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Petrolia plans for growth EYE ON THE BALL

Heather Wright The Independent

A new planning document says Petrolia should allow granny suites and set a target for new affordable homes in the community.

Those are just two of a raft of suggestions from NPG - a consulting group reviewing the town's official plan. That plan lays out rules for homes, businesses and industries in the community.

NPG officials told Petrolia councillors Monday over the next 25 years, the town could see the population grow as much as 1,350 people from its current population of 6,013 to 7,372 people.

That will require a lot more housing.

The plan says the Petrolia needs a "mix of housing options" and should try to encourage homes to be built in vacant lots in established neighbourhoods - a process called infill-

The report says Petrolia has mostly single family homes, and that could change. "Residential intensification could occur via redevelopment, the addition of units in existing dwellings or accessory buildings, infilling or repurposing of non-residential buildings.

That would mean could mean the addition of granny suites in some areas. It could also mean more apartments in single family homes - something the province has been encouraging in the Build Homes Faster Act.



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO

Tessa Jackson was in a battle for the ball during the LCCVI Sr. Girls game against Great Lakes Monday in Sarnia. The Lancers and Wolfpack tied at one.

No dedicated fire boat for Stag

Heather Wright

The Independent

St. Clair Township firefighters will rely on commercial ferries to get to Fawn and Stag Island if there is a fire.

That may leave people on Stag Island in the lurch in the short

After a New Years Day fire in 2022, Fire Chief Richard Boyes started looking at the response to the two St. Clair River islands where there are about 180 cottages. Boyes found the department could

not use a private boat to get the firefighters across the St. Clair as it had at New Years. Transport Canada rules say only a commercial vessel can be used for rescue operations.

In June 2022, Boyes said the most effective way to cross the St. Clair in case of emergency would be to purchase a couple of boats exclusively for the department's use. The department suggested that would cost about \$300,000 per boat and the department would have to find a place to dock.

SÉE ISLAND PG 3

Natural gas inching toward Warwick, one pipeline at a time

Heather Wright The Independent

The Village of Warwick is inching closer to getting natural gas, one pipeline project at a time.

That's according to Brian Lennie, Senior Advisor, Municipal and Stakeholder Engagement from Enbridge, who told Warwick

Township councillors a relatively new program is enabling the company to complete smaller natural gas pipelines around the

Normally, if you want natural gas at your home, farm or business, Enbridge assesses how much it will cost and demands an upfront payment. That fee can be tens of

thousands of dollars.

The provincial and municipal government have recognized that in some areas, Enbridge isn't likely to work on projects because they're not profitable. Warwick has been trying for years to get natural gas to the village and in 2019, many thought it was imminent when

then Minister of Infrastructure, Lambton-Kent-Middlesex MPP Monte McNaughton, hosted a news conference at a farm on the outskirts of Warwick Village announcing a provincial plan to help expand natural gas pipelines to rural areas by supporting project which wouldn't be economically

But the Warwick Village project didn't get funding in the first phase.

It was also left out when the province handed out the next round of projects. In all, about \$373 million of provincial cash has been spent supporting projects in rural and remote areas.

SEE NATURAL GAS PG 2



Petrolia planners consider housing options

CON'T FROM PG 1

NPG's report says that will likely make a "gradual incremental contribution" to Petrolia's housing stock, should council approve the plan.

"Residential growth in Petrolia for the foreseeable future is likely to result from development of lands designated for residential use around the edges of the built-up

While there is much about housing in the planning report, it seems some residents aren't as concerned about affordable housing as they are about good recreational facilities. An online survey done in preparation for the official plan update shows 75 per cent of the people who answered a survey felt recreation opportunities at facilities and parks are important to them. Another 68 per cent said having a walkable community is important.

Just 38 per cent of the 160 people who answered the survey said their biggest concern was a good mix of housing, including affordable housing.

And when the survey asked how if they felt Petrolia needs to grow to accommodate more housing and jobs, nearly a quarter disagreed while another 30 per cent didn't have an opinion about the idea.

The planning group's report studies more than just homes, giving ideas on how to deal with commercial activity as well.

NPG's report suggests Petrolia should have policies limiting green energy projects to "only small-scale wind or solar projects" although solar panels should be encouraged on industrial buildings.

NPG wants the town put guidelines in place in the official plan on how to deal with cannabis operations including where they should be in Petrolia and how to limit any impacts like light and odour. The consultants did say, outdoor cultivation and processing should not be permitted in Petrolia.

The proposed planning document also would put a limit on short term rentals - commonly called airBnBs. NPG says property owners should live on site, rent out only three bedrooms and half enough parking.

Acting Mayor Joel Field, who got his first look at some of the changes being proposed to the official plan Monday with the rest of council, says it is clear there is a need for more than just single family homes in town.

The planners, he says "are trying to give every opportunity to have more people in homes...we just have to be cautious of how. Putting a granny suite in some backyards... it might fit, but I still think there needs to be regulations and controls on it. There can't be just random buildings."

And Field has heard from residents about the need for more rental properties as well.

"I think we have to encourage a lot of different things. I've had people recently talk to me about apartments - we need another apartment. There are people nervous about

It's nice that some of the homes are coming ... are smaller. We need a good combination of all," says Field.

Residents will get their first look at some of the planners ideas at an open house in

A public meeting is also planned in June with council deliberating on the direction of housing after that.

There is some concern however that the province may throw a wrench into the process. In April, the province released proposed new provincial guidelines for planning. They're under review, but Ken Melanson, manager of planning for Lambton County, says it is possible, the new rules would change force Petrolia to make changes.

When that might happen is unclear.

Natural gas pipeline projects built near Warwick

CON'T FROM PG 1

Lennie says the Conservative government has promised a third round of projects soon. They'll focus on builds linked to growing businesses opportunities. There is no timeline for when those grants might be announced.

Lennie says it appears that provincial grant program will likely be limited to larger projects.

So, Enbridge is now working with smaller numbers of homeowners extending gas lines in rural Warwick township.

Recently, the Ontario Energy Board allowed the utility to place a charge on the property owner's bill to pay for the expansion of services. That charge would take the place of an upfront payment. The charge could be stretched out on the bill for as long as 40 years.

"While we wait to see what the government does with phase three were going to go ahead with incremental growth," Lennie told council Monday.

In one project, 10 customers between

on Egremont Road between Quaker Road and Nauvoo Road was completed with the customer surcharge in 2022.

Another north on Nauvoo Road past Egremont Road is in the works now.

Councillor Wayne Morris says residents in the area have heard about the first local expansion project and want to know where they can express an interest in the payas-you-go system. Lennie says customers simply have to go online and google Enbridge's Get Connected program.

There is only one catch to the program, the new customers can only be charged 40 years for the pipeline. If it would take, say, 42 years to pay off, the Ontario Energy Board won't approve it.

