, "We are extremely excited about the addition of Trevor to our program. He's another great addition in a long line of Canadians we have recruited

to Chicago." "My assistant, Peter Romsek identified Trevor early in the summer at a tournament in Westfield, Indiana. His summer team returned later in July and we got to see him toe the rubber once again in a dominate, emotional effort against a team from Wisconsin. We were sold as we believe Trevor's ability and spirit fit the mold of Cougs baseball. ." Chris Robinson, Director of Baseball Operations for the Great Lake Canadians, says Syer is "one of the fiercest competitors that we have ever had and his desire to put winning above everything will make him a valuable asset to any team."



Trevor Syer



# Check your expiry date

don't miss an issue... RENEW today!

▼issue date▼

PTRPINDY' 2023-01-05 (892)

subscriber, name (LAST ISSUE)

4156 Petrolia Line

Petrolia, ON N0N 1R0

▲expiry date▲

# The Independent

Serving Petrolia and Central Lambton

\$55

within 50 kms of Petrolia

TAXES INCLUDED IN PRICE

\$65

outside the 50 km radius

\$75

Other Provinces

Name on Subscription:

Mailing Address:

In Town: P.O. Box # OR Rural: 911 - Civic Address

In Town: Street Address OR Rural: RR#

TOWN Postal Code

[ ] Renewal

Please - make  
cheques payable to:  
The Independent.

4156 Petrolia Line  
Petrolia, ON N0N 1R0

Vol. 10, Issue 19

Newsstand Price \$1.50 per week

Thursday, January 5, 2023



Classified Deadline:  
Monday @ 12 noon

Classifieds



Word Classifieds: \$10 plus tax for up to 40 words  
Stop in at the office 9a-3p Mon, Tues, Fri or 9a-12p Wed  
4156 Petrolia Line – Call 226-738-0728  
or email: office@petrolialambtonindependent.ca

Help Wanted

Secretary Needed

The Petrolia & Enniskillen  
Agricultural Society  
is looking for a new secretary.

Key Responsibilities:

- Attend and take minutes at monthly meetings
- Data Input • Attend and do office work for fair weekend
- Mostly remote work

To apply or for more info email:  
kellyhumphrey1966@gmail.com



Rentals

Wyoming Lions  
554 Main Street  
Reception Hall Rentals  
Weddings  
Anniversaries  
Funerals  
Business Meetings



Up to 150 seating capacity  
Fully licensed by AGCO  
Bookings and information  
call: (519) 466 7806 or 845 3333



Card of Thanks

“Thank You”  
for your continued  
support of our  
Lambton Central  
Optimist Angel  
Tree.

Donations this year  
went to Petrolia  
Food Bank and the  
Community Life  
Centre.

Also a big Thanks,  
to Broker Link  
Insurance in  
Petrolia for taking  
care of our tree.



Antiques, Art & Collectibles

BUYING ANTIQUES,  
VINTAGE ITEMS,  
ESTATES

Buying anything old:  
Signs, pottery, toys, comics,  
knives, Coleman lanterns,  
lighters, advertising, razors  
and much more!  
Single items, contents of attics,  
garages, barns & entire estates.  
Call Chad 519-639-9102  
chadnlyndsay@yahoo.ca.

Coming Events

I.O.O.F. EUCHRE

- Card parties  
starting **Wednesday, January 4  
2023** at the Oakdale Hall begin-  
ning at 7:30 pm. All Welcome.

Notices

CHRISTMAS DRAW WINNER

- Penny Keating of Petrolia was  
the Winner of \$1,000. when her  
ticket #48 was drawn during  
Meadowview Villa Auxiliary's an-  
nual Christmas Draw in December  
2022. Congratulations.

ADVERTISING POLICY

- The  
publisher of this newspaper, *The  
Independent of Petrolia and Cen-  
tral Lambton*, reserves the right  
to clarify or refuse any advertise-  
ment based on its sole discretion.  
The publisher reserves the right  
to reject, discontinue or omit any  
advertisement without notice or  
penalty to either party. Liability  
for errors or non-insertion is lim-  
ited to the amount paid for the  
cost of space occupied by the er-  
ror. Claims of errors must be made  
prior to the next publication date.



