

## COLOURFUL START TO PETROLIA'S 150TH



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Jesse and Leah Grandmont and some of the 22 members of the Petrolia 150th organizing committee got the sesquicentennial year started with a bang Jan. 1 during the Opening Gala at Victoria Playhouse Petrolia. The Town was incorporated in 1874 and birthday celebrations are planned throughout the year. For more on the Opening Gala, see pages 6 & 7.

## Family looks for answers

Heather Wright  
The Independent

The family of a Reeves Corners woman are waiting for answers in her “untimely death.” Investigators from the Ontario Fire Marshal and the OPP Forensics Identification team as well as the Plympton-Wyoming Fire Chief combed through a Reeves Corners’ home Dec. 27 and 28 after a senior died there.

Lambton OPP, Wyoming firefighters and paramedics were called to the home on London Line, about a kilometre south of the traffic lights at Oil Heritage Road when an unresponsive person was found in the one storey house in the community. When emergency responders arrived, Chief Erik Campbell says it was clear there had been a fire but it was already out.

A 74 year-old woman was dead at the scene. It’s not clear how the senior died.

The OPP’s Crime Unit and Forensics Identification Services as well as the Ontario Fire Marshal and the coroner spent



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Plympton-Wyoming Fire Chief Erik Campbell heads into the home in Reeves Corners where a senior was found dead Dec. 27.

two days in the home. Police have not yet identified the woman nor answered questions about how she died.

In a post to *The Independent’s* website, family member Donna Young said the woman is “a beloved family member with siblings and many cousins and a wonderful Godson. Her family is spread all over Canada from Vancouver to Nova Scotia. She was the youngest from a large family and her eldest sister is 92.

“We are broken hearted at her untimely death and hope it is figured out as to what happened to her.”

## Firefighting ‘big part’ of new chief’s life

Blake Ellis  
Local Journalism Initiative

Rick Cousins firefighting career began when he was just a teen.

The Petrolia/North Enniskillen Fire deputy chief has just taken over the top job of the department in the wake of the retirement of Jay Arns. Cousins says it is quite and honour and privilege to be appointed to the job.

Cousins has been part of the fire service for most of his life. Before becoming a firefighter 35 years ago, Cousins helped out at the Brigden fire hall. When he was 14 or 15, Cousins lived near the hall and when the sirens would blare alerting the volunteers of a call, Cousins would go to the hall too, answering calls as the department responded.

“It was pretty cool,” said Cousins in an interview with *The Independent* Dec. 30. Cousins would be at the fire hall approximately three to four hours each time.

When he turned 18 in 1985, he joined the Brigden Fire Department as a firefighter. Upon getting married in 1988, he moved to Petrolia where he took a hiatus from volunteering as a firefighter until he joined the Petrolia/North Enniskillen Fire Department in 1990. Since then he has moved up the ranks to captain and deputy chief to fire chief.

“It really excited me,” Cousins said about being a firefighter. “It has been a big part of my life and I have enjoyed every day of it.”

SEE NEW CHIEF PG 2

## THE Independent

of Petrolia and Central Lambton

Learn more about the Town of Petrolia’s history with

### The Independent’s Special Petrolia 150 Edition

Delivered to every home in Petrolia and to our subscribers across Canada January 11, 2024



# Campbell house demolition approved

Heather Wright  
The Independent

The home of Archie Campbell will be demolished.

The fate of the historic farm house at Alvinston’s AW Campbell Conservation Area has been hanging in the balance since Oct. 2021. The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority said the long-neglected home of the man who donated the land for the park is beyond repair and planned to demolish it in 2021.

The decision was put on hold after Friends of Campbell Park formed. It hoped to save the home built in 1867 which was home to the Campbell Family until Archie died. He willed over 300 acres to a newly formed conservation authority for a park.

After waiting two years for the group to take action, SCRCA board members agreed to ask Brooke-Alvinston for a demolition permit. But the request was turned down by Brooke-Alvinston council.

That prompted the SCRCA’s board to say it would seek to overturn the decision at the Ontario Land Tribunal.

In November, Brooke-Alvinston Mayor Dave Ferguson, the Administrator, Janet Denkers, two

members of the Friends of Campbell Park and SCRCA officials met to talk about the issue where the conservation laid out the costs to keep the aging building standing.

The authority said it would cost over a half million dollars to repair and maintain the building without public access and over \$1.3 million to turn the building into a museum in the future- both ideas floated by Friends of Campbell Park. The conservation authority said Brooke-Alvinston would have to foot all of those bills.

Just days after the meeting, council again denied the building permit.

Thursday, in a meeting that lasted less than five minutes, councillors agreed to issue the building permit. Councillors Jenny Redick and Craig Sanders reversed their previous support to keep the building standing.

Deputy Mayor Frank Nemcek said it was clear “where this is going” and wanted to make sure there would recognition of the Campbell Family left in the park.

Administrator Janet Denkers said the County of Lambton wants to work with the conservation authority to recover any of the historic artifacts left in the building. There is also a desire to apply for a Creative County grant to



FILE PHOTO

A two and a half year battle over the fate of Campbell House in Alvinston is over. Brooke-Alvinston Council has okayed the demolition permit for the destruction of the historic home.

give formal recognition of the family for visitors to see in the coming years.

Council called for that recognition in the formal motion which granted approval for the home to be demolished.

It’s not clear when it will come down.



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO

Deputy Fire Chief Rick Cousins will take over the helm at the Petrolia/North Enniskillen Fire Department Jan. 8.