Lennie says the only way for the project to then move ahead is for the municipal government to step up and pay the fees for the last two years. Lennie says there hasn't been the need for extra cash Warwick yet and the company is "still pushing forward no matter what...committed to building incrementally."

'Cheesiest ever' Pizzafest planned

Organizers are promising the cheesiest Pizzafest ever for the Petrolia festivals' 10th anniversary.

The event that draws pizza-lovers to Victoria Park will see seven local restaurants offer up slices for \$2.50.

The price has increased this year, organizers say, because of the rising cost of the ingredients.

Aside from the food, there will be bouncy castles and games for kids, a beer garden and four musical acts, Jesse & Brian from Victoria Playhouse, Electric Popsicle – an 80s cover band, The Geoff Masse Band and Painkiller Jane closes out the event which runs from noon to 7 pm.

Organizers are hoping to top the 7,000 slices sold in 2022.





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Federal minister to listen to CN payment woes

Heather Wright
The Independent

Warwick Township's mayor is hoping the federal transportation minister may help solve a financial standoff with CN Rail.

Todd Case and his counterpart in Plympton-Wyoming, Gary Atkinson, have been pushing CN Rail to settle up outstanding charges under the Drainage Act.

The Drainage Act is one of the oldest pieces of legislation in Ontario, passed in 1859. It prescribes a formula to assign costs to those who receive the most benefit from the new

infrastructure.

Until 2021, CN Rail had paid any costs assessed under the act. But in 2022, CN Rail – which is now owned by multiple US investors – refused to pay any charges saying it is a federally regulated business and not subject to the provincial legislation.

That's left both Warwick and Plympton-Wyoming in the hole. Warwick is owed \$160,000 and Plympton-Wyoming has billed CN \$80,000 which is still outstanding.

They're not alone.

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario says the company owes about \$1.5 million for new drain construction

and maintenance across the province. AMO added about \$2.7 million worth of drainage projects are in limbo because of CN's refusal to pay.

Case and Atkinson have met with CN Rail officials, but the company refused to bend even though both the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs and AMO have backed the call for CN to pay up.

Case says he's secured a meeting with the federal Transportation Minister, Omar Alghabra, to talk about the problem. He told Warwick council Monday a date has not been set yet for the meeting.

Mother's Day Menn All breakfast items are available from eam - zpm Fresh fruit cup, 2 poached eggs, peameal ba house made raspberry lemon scone Smothered French Toast othered in lemon cream cheese topp lemon curd, blueberries and whip cream Breakfast Croissant Sandwich egg, bacon, cheddar cheese, tomato, gu and jalapenos on a warm croissant Lobster and Asparagus Crepe topped with a herb hollandaise sauce Mixed Berry Crepe arm crepe filled with mixed berries and top raspberry sauce and whip crear Steak Eggs Benedict er sliced steak, spinach, poached eggs and he toasted English muffin Call for reservatious or take out pre-orders 519.882.0400 4211 Petrolia Line | Petrolia | 519-882-0400

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Oil Springs taxpayers face a five percent tax hike

Blake Ellis
The Independent

The preliminary numbers of the Village of Oil Springs budget show a five percent increase to property taxes.

A \$1,048,000 draft budget was presented to the Oil Springs council at its May 2 meeting.

"I don't think it is that bad," said Mayor Ian Veen. "Wages are up, fuel is up and everything you buy is way up."

But Councillor Larry Wagner is worried about what residents might think about the proposed property tax increase. Usually the council is looking at an increase of two or three percent, Wagner said. People don't realize how much it costs to provide services to residents.

Some of the large expenditures include \$100,000 for policing, and \$98,000 for payments for loans.

One of the projects the municipality wants to undertake is the resurfacing of Oil Springs Line.

The council also wants to replace the ball booth washrooms. It was suggested the an application to a Trillium Grant could be made. The village may also partner with the Oil Spring Optimist Club for the project. The skateboard park also needs some work. This can also be accomplished with a grant or having a sponsor to help fix it.

Council agreed to have Ray Dobbin of R. Dobbin Engineering compile an asset management plan. Veen said it is something the village has to do, as

it is the first thing the province asks to see when a municipality asks for money for a capital project. It has been 10 years since Oil Springs compiled its last asset management plan, with Dobbin also taking on that project. Oil Springs Clerk Martha Gawley said the asset management plan will have to be continually updated moving forward.

The municipality is also having trouble finding pea stone or mulch for its three parks. There was \$3,500 set aside for each park for safer product for the playgrounds.

Council will be meeting further on the budget next month before the final budget is determined and passed.

• THE INDEPENDENT



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

The ferries at Stag Island sit at the dock across from Corunna. So far, the cottage association has not obtained a commercial vessel license for the boats which means St. Clair fire cannot use them for fire response.

Islands ferries need to be licensed

CON'T FROM PG 1

Council said the council elected in October 2022 would have to deal with the issue.

In the meantime, the township and department have encouraged both Fawn and Stag Island Cottage Associations to have the ferries which serve the islands licensed as commercial operators.

Boyes told council May 1 Fawn Island has obtained the license but Stag Island has yet to make a decision whether to license its private ferry. Last year, the fire department had a deal with Point Edward Fire, the OPP and Coast Guard to get a ride if necessary. But that too was a limted response.

"If these agencies are unavailable, the fire department cannot respond to an emergency on Stag Island."

Boyes tells The Independent it is simply not safe to send volunteer firefighters on a boat which isn't a commercial vessel.

So, on May 1, council passed on the idea of a dedicated fire boat instead passing a motion saying Stag Island must obtain a commercial operators watercraft license to allow the department to use the ferry to get to the island for emergencies.

But even with the ferries licensed and able to transport firefighters, the cottages could still be vulnerable, according to Boyes' report. "St. Clair Fire Department can only respond to the island if the approved boat is available. The fire department will not respond to the island if the approved boat is unavailable or out of service for the season. This is usually late fall, winter, and early spring."

Boyes says there are not that many fires on Stag or Fawn Island. Since the New Years' Day fire which prompted the investigation into fire response, there has not been another fire on Stag.

And he says there are points in the year where there is simply no way to access the two islands because of ice in the St. Clair River.

While members of the cottage associations on the two islands were not available for comment, in the past, they'd asked the municipality to purchase boats for the fire department. They had also voiced concern "about not being notified of the change in response protocols," said Boyes in his report.

Inwood ...a caring community

Brooke Telcom Co-operative Inc., formerly a small company, has evolved over the past ten decades to provide reliable telecommunication service to the rural Inwood community. Pictured here, is Geoff Greening, the general manager since 2016 of Brooke Telecom based in Inwood. He describes the business as abuzz with duty. Years back, the Brooke Municipal Telephone Co. was commonly referred to as the "Chapman Phone Company" since 3 generations of Chapmans, spanning over 70 years, served on the board of directors. The home Chapman residence once stood in today's Brooke Telecom parking lot.