Lyn & Dave Rose  
of Wyoming, Ontario  
are thrilled to announce the  
safe arrival of their  
Granddaughter  
**LUCIE MJ  
ROSE-LITSTER**  
in Glasgow, Scotland  
on December 19, 2022.

Proud Parents are Kelly Rose  
& Danielle Litster.  
Welcomed by her  
Scottish Grandparents:  
Marion Litster, William McLean  
and Wee Great Gran  
Marion Litster.  
Canadian Great Grandmother is  
Iris Murtha



LOCAL MATTERS.





Remember that time when **Amazon** sponsored your church fundraiser?



Remember when **Facebook** bought a case of Girl Guide cookies to support your daughter?



Remember when **Google** provided free pizza to your child's soccer team when they won the championship?



Neither do we!

Local businesses live here. They play here. They invest here.  
They need our support, now more than ever.



SHOP LOCAL.  
SAVE LOCAL



Support the local businesses that support your local newspaper.

ADVERTISE  
LOCAL

Canada



Classified Deadline:  
Monday @ 12 noon



# Classifieds

**Word Classifieds: \$10 plus tax for up to 40 words**  
Stop in at the office 9a-3p Mon, Tues, Fri or 9a-12p Wed  
4156 Petrolia Line – Call 226-738-0728  
or email: [office@petrolialambtonindependent.ca](mailto:office@petrolialambtonindependent.ca)

In Memory

In loving memory of a dear husband, father, grandfather and friend.

**Antonio Libreiro**  
May 28, 1942 - January 6, 1992

To live in hearts we leave behind,  
is not to die.

Sadly missed and lovingly remembered by Bea  
Joe, Bernadine, Tony, Emma & Jesse  
Mike, Maria & Alyssa

In loving memory of a dear husband, dad, grandfather & brother-in-law

**ROBERT "BOB" D. ELLIOTT**

November 11, 1935 - January 6, 2020

Those whom we love go out of sight,  
but never out of mind.

They are cherished in the hearts of those  
they left behind.

Margaret Elliott,  
Greg & Colleen Elliott and Family,  
Janice & Chris Francis and Family,  
Dorothy Vogt

Obituaries / Death Notices

**McLEOD**  
Kenneth John

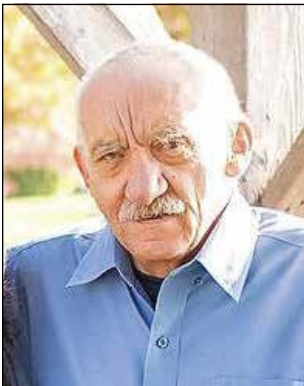
**Kenneth John McLeod – Age 68 of Oil Springs, passed away on Thursday, December 22, 2022** at Bluewater Health, Sarnia. Beloved husband of Laura McLeod (nee Young). Loving father of Christine (James) White and Katie (Glenn) Karnas. Cherished grandfather of Brantley, Stephanie, Colton, Michael and Brooks. Dear brother of Penny Whyard, Judy (Vic) Brown, Pat (Michelle) McLeod, Linda McLeod (Bob), Tom (Pearl) McLeod, Kathy (John) VanBommel. Loving son of Justa Gilliland (nee Bardawill) and the late Neil Alexander McLeod. Predeceased by his step-father Frank Gilliland. Survived by many brother and sister-in-laws, nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. Ken worked for too many years on the road with CN Rail. Ken was a proud member of the Oil Springs Optimist Club and you could hear him at the local Optimist Club meat bingo's calling the numbers; Or you might find him on the golf course with his brothers-in-law and golf buddies!

With his girls, he used to enjoy camping at Rondeau. The rest of the year they would play cards on Saturday or Sunday evenings and listen to Ken's extensive Columbia House music collection. And we can't forget the cats that he "didn't" like. His grandchildren were one of his greatest joys in his recent years, lovingly known as "grumpy grandpa"! But his girls will always remember "Daddy's hands". Special thanks to the Bluewater Health Doctors and nursing staff as well as Lambton EMS.