Dedication to the community is Brooke Telecom's number one mission. Their services compare competitively to those provided in larger urban centers. Gone, are the days when a lone switchboard operator manually connected person to person calls in a time-consuming process. Here, is the age of cellular telecommunication operated by wireless networks. Popular, are smartphones which provide extensive data service so features such as alarm clocks, calendars, cameras, flashlights and internet can be accessed at the touch of a finger. Through these rapidly changing times of telecommunication, Brooke Telecom has remained committed to providing up to date and quality services to the community.

Geoff is optimistic that population in the Inwood area will grow since fibre-optic



internet, expansion possibilities, library programs, restaurant, grocery and ball park facilities already substantiate the Inwood community. Socially, the community prospers in neighbourliness. Visiting on front porches or while hanging laundry, sharing garden vegetables and volunteering to search for missing pets are commonplace happenings. The spacious ball park plays host to many recreational events including Brooke Telecom's Customer Appreciation Days where the community congregates in the outdoors. Geoff suggests a town wide Facebook page would benefit the well-being of community connection.

Geoff is enthused about sharing memorabilia from the archives of Brooke Telecom that will be displayed at the milestone birthday celebration of Inwood in June. 150 years . . . bringing community together and history to life!

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Editorial

Confusion and delays as regulations change

Most people's eyes glaze over when municipal leaders start using words like Official Plan and Zoning. And really, who can blame them. Planning, as important as it is, can be mind-numbing at times.

That's not the case right now, however as the provincial government keeps changing the rules of the game in the name of to try to encourage housing development.

Planners across the province are still trying to figure out the ramifications of the Build More Homes Faster Act. In it, the province changed five pieces of legislation doing everything from removing the right for people to appeal planning decisions, to making massive changes to the way conservation authorities do business, all with the goal of streamlining the rules to build 1.5 million homes in 10 years.

But it seems the changes aren't speeding home building up.

At a recent planning meeting in Petrolia, the county's manager of planning shared that the planners he knows, particularly in the GTA, say there has been so much change, the planning system has ground to a halt as people try to figure out how the changes affect them.

Particularly concerning in Lambton County is the province's new rules which don't allow the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority to have a say on local planning matters anymore. Municipal planners will have to find consultants to do some of those duties.

That's likely to slow a few projects in Lambton County down as well.

The idea behind the legislation was to make it easier for developers to build homes without excessive regulation - according to the province.

Because the province has changed so much of the system, the actual result is confusion and delay not to mention some of the long term environmental and planning issues some of the changes will cause.

It's made the world of planning an interesting place to work if you can take the stress.

But for those trying to actually build a home, it may make things more difficult than it needs to be.

Our Story



This is the second train station built in Alvinston. Construction started on the St. Clair branch of the Canada Southern Railroad in 1871 which brought train service to Alvinston in 1872 with two trains per week. There was no station house so passengers boarded the train from a short platform at the foot of a steep stairway beside the bridge on River Street. The first station was built in the late 1870s and was initially used as a freight station. In 1879 the ticket office was moved into the freight station and passengers were required to board the train there. A new station house, the one in this photo, was constructed in 1883 when the Canadian Southern Railroad was leased by Michigan Central. In 1892, the Grand Trunk Railway built their line from Glencoe to Kingcourt (a small hamlet in Warwick Township) and took over serving Alvinston.

Letters to the Editor

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You can also deliver letters to *The Independent* at 4156 Petrolia Line, Petrolia or drop them in the mail at *The* Independent, Petrolia, ON, NON 1R0.

The Independent reserves the right to edit letters for brevity

All letters need to be signed and must have a phone number for verification.

Slightly disappointed hockey season ends at our house

Hockey has always been a part of my life - although I never played. My Dad was a huge hockey fan - the Montreal Canadians were his team. Sometimes he'd watch the Habs on French CBC and the Maple Leafs on English CBC, particularly when the playoffs were on.

We'd sit with him on Saturday night, taking in the game snuggled up next to him.

After I left the house, we still

So, I've been able to keep up as the two Sarnia Sting fans in the house talk about the good, the bad and the ugly of the OHL

Their hockey talk seeped into most conversations by the time the Sting made it to the Conference final.

And, I have to admit, I made sure I snuggled into the couch to see exactly what happened, so I would know what the conversation was all about. After months of covering

at home, I was only slightly disappointed when the Sting bowed out Sunday. Even though it was exciting to

hockey here and talking hockey

see the franchise do so well this year, I really have had enough of hockey for a few months.

I know there is still hockey being played somewhere and that Leaf fans are hoping against hope they can win just one more time, but I won't be front of the TV cheering them on. I'll be outside on my bike.

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Heather Wright

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'Where can we find a space for them?' McRoberts

Concerns for chronically homeless

Heather Wright The Independent

Lambton County has an extra \$2 million to help those who are homeless, but even that may not be able to help some chronically homeless people with mental health and addiction issues.

That from Lambton County officials after a passionate plea for action from Sarnia City/County Councillor Chrissy McRoberts.

McRoberts raised questions about people sleeping on the streets of Sarnia. She told county councillors May 3 that business owners were having a hard time getting into their businesses some days after finding

people sleeping in their doors. "We have built this group of individuals that I can only guess are 50 plus, where do they go?" McRoberts asked. "They are protecting themselves in front of doorsteps into businesses, which is aggravating (to) the businesses because their clients don't feel safe. They're losing business.

... We need a space where these individuals can go, because they don't want to stay in - or cannot for mental health issues - stay in somewhere like the Good Shepherd Lodge... Where do we find a space for them? Where they can be looked after, where their social workers can find them, medical help can come in, because these are the folks that don't go to the hospital. But we now have this aggression that is

building and building and what do we do, wait until someone truly gets hurt or do we try to help right now?

"They need somewhere to go where they know when they leave to go to The Inn of the Good Shepard to get their one meal a day, when they come back to their home, their items are there and we can start to give them a little less pressure."

Valerie Colasanti, the general manager of social services for the county, says it is a difficult problem groups across Canada are trying to solve.

Colasanti says the province recently increased homelessness funding in Lambton from \$3.6 million to \$5.6 million. Staff is planning a new dropin centre with some of the cash as early as this spring.

"We are looking at opening more of a drop in that will be low barrier. However, there still may be individuals bringing in weapons in or things like that we're not going to be able to have them in, we will have our own staff there... they just can't tolerate

McRoberts pressed further. "Where can we help these (people) because we're supposed to help the whole community...Everybody wants to complain about them existing. They need somewhere to be, they work with each other, and they just need to be outdoors and have a space."

Colasanti says the county has a homeless outreach team which is building relationships with the 50 people the county knows to be sleeping rough. "It takes time to build those relationships, it takes time to build trust, it takes time to build trust with anyone let alone someone who's had mental health issues or poor experiences with the regular systems of our society. So, we'll continue to do that work.'

She added improving the quality of life of those facing mental health and addictions on the streets is complex and Colasanti says it will only be solved with an increase in social assistance rates so people can afford housing and more affordable housing in the community.