**Family and friends were received at STEADMAN BROTHERS FUNERAL CHAPELS on Wednesday, December 28, 2022 from 11am to 1pm followed by a graveside funeral service held at Oil Springs Cemetery.**

Sympathy may be expressed through donations to Alzheimer Society ([www.alzheimer.ca](http://www.alzheimer.ca)) or Canadian Lung Association ([www.lung.ca](http://www.lung.ca)).

Memories and condolences may be shared online at [www.steadmanbrothers.ca](http://www.steadmanbrothers.ca). **Steadman Brothers 519-864-1193.**



In Memorium



In loving memory of **JOAN VANITA RUNDLE**

Wife, Mother, Grandmother and Great Grandmother who passed away 1 year ago (January 9, 2022).

We miss your laughter and smile, but most of all, we miss YOU.

Greatly loved, deeply missed  
*Ross and families*


The moment that you died our heart was torn in two, one side filled with heartache, the other died with you. We often lie awake at night, when the world is fast asleep, and take a walk down memory lane, with tears upon our cheeks. Remembering you is easy, we do it everyday, but missing you is a heartache that never goes away. We hold you tightly within our heart and there you will remain. Until the joyous day arrives, that we will meet again.


**SCOTT**  
Joanne

After a short struggle with COPD, on **Tuesday, December 27, 2022** at Bluewater Health, Sarnia, **Joanne Scott (nee Paterson)** passed away peacefully with her family by her side at the age of **83**. She will be missed by children Mathew (Karen) Scott, Robert Jr. (Tammy) Scott, and Tim (Susan Corchis) Scott. She was the proud grandma to Anne-Marie, Jeremiah, Joshua, Robert III, Tara, Eligh, Ryland, and Owen, and many great grandchildren and their families.

She is survived by her sisters, Pat (Albert) McKeegan and Karen (the late Don) Grieve and brother-in-law, Jim Scott. Joanne loved her family most dearly and she and Bob were deeply devoted to each other – now reunited. Joanne is predeceased by her younger sister, Judy Scott and her parents, John and Dorothy Paterson.

**Cremation has taken place.** As an expression of sympathy, memorial donations may be made to London Health Science Foundation Cancer Program (<https://lhf.ca/>). Memories and condolences may be shared online at [www.NeedhamJay.com](http://www.NeedhamJay.com)






# Church DIRECTORY

**Christ Anglican Church**  
414 Oil Street, Petrolia

Join us for  
**In-Person Services**  
**Sundays @ 10:00am**

Everyone Welcome


Rev. Dave Hewett  
Church Office 519-882-1430  
[christchurchpetrolia@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://www.stpaulsunitedpetrolia.net)



**First Baptist Church**  
418 Greenfield Street, Petrolia

**IN PERSON CHURCH SERVICE**  
**Sunday Mornings @ 10:30 am**

Pastor: Alex Craig  
Church Office 519-882-2480  
email: [fbcpetrolia@gmail.com](mailto:fbcpetrolia@gmail.com)  
[www.firstbaptistpetrolia.ca](http://www.firstbaptistpetrolia.ca)




Find us on Facebook!  
[www.facebook.com/First-Baptist-Church-Petrolia](http://www.facebook.com/First-Baptist-Church-Petrolia)

**Wyoming United Church**  
730 Second Street, Wyoming

**In-Person Services taking place**  
**Sundays @ 9:30 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](http://www.standrews-petrolia.ca)



Pastor Katherine Hawley



# Sports

## Duncan eyes chance at OHL

Heather Wright  
The Independent

It wasn't that long ago that Hayden Duncan was standing on the blue line of the Alvinston arena waiting for the Regional Silver Stick Tournament to begin.

Now, the 16 year-old is standing with the dignitaries and dropping the puck wearing an Ottawa 67s Jersey.

The Alvinston teen is not just turning heads and drawing words of encouragement at his home rink - he's on a hot streak and getting the attention of OHL scouts.