BY THE NUMBERS

\$5,615,600 – the amount of money the province provides for homelessness initiatives

\$2,045,100 – the increase Lambton received in 2023

\$701,750 – what Lambton spends on transitional housing, food security and supporting tenants at risk of homelessness

\$380,500 – what Lambton spends supporting The Good Shepard's Lodge, The Haven youth shelter and Out of the Cold overflow shelter

\$2,246,986 – spent on rent supplements, utility bills, and rent supplements to keep people in their homes for and last month's rents to help get people out of temporary shelters.

\$2,005,584 – cash for domiciliary hostels for meals for 30 people, housing people in retirement homes, funding for community agencies providing supports to people with mental health issues, and rent supplements.

Average Lambton home sold for over \$590K in April

Homes sales in Lambton are picking up as the warm weather arrives.

The Sarnia-Lambton Real Estate Board says 147 homes were sold in April – nine per cent more than the same time last year – and they were

not staying on the market very long. It's taking an average of about 20 days for most homes to sell.

Single family homes sold for an average of just over \$590,000 in April. The median price for 2023 is about

Ninety-nine per cent of the homes sold at list price and there were 300

The total real estate sales over April topped \$84.4 million.

homes on the market in April.

(ITTY CONCERNS



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO

Jane Hardy holds her cat, Cece as it gets a shot during the free rabies clinic offered by Lambton County held at the Oil Springs and South Enniskillen Fire Hall on Saturday May 16. There was a line up of people and their pets when the clinic opened.







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Former Oil Springs fire chief remembered

The Independent

A long-time chief of the Enniskillen/Oil Springs Fire department has died.

Ken McIntyre, who volunteered with the department for 48 years and was the chief for 25 years, passed away Thursday.

In his obituary, family said McIntyre served the department proudly.

McIntyre was also active in Scouting and was the steward of the Oil Springs United Church.

There will be visitation Tuesday at Steadman Brothers' Funeral home and

the funeral will be Wednesday at 11 am at the funeral home. McIntyre was 76.



McIntyre

The Independent

A Brooke-Alvinston woman is one of five being honoured as Women of Excellence by the Sarnia Community Foundation.

MacDonald to be honoured

Terry MacDonald is being hailed as a person who freely

gives her time and ideas to make things better for the people living in Brooke-Alvinston.

MacDonald, who has been a fixture at the Alvinston Legion, responds individually to people who need her to help, as well as being heavily involved in several groups that not only impact her community but can also make a difference nationwide. MacDonald is a fundraiser, secretary and organizer creating a monthly calendar of events for the community. She's also been involved in the recently created Alvinston Feral Cat



Terry **MacDonald**

MacDonald will be honoured with Madhu Baker, an advocate for mental health, trauma and addiction, Kathy Bresett – a live long advocate for people facing barriers and is the executive director of the North Lambton Community Health Centre, Michelle Holbrook, the executive director of Rebound who has been active with children's charities for years, and Deanna Sandrin, who is active in traditionally male-dominated industries and is hailed as a "role model for the new generation of women entering the workforce, especially in the Sarnia-Lambton community where skilled trades are in high demand."

"Sarnia-Lambton truly has amazing leaders who help shape this community. This year's recipients come from all parts of the county; embarking on those key principles of making your community better, assisting with a cause, or collaborating help with a community project," says Sarnia Community Foundation Chair Bill Woods.

The women will be honoured June 8. For tickets, you can go to the foundation's website www. sarniacommunityfoundation.ca

OPP issue alert for lethal packages

The OPP wants you to be on the lookout for packages of what could be a lethal substance.

Police are asking you to watch for packages with the names Imtime Cuisine, AmbuCA, Academic/ACademic, Escape Mode/escMode or ICemac. They contain sodium nitrate and were being sold on line and distributed by mail to more than a dozen communities across the province.

Sodium nitrate is a white, crystalline substance used as a food additive and found in processed meats. Consumption of excessive amounts of this substance can result in death. The OPP is calling on everyone to be vigilant of the online transactions and activity of family members and the arrival of any unexpected packages in the mail.

How to on home daycare business to be provided

The Independent

Lambton County is trying to encourage people to open their own home daycare business.

A new federal/provincial program will create 541 new day care spaces in Lambton – 67 are slated for Petrolia and Wyoming. County officials are focused on licensing home day care

On May 16, Lambton Rural Childcare and Wee Watch – the two organizations tasked with monitoring home day cares – will be holding an

open house at LCCVI starting at 5:30 pm to talk about what it takes to start and run a business.

"If there are people out there who love children and want to grow a successful business but haven't taken the leap yet, we are here to encourage and support them to realize their dream." says Lori Veroude, Executive Director for Lambton Rural Child Care. Veroude says it can provide a good living to those who are interested.

While Lambton tries to gear up its home child care options, the

Petrolia Childcare Advocacy Group is appealing to the town to start a municipally run daycare saying only a dedicated day care is a completely safe option for parents.

Petrolia has already waived some of the fees to set up home day cares to encourage more people to help meet the community's need.

And a recently released survey done for Petrolia's official plan review shows at least 30 per cent of the 160 people surveyed listed day care for children as one of the most important aspects of living in Petrolia.





Brooke-Alvinston looking at farm lots, severances and cannabis in plan

Heather Wright The Independent

Brooke-Alvinston Councillor Craig Sanders wants the minimum farm lot size to be more flexible. Lambton County officials say that's not likely to happen.

Sanders also wants to talk about severing homes from farmland, which right now can only happen when there is a farm consolidation. That, planners say, may be possible soon.

Brooke-Alvinston council is in the middle of reviewing its official plan. Recently Aaron Butler and Mary Lou Tanner of NPG Planning Solutions came to council with a preliminary report at some of the things which may be updated in the document.

Tanner says the housing policies proposed "support broader housing choices within the community... there are also housing initiatives to support rural population growth."

Tanner also suggested Brooke-Alvinston should change the way it decides on farm severances by first deciding the agricultural property remains zoned agricultural and then giving approval for the home and lot to be severed from it.

That led Sanders to ask about the practice and question why homes couldn't be severed from farmland without the consolidation of farms.

Butler interjected and said the provincial government is actually considering that now in its proposed provincial policy statement.

"One of the policies that the province is proposing right now is the severance of up to three lots are in prime agricultural areas where the principal use of that property is a farm today. So it's a different policy than the surplus farm dwelling consent policy. But, I will just note that I don't think we should spend too much time discussing that because it's a draft," says Butler.

As for the rules requiring a 100 acre farm plot, Ken Melanson, manager of planning for Lambton County, says that is unlike to change.

The county recently tried to get the province to allow 50 acre plots, but was denied.

"As it stands now, it's not flex-

ible," he says.

He added some municipalities, including Dawn-Euphemia are talking about lobbying the province to change the rule.

Councillor Don McCabe doesn't like the standard.