Duncan was recently drafted by the Ottawa OHL club and his recent stint with the Strathroy Rockets Junior C club brought the scouts to the area to take a look.

And he put on quite a show. Duncan is currently on a 20 game win streak between his time with the Rockets and with his home club - the Elgin-

Middlesex Canucks. "I guess my team's been playing really well. And it's really been gelling and coming together. Well, it's been great," he told The Independent after dropping the puck at the opening ceremonies for the U11 tournament.

He got the call to head to Strathroy when the Rocket's goalie was called up to the Sarnia Sting to be a backup while Ben Goodreau played at the World Juniors.

And while he racked up three wins and a .963 save percentage, the scouts were watching. "The 67s will send scouts to my games to watch me, so when I was with the Rockets, they had a few scouts come out and watch...It's nice to know that people are watching and it kind of gives you that edge to do better to prove what you can do."

With the prospect of playing in the OHL not far from reach, Duncan admits it really wasn't that long ago that he played in



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Alvinston's Hayden Duncan dropped the puck at the regional U11 Silver Stick tournament over Christmas.

the U11 tournament.

"We made it to the finals, but lost to Belmont. And we still got invited international silver sick. But we didn't do too great that year."

But his return to the Alvinston arena was much better. "I played in this tournament before and come back and drop the puck - it's great."

## Sarnia Legionnaires hope for better 2023

The Sarnia Legionnaires will be out to snap a 14 game winless streak when they host the St. Thomas Stars in GOJHL action Thursday at the Pat Stapleton Arena.

The Stars have won the three previous games between the teams this season. St. Thomas is five points better than Sarnia for seventh place in the Western Conference.

Plympton-Wyoming's Ryan

Richardson leads Sarnia in scoring through the pre-holiday portion of the schedule with 12 goals and 32 points. Jaxon Priddle is second with 29 points, followed by Colton Graham at 22. Meantime, Sarnia acquired forward Owen Hey from the Komoka Kings this week in exchange for Joaquin Gonzalez. Hey had two assists in 29 games for the Kings this season and

Gonzalez had four goals and 11 points in 30 games for the Legionnaires. Both played for the Elgin Middlesex U18 squad last season.

Also this week, Strathroy is at LaSalle Wednesday before hosting Leamington Saturday. The Rockets roster includes Petrolia's Andrew Jaques, Oil Springs' William Hull and Alvinston's Hayden Duncan.

## Attack, Lady Sting featured at Silver Stick

Some of the best girls' hockey players in their age groups will converge on Sarnia this weekend for the annual Girls' Silver Stick Finals.

The Lambton Attack, Sarnia Lady Sting, Mooretown Lady Flags, and Bluewater Hawks will all be represented throughout the

weekend. Games begin Friday and run through Sunday at the Progressive Auto Sales, Pat Stapleton, Clearwater and Point Edward arenas.

Meantime, the Lambton Jr. Sting and Sarnia Sting will ice teams at the Port Huron boys' finals this weekend, the host Lambton Shores Predators will



take part in the Forest Finals. The U21 Finals begin Thursday in Mooretown.

## SNOWSTORM IN LAMBTON



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTOS

Dreams of a white Christmas were more than fulfilled in Lambton as a blizzard hit the area. OPP warned drivers to stay off the roads as about 15 cm of snow fell and 70 km/h winds whipped drifts across the roads. Highway 402 was closed after a 50-plus vehicle pileup near Kerwood (centre) and drivers carefully manoeuvred local roads in the daylight. The wintery scenes were short lived as warm weather and rain moved in. The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority was warning of the possibility of flooding until Friday.

7910 Industrial Rd., Watford  
www.groganclassics.com  
larry@groganclassics.com  
519-849-7000

ONE-OF-A-KIND, MILLENNIUM HERITAGE DEALERSHIP

Box 220, 5437 Nauvoo Rd., Watford, ON N0M 2S0  
Fax: 519-849-7700 • email: sales@groganford.com

**Grogan Ford Lincoln**

service **519-849-7777**  
1-855-849-1222

sales **519-849-7000**  
1-855-849-1199