"Hectares is not a realistic number and it has currently established economic viability can occur on an eighth of an acre depending on what you have growing on it," he

Councillors were also interested in the planners views on regulating cannabis operations.

Tanner says indoor operations should be in industrial areas. Outdoor growing, she says, would require an official plan amendment where the community would have

an opportunity to comment.

Janet Denkers, the municipality's administrator, questioned whether the outdoor operation currently under construction in Brooke-Alvinston would need an official plan amendment if council went that route. Tanner wasn't sure and offered to investigate.

McCabe also wanted to make sure the issue of greenhouse grown cannabis would be addressed - particularly light and smell. "Whether it's cannabis or not, if you get a greenhouse, there is an immediate impact to the neighborhood of that kind of an issue of light pollution."

The planners will take all the councillors comments back and prepare the final report for public meetings this spring.

Pitel looks for county cash for guide

Heather Wright The Independent

A mental health advocate is asking Lambton County council for \$60,000 to continue to print a resource guide for mental health

In 2019, Debb Pitel complied No One Stands Alone and raised the money to distribute the booklets in 46 different businesses, municipal offices, fire departments, EMS stations and libraries in Lambton County. It costs about \$20,000 a year to produce the booklet.

She is now asking Lambton County to fund the booklets being placed in locations owned by the County of Lambton for three years at a cost of \$60,000. Pitel says if the county

would pay for the booklets in its building, the program could be expanded to local gyms and be made available during local events.

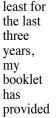
Pitel, who is also a Petrolia councillor, told Lambton county councillors recently, the booklets are necessary since searching for local information online is not easy especially if the person is in a crisis.

When time does not leave room for second guessing or second and third chances, we need to be right," says Pitel.

"The inability to connect to local updated information and the right agency quickly ... while googling can be difficult...That would be asking people at their worst struggling and even desperate are to google for help only.

"I'm not suggesting that I have the only solution. What

I'm sharing today is that at least for the last three years, my booklet has





Debb **Pitel**

alternative, a human contact and ability to find and share with others.'

Andrew Taylor, general manager of public health services in Lambton, says public health does work on mental health and it would see how it might be able to help with the resource guide.

Warwick building deposit 'huge' issue

Heather Wright The Independent

A Warwick couple says the township's requirements for security deposits on new buildings is having a big impact on their

Colin and Jen Van Kessel started planning for their new business, 79 Auto Shine, two years ago. When they came to the final stages of the planning with the township, they learned they would have to pay a deposit worth 50 per cent of the project's cost before building could begin. For the Van Kessels, that was over \$107,000.

At the time, the couple was able to convince council to reduce the fee to around \$53,000.

Monday, the business owners came to council asking for the money back so they could complete the asphalting and landscaping after hearing the owner of Watford Home Hardware had his building deposit reduced in April after voicing frustration about a deposit fee of about \$150,000.

"I don't feel we need to go back to the bank to get capital for the money you guys are holding," Colin Van Kessel told council Monday.

Jen Van Kessel says not only is the large deposit needed to complete the work, it was a surprise since the information online said builders were required to submit a \$10,000 deposit.

"I had budgeted for \$10,000 and then it was \$100,000 or \$107,000. That's huge. That's a huge difference for small investors...it's really upsetting.

She added last she checked Warwick Township's website still said deposits were \$10,000.

"If I was going to start another project it is very misleading.'

Council agreed to return the couple's deposit so they can finish their work without going back to the bank. However, they will have to provide a deposit cheque for \$10,000.

Mayor Todd Case told the business owners council is revisiting the deposit requirements which were approved by council in 2021.





Charlotte's Corner



Celebrating Nurses' Week

May 8 - 14 is Nurses' Week. This year's theme is "Our Nurses. Our Future" — and was designed to showcase the many roles nurses play in a patient's healthcare journey. The pandemic brought to light the courage and commitment that nurses work under every day and showed the integral role that nurses play in the community.

In Petrolia, the hospital plays a central role in the community. And the nurses who provide care there, are like family. Emily (pictured here) has been a nurse at CEEH of Bluewater Health for the last 17 years. "I love the small town feel of the hospital," says Emily. "Everyone knows everyone. It's a really special atmosphere".

Emily grew up going to the hospital often. Her grandmother lived on the continuing care unit for the last years of her life and she was often there visiting. "I loved going, I loved the environment — which is what made me want to enter health care. Ever since I was a young girl that was my dream, to be in health care."

Emily loves her job. She loves being able to make a difference in someone's life, even it is just something small.



Emily, RPN, at CEEH of Bluewater Health for the last 17 years.

To Emily, and all of the highly skilled, kind and compassionate nurses that work at Bluewater Health in Sarnia and Petrolia thank you for all you do — not just this week, but every day.

#OurNursesOurFuture

#PetroliaProud

#WeAreBWH

Petrolia council back online in a few weeks

Heather Wright The Independent

You'll likely be able to watch the Petrolia council meetings from the comfort of the couch again by the

During the pandemic, Petrolia – like all other municipal councils – went online to do business via Zoom with each councillor in their own home.

But when the pandemic restrictions eased and meetings returned to council chambers, the town tried to continue

the online offering. But they found the equipment they had just wasn't doing the job. The sound was poor as microphones cut out.

So, staff suggested setting aside \$60,000 for a new streaming system during the budget. Councillors balked at the idea and suggested the plan be scaled back.

Monday, council approved the purchase of a new streaming service in the council chamber even though only one company bid to install the equipment, according to Laurissa

Ellsworth, director of marketing, arts and communications.

"This is largely due to the specific nature of the required equipment, and the limited

companies that provide these solutions."

Ellsworth looked at another option, but it would have to be operated by staff not involved in the meeting.

While there is no firm date for the installation of the equipment, Ellsworth says it could be ready for prime time in a matter of weeks.



CelebratingOurMoms May 14, 2023



Student tutors fan out over Lambton County

Blake Ellis

Local Journalism Initiative

Genevieve Devost is considering making a change to her career path after tutoring at her former elementary

Devost, a second year social work student at Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo, is one of 29 postsecondary students who will serve as tutors with St. Clair Catholic School District until the end of the school year. Devost is serving at St. Joseph's Catholic School in Corunna

"It has been a special experience,"

Her experience has been such a good one, she might have changed her mind on the career path she wants to pursue, as she is now considering teaching.

She helped 12 students last year and she is expecting the same this year.

All of the 29 tutors are spread out among 17 schools.



Genevieve **Devost**

The university students turned tutors underwent a two-day orientation on May 1 and 2, providing them with strategies to best help students in one on one supports in literacy and math.

"The tutors also serve as another positive young adult role model for our young students, who enjoy spending time with them to practice and further develop their skills in literacy and numeracy," said Superintendent of Education Laura Callaghan.

Devost said the teachers, principals and students have been so welcoming to her and she looks forward again to the time in the school with the

Tourist to find help in Lambton libraries, museums

The Independent

Tourists to Lambton County will be able to find information about local events and attractions by going to the

Lambton County is working with Tourism Sarnia-Lambton to set up interactive touchscreen kiosks promoting programs, exhibitions, and events in libraries and cultural sites across Lambton. TSL received a Tourism Relief Fund grant for the

The kiosks are preloaded with Tourism Sarnia-Lambton's Tour Ontario's Blue Coast app. Using the kiosk, patrons will be able to find information about events, beaches, dining, arts, outdoor adventures, safe travels or gain some trip inspiration.

There is also a poster rack and brochure holder featuring information about the Lambton County Library, Judith & Norman Alix Art Gallery, the Oil Museum of Canada, the

Lambton Heritage Museum, Lambton County Archives and Tourism Sarnia-Lambton.

While the kiosks will likely be used by tourists, Andrew Meyer, general manager of Lambton's cultural services, says Lambton residents can also use it. "We can sometimes overlook the great experiences available in our own backyards, and visitors to one cultural site can be encouraged to visit other sites throughout the county," he says.



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CHICKENS FOR THE ROOF



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO Gordon Henderson of St. Paul's United Church hands out one of 140

chicken dinners as part of its drive thru fundraiser Saturday. The church is raising money to replace the roof on the historic downtown Petrolia church.

Graphic Design & Creative Services

Become a Preferred Vendor

The Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery seeks proposals from highly-qualified, experienced vendors to provide graphic design and creative services to Ontario government ministries and agencies.

Candidates who qualify as Preferred Vendors will have the opportunity to work with government to design communications that inform Ontarians through print and digital communication vehicles (e.g., publications, collateral, animations, videos, websites, social media, branding, visual identity, etc.). Only Preferred Vendors will be invited to compete for graphic design and creative services projects when they become available.

To apply, go to www.ontario.ca/tenders, select Current Opportunities, click on Project Info filter, enter tender_18066



Knights begin OHL championship series Thursday

Barry Wright The Independent

The London Knights will take to the ice at Budwiser Gardens in the OHL final Thursday.

The curtain came down on a historic season for the Sarnia Sting Sunday before another sell-out crowd at the Progressive Auto Sales Arena. The Knights, led by Oil Springs' Dale and Mark Hunter, beat the Sting, 5-1 to capture the OHL Western Conference championship in six games.

Making their first ever appearance in the conference finals, the Sting lost the first two games in London before rebounding for 5-3 and 6-3 victories on

home ice. London took the series' lead Friday and closed things out Sunday.

Sting Coach Alan Letang said he was extremely proud of his players and said, despite being disappointed, they too should be "over the moon" with pride in reaching the league's final four for the time since the franchise relocated from Newmarket nearly three

London begins the OHL final on Thursday at home against the Peterborough Petes.

The Petes advanced with a 3-2 win in game seven against the Battalion in game seven of the Eastern Conference final on Monday in North Bay.

It's the first trip to the league final for



METCALFE PHOTOGRAPHY/SARNIA STING PHOTO The Sting salute the crowd after game six of the conference finals.

the Knights since 2016 when they won both the OHL title and Memorial Cup. London's coaching staff also includes Rick Steadman of Oil Springs.

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Run or Watch the

Lancers win eight in LK track tune up

The Independent

Charlie Shaw, James Grant and Hunter Mitchell each won two events at the Lancer Relays in Windsor.

Shaw captured the Senior Boys' 1500 metre race and the Open Boys' 3000 metre events, Grant crossed the finish line first in the Novice Boys' 400 and 1500 metre races, and Mitchell broke the tape first in the Novice

Boys' 100 and 300 metre hurdles.

Elsewhere, Ella Wellington captured the Novice Girls' 1500 metre race and Abbey Wallace was first in the Senior Girls' high jump.

Several other Lancer athletes had top five finishes.

The weekend Lancer Relays were a tune up for the LKSSAA track and field championships which will be held next week in Chatham.

Lambton alum at NHL draft

Two of Central Lambton's most prominent hockey families were front and centre at the NHL draft lottery Monday.

The Chicago Blackhawks, with Oil Springs' Meghan Hunter as its assistant general manager, won the coveted first pick and the right to choose teen phenom and Team Canada junior star Connor Bedard with the initial selection at the NHL draft in late June in Nashville.

Anaheim, with Plympton-Wyoming's Pat Verbeek at its general manager, won the second overall selection. They are likely to choose Team Canada alumni and University of Michigan star Adam Fantilli. The Hawks' NHL roster includes former Sting defenceman Connor Murphy while its prospect pool includes one of Bedard's Canadian junior teammates Ethan Del Mastro acquired by the Sting from Mississauga at the trade deadline in early January.

Victoria Day May 22, 2023

Registration / Race Kit Pick-up at the

East Lambton Community Complex Mon, May 22nd 6 a.m. - 8 a.m.

or online at: www.watfordalvinstonroadrace.com



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BACK SAVING TIPS

FOR GARDENING

Flags' Dupuis gets invitation from Knights for tryout

Corunna's Jace Dupuis has been invited to the London Knights spring training camp as a free agent.

The Lambton Jr. Sting grad led all 16-year-olds in scoring in the PJHL this season with 26 goals and 40 points in 40 games with the Mooretown Flags. He added a goal and six assists

in 12 playoff contests. Dupuis was also named the Stobbs Division rookie of the year.

Meantime, a pair of Watford products spent time at camps last weekend. Evan Van Gorp attended the OHL Kingston Frontenacs orientation camp and Blake Verberne was at camp for

the OJHL champion Collingwood Blues. Van Gorp played this season with the Elgin-Middlesex U18 Canucks and Verberne was part of the goaltending tandem with the Lambton U16 Jr. Sting.

Irwin named to head up Sarnia Legionnaires for 2023-2024 season

Brian Irwin has been promoted to

Irwin was an assistant coach last

organization following the 2021-22 campaign.

With 20 plus years of coaching experience, Brian is a passionate leader with superior communication skills

who has a history of developing strong relationships with his players in order to get their full buy in to the hockey systems he chooses to implement based on his team's roster," said the Legionnaires in a statement Thursday.

The GOJHL's Sarnia Legionnaires season after joining the Legionnaires has a new head coach. from the Lambton Jr. Sting U18 AAA

the top job replacing Derek Di Muzio who resigned following the 2022-23 campaign.

Jackson named an all-star

Core Jackson has been named to the second team all-conference squad in the Arizona Community College Athletic Conference. The LCCVI grad, from Wyoming, batted .323 with 62 hits and 45 runs in 51 games this season with the Phoenix-based South Mountain Community College. He tied for the team lead with 16 doubles and added three triples, four home runs, 32 RBIs and nine stolen bases.

Jackson and his Cougar teammates lost two 5-4 games to Tucson's Pima Community College



Core Jackson

late last week and were eliminated from the junior college regional playoffs.

Lucier now Hall of Famer

Mike Lucier is now a member of the OCAA Hall of Fame.

He was inducted last week during a ceremony in Windsor.

The Forest product averaged 16.8 points and 10.7 rebounds per game over his five-year career with the Lambton College men's basketball squad. The North Lambton grad was named an OCAA all-star on multiple occasions, he was chosen as part of the all-rookie team in 2011-12 and was named defensive

player of the year in 2015-16. After graduation, Lucier went on to play professionally in Europe and the National Basketball League of Canada.



Mike Lucier



1. WARM UP & BREATHE

muscles and help improve circulation

Set a timer and take a break every

2. TAKE BREAKS

15-20 minutes to stand up,

stretch and walk around 3. DRINK WATER

Prepare your body for new movements

take in some deep breaths to nourish you

Carry a bottle of water with your garden tools

4. LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

easier to handle or use a wheeled cart.

6. VARY YOUR TASKS

Ensure that you aren't holding the

same position for extended periods.

When you take your break have a drink of water

Do not ignore those niggling aches and pains until it's too

late, if you feel a twinge, take a break or change positions.

5. BE MINDFUL OF LARGE LOADS

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Classifieds



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TUESDAY, MAY 2

O'MAHONY, Dr. Michael Fergus John

Age: 82 Smith Funeral Home

NOTHELFER, Sheila

Age: 84

Smith Funeral Home

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3 **KAMEKA**, Xavier James

Age: 87 D.J. Robb Funeral Home

WEBER, Gerhard Johannes "Gerry"

Age: 90, of Newbury Van Heck Funeral Home

THOMPSON, James Kendal

Age: 64 Smith Funeral Home

McBEATH, Charles James Allan

Age: 80 Smith Funeral Home

BRUMWELL, Terry Neal

Age: 57 Smith Funeral Home

ADAM, Mary Ann

Age: 86 **Smith Funeral Home**

THURSDAY, MAY 4

McINTYRE, Ken Age: 76, of Oil Springs

Steadman Brothers Funeral Home **JOOSTEN, Jan Paul Henry**

Age: 56

Denning's of Watford Funeral Home **HOOPER, Rose Linda**

Age: 75, of Dresden **Badder Funeral Home**

BAGLEY, Kathleen Mary (nee Grady)

Age: 89 Smith Funeral Home

FRIDAY, MAY 5

LAM, Janna "Anna" Martina (nee Mostert)

Age: 84 Smith Funeral Home

SATURDAY, MAY 6

STEADMAN, Larry Ross

Age: 83, of Sombra Steadman Brothers Funeral Home

GIBBS, Kathryn Joan (nee Carr)

Age: 70, of Glendale Crossina Van Heck Funeral Home

LEA, Marilyn Ann (nee Hardy) Age: 90

Smith Funeral Home

SUNDAY, MAY 7 SPANO, Anthony Joseph

Age: 79 McKenzie Blundy Funeral Home

VILLENEUVE, Brenda

Age: 70, of Dresden **Badder Funeral Home**

COOPER, Gary Douglas

Age: 66

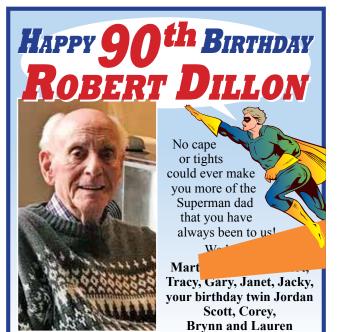
Smith Funeral Home

MONDAY, MAY 8 FRALEIGH, Sidney Arthur

Denning's of Forest Funeral Home

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

Birthday



In Memoriam





who passed away

May 15, 2021

Though it seems like yesterday Two years have slipped by since you went away.

My heart split in two.

One side with memories and the other died with you. Each Morning When I wake

I know that you are gone No one knows the heartache As I try to carry on. My heart still aches with sadness And secret tears still flow. What it meant to lose you,

No one will ever know. You were such a special person So gentle and so kind. And have left the sweetest memories

And thoughts of you behind. The love of our family flows strong and deep.

Leaving us memories to treasure and keep. So for now I will hold you in my heart

until I can hold you again. Sometimes I just look up, smile and say; "I know it was you"

Sadly missed by All. Love Jan & Family

Celebration of Life



The family of Ruth Moore, and all of her good friend's from the Country Jams would like to welcome those who knew and loved Ruth to her Celebration of Life, between 2 and 5 pm on May 15th, at the Petrolia Llon's Club tario. In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Ruth, can be sent to the Heart & Stroke Foundation, or Petrolia Hospital.

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Doris Fraser May 3 1931 to May 14/2022

> Always loved Never forgotten

Forever missed Joan, Dale & Debbie, Kathy, Mark & Candace and families

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The publisher of this newspaper, The Independent of Petrolia and Central Lambton, reserves the right to clarify or refuse any advertisement 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 limited to the amount paid for the cost of space occupied by the error. Claims of errors must be made prior to the next publication

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SEASONAL SERVICED SITES STILL AVAILABLE at Shetland Campground for \$1150.00

Shetland Campground is a small, secluded campground situated along the Sydenham River, 6632 Bentpath Line, in Dawn-Euphemia Township.

Opened May 19 to October 16.

For more information:

www.dawneuphemia.ca/facilitiesbusinesses/conservation-area/

or call: 519-692-5148





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\$3200.00! We surpassed

our financial goal - payment of our necessary insurance.

We are grateful, we are blessed!

Oil Springs Optimists'

Meat Bingo Thurs., May 18 @ 7pm at the Oil Springs Youth Centre



To Enter and Play, you must be

18+ years of age All proceeds go

to local youth

Classified Deadline: Monday @ 12 noon



Classifieds

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@ 12 Noon

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June 9:30am-

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10

Church directory



St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

416 Queen Street, Petrolia (Behind the Post Office)

In-Person Service Sundays @ 10:00 am

Services also available online: www.standrews-petrolia.ca
Pastor Katherine Hawley

Christ Anglican Church

414 Oil Street, Petrolia

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

Everyone Welcome

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

f

Rev. Dave Hewett



St. Paul's United Church

4169 Petrolia Line at Centre Street

In-Person Services Sundays @ 10:30 am

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

Rev. Carol Ferguson

First Baptist Church

In Person Church Service Sunday Mornings @10:30 am

Pastor: Alex Craig

418 Greenfield Street, Petrolia | Church Office 519-882-2480 email: fbcpetrolia@gmail.com | website: www.firstbaptistpetrolia.ca Find us on Facebook! www.facebook.com/First-Baptist-Church-Petrolia

Date:



Calendar PLEASE CALL AHEAD TO CONFIRM OF EVENTS DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Events are listed FREE for non-profit groups in Petrolia and Lambton County (space permitting).

To be included in this listing email the required information to office@petrolialambtonindependent.ca Subject: FREE EVENT LISTING.

CLUBS AND REGULAR EVENTS								
DAY	START TIME	LOCATION	EVENT	CONTACT INFO				
Mon	7p	Watford	Darts @ Watford Legion	519-876-2360				
Tues	7p	Watford	Euchre @ Watford Legion	519-876-2660				
Tues	7p	Petrolia	Petrolia Toastmasters @ Petrolia Lion's Hall	519-381-4910				
Wed	6:30p	Oil Springs	Legion Open - cards, pool, darts - 6:30-10pm	519-834-2537				
2nd Wed	7p	Petrolia	Bingo @ Petrolia Lion's Hall	519-882-8728				
3rd Wed	7p	Sarnia	Monthly Meeting @ Horticultural Society	519-332-5837				
3rd Thurs	7p	Oil Springs	Optimist Meat Bingo @ Youth Centre	519-834-2152				
Fri	7p	Brigden	Pool Night @ Brigden Legion	519-864-1395				
Fri		Watford	Meat Raffle, 50-50, CTA @ Watford Legion	519-876-2360				
Sat	12p	Petrolia	Lunch 12-3 or until sold out @ Petrolia Legion	519-882-1557				
Sat	2p	Petrolia	Meat Raffle @ Petrolia Legion	519-882-1557				
Sat	3:30p	Forest	Meat Raffle @ Forest Legion	519-786-5357				
Sat	6р	Alvinston	Catch The Ace @ Alvinston Legion	519-898-2100				
		Brigden	NEW LEGION HOURS: Thurs 6-9p; Fri 6-9p; Rafi Non-Raffle Saturdays 6-9p	fle Saturdays 4-8p;				

LOCATION EVENT CONTACT INFO Sarnia Concert Association presents BUZZ BRASS - 519-344-7469 SPRING CRAFT & GIFT SHOW @ Greenwood Arena - For more info 9am-519-330-1802 or email: d kohoutek@hotmail.com IG WEALTH MANAGEMENT - WALK FOR ALZHEIMER'S 11am-May13 Petrolia @ Black Gold Brewery - Find details online: www.alzeimer.ca EUCHRE @ Wyoming Fair Building - 519-312-0578 PERENNIAL PLANT SALE @ Watford Warwick Horticultural Society -Mav Corner of Confederation St. & Centennial Ave. For info or to donate call: 19-22 'Lucy' 519-636-1161 - or - 'Peg' 519-384-5636 PICNIC IN THE PARK @ McKay Park. For info search 'Plympton-11am-May20 Wyoming Wyoming Special Events Committee' on facebook "INSPIRE" FUNDRAISING EVENT @ SASCSL - Tickets can be purchased 10am-May27 ONTARIO ANCESTORS DROP-IN & CHAT - Zoom Webinar - For a link May29 2-3:30pm Online visit: lambton.ogs.on.ca or email lambton@ogs.on.ca May30 EUCHRE @ Wyoming Fair Building - 519-312-0578 PICNIC IN THE PARK @ Lakeshore Park. For info search 'Plympton-11am-June 3 Wyoming Special Events Committee' on facebook 3pm GARAGE/PLANT/BAKE SALE @ Camlachie United Church - 6784 8am-June 3 Camlachie Rd. - For info visit: www.camlachieunited.ca 12pm 12pm-June 3 10TH ANNUAL PETROLIA PIZZAFEST @ Victoria Park 7pm BLENHEIM SENIOR FAIR @ Blenheim Arena - 199 King St. - For more June 9 **Blenheim** info visit: www.blenheimseniorscantre.ca - Call: 519-676-3894 or 1pm email: Blenheim55@gmail.com

2480 or email: fbcpetrolia@gmail.com

"THE SECRETS AMONG US" Exploring Domestic Abuse in Our Com-

munity @ First Baptist Church - Pre-Registration encouraged; 519-882-

UPCOMING EVENTS

Deadline for submitting free events is Friday @ 12 noon

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

Time:		 		
Town:			 	
Event 7	itle: _	 	 	

Phone # / website: _____

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

Repair it and they will come?

Enniskillen questions need for Krall Park washroom upgrades

Blake Ellis

Local Journalism Initiative

Enniskillen Township Council is wondering whether the planned upgrades at Krall Park are warranted.

Doug Krall, who does the scheduling of events at the park, said there are two women's teams using the diamond for games. A tournament is also planned at the end of July. He said in recent years, some players have decided to play ball in larger centres. Lambton College now also has a women's softball team.

Council gave the green light Feb. 21 to go ahead with final design work and tendering process for new washrooms among other improvements. Once this is complete, council will decide whether to go ahead with construction.

The municipality received an Ontario Community Improvement Program grant in February 2021 with the total cost of the project being \$303,875. The federal government is to contribute \$121,550, while the provincial government is kicking in \$101,281 and the township covering the remainder. The municipality has plans to take \$35,000 out of its park reserve to meet its contribution.

Krall said the existing washrooms are about 50 years old and they have to be accessible. The washrooms are barely accessible by any group right now, he

added.

Mayor Kevin Marriott remembers a time when there was so much activity at the park, people had trouble booking the diamond. Krall said the men players now go to Alvinston to play softball. There has also been increased interest in baseball, soccer and slowpitch. Also a lot of kids are now playing hockey year round.

"We have built a nice facility," said Krall. There have been many who have commented over the years, the diamond at Krall Park is just as good as any in the city. New lighting was installed in 2015 with other improvements being made through the years from a new sprinkler system and fencing. Krall said when people see the diamond lights on, he is sure people will come to the diamond and enjoy watching a game.

Deputy Mayor Judy Krall doesn't want to say no to the project and then, in two or three years, see the usage increase adding the new washrooms might attract more activity.

Councillor Wally Van Dun suggested a smaller building for the washrooms be constructed, possibly with a unisex washroom. It was even suggested to reuse the plans for the washrooms that were just built in the Marthaville Park.

The municipality will check on the grant and see what its options are on changing the scope of the project. Plans were to replace the washroom pavilion while putting in walkways from the parking lot, cement pads in the dugouts for the ball diamond and netting around the backstops.

PETROLIA PICKLEBALLERS



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO

It is the fastest growing sport in the world and it has quite a following in Petrolia as well. Ten teams vied for the championship as the Petrolia Y held its second annual pickleball tournament recently. Centre Manager Wade Babula said it was hoped a dozen pairs would compete in this year's tournament, but were having fun and being physically active. In the end Leanne Havers and Frank Bartelen were the winners and claimed bragging rights for this year. The popularity of pickleball, a combination of tennis, ping-pong and badminton has exploded in the last two year. Pickleball Canada estimates there are 900,000 households in Canada playing pickleball, up from an estimated 350,000 in 2020. Mike Smith and Shelley Aubie were just two of the 10 pairs competing in the pickleball tournament at the Petrolia YMCA April 29.



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Monday-Friday: Drop in 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.



Wednesday: Virtual 4:30 p.m. - 6 p.m.

- ▶ 4248 Oil Heritage Road, Petrolia
- **519-882-4333**
- ▶ lambtoncollege.ca/CES









This Employment Ontario program is funded in part by the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.