## New chief says new pumper/tanker still in the works

CON’T FROM PG 1

There have also been some tough situations every firefighter has to deal but each of these incidents bind you together as a crew.

One of the key things he brings to the fire chief position is his leadership experience. He has been with the OPP’s auxiliary unit for 28 years, with 18 of those serving as unit commander overseeing 20 members. He has also worked for Patene Building Supplies for 23 years and has been the assistant manager and regional commercial roofing sales representative for the past 15 years.

“I honestly never thought I would be in this position,” said Cousins. As he has moved up the ranks, Cousins has learned from those above him. He was especially appreciative of his predecessor Fire Chief Jay Arns. Cousins said Arns has done a great job and he has learned a lot from him.

In fact, when the appointment was made,

Cousins said Arns told him he was ready. Cousins says the fire department has been left to him in good condition, calling it a “fine tuned machine.” Cousins moves up from his role as deputy chief. He expects to fill that deputy chief position by February or early March.

Looking ahead, some of his priorities is to continue training, as well as recruitment. The Petrolia and North Enniskillen Fire Department currently has 30 members, with a fire chief, three deputy chiefs, four captains and 22 fire fighters. The department has 25 fire fighters at full complement.

Maintaining equipment is also another priority, with a replacement of the department’s tanker. Cousins said the department are still in talks about replacing the tanker. This is after the plan to purchase a \$1.4 million combined pumper and tanker was rejected by the Enniskillen Township Council in 2023.

# United way reaches goal

The Independent

The United Way slightly surpassed its \$1.4 million fundraising goal for 2023.

Officials in Sarnia-Lambton announced Dec.28 \$1.42 million – about 101.4 per cent of the goal of \$1.4 million had been received. Vicky Ducharme, the campaign chair, said a number of end of the year donations – including two anonymous donations – helped the organization reach its goal. Ducharme said throughout the campaign that although the goal is set at \$1.4 million, the actual needs in our community are closer to \$1.6 million. Like others in North America, with the United Way of Sarnia-Lambton has missed its fundraising goals leading up to and during the pandemic including in 2022 when the goal was about \$1.6 million.

Eighteen agencies are funded by the United Way of Sarnia-Lambton, providing 30 programs and services.

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# More kids in classroom says LK board

Blake Ellis  
Local Journalism Initiative

If the projections are correct, there will be over 1,700 more students in classrooms at Lambton-Kent District School Board in 10 years.

A report on the enrolment projections for the next decade was presented to the public board Dec. 12. For the first time, the board hired an external consultant to compile the yearly estimates. Associate Director Brian McKay said school board staff usually conducts this type of work, but they lacked information about residential development, which impacts future enrolment numbers. Municipal governments have been dealing with the same issue as population projections provided by Lambton County for 2031 have already been surpassed in some places, including St. Clair Township.

A demographics and planning consultant, Watson and Associates Economists Ltd, was hired. Jack Ammendolia, a managing partner, said what is happening in Ontario in terms of population growth and demographic shifts is unprecedented – something which has not been since the post Second World War period. “We are trying to put school boards in the best place to react.”

The things which impact enrolment numbers is migration within the province, immigration and housing supply, said Ammendolia. McKay added birth rate and the rate which parents choose to enrol their children in the Lambton-Kent District School Board, instead of the Catholic school boards or private schools, are other factors, which are taken into account.

Currently, there are 22,165 students enrolled at the public board with a capacity of 30,221. This means the school board is at 73 per cent capacity. In 10 years – during the 2033-34 school year – the enrolment number is expected to be 23,883, which will be 79 per cent of capacity.

Trustee Greg Agar was excited to see projected enrolment numbers for the Sir. John Moore School in Corunna. Its current

enrolment is 471 students, one less that the school’s capacity, but in 10 years, the student population is expected to grow to 717. Agar said with those type of numbers, he asked if there could there be a new high school along the St. Clair River.

The other area elementary school’s Colonel Cameron go from its current enrolment from 245 to a projected 255 in 10 years and at Mooretown-Courtright where enrolment is expected to drop from 104 to 86. The combined capacity at all three schools is 1,068 and the combined projection numbers are 1,058.

Most schools in Lambton County are expected to increase in the next 10 years with Brigden going from 180 to 224, Brooke Central from 264 to 292, Ecole Hillside from 278 to 306, Lambton Centennial from 217 to 226, Plympton-Wyoming from 285 to 352, Queen Elizabeth II from 327 to 379 and East Lambton to 233 to 260. LCCVI’s student population is expected to climb from 814 students to 1,065.

Ecole Hillside and Plympton Wyoming schools already have enrolments over their building’s capacities and the growth will make them more crowded.

The Dawn-Euphemia school, however is not expected to see the growth experienced in other communities. The consultant projects student enrolment will decline from 133 students to 128 students in 10 years time. The closure of the rural school in south Lambton had been discussed however in 2017, the then-Liberal Ontario government put a moratorium on school closures after facing public criticism on the issue. Dawn-Euphemia students, under a plan devised at that time, would have gone to Dresden attending school at a Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 school at Lambton-Kent Composite’s building.

The latest data will be used to formulate the next accommodation review report. However it is unlikely any schools will be slated for closure since the moratorium remains in place.

## NEW YEARS LEVEE



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO

Conflicts around the world and the contribution the Legion makes to veterans and the community was top of mind as local leaders gave their remarks at the Petrolia Legion’s annual New Year’s Levee held on Monday. The Petrolia Legion and the Legion Auxiliary hosted the afternoon event at the branch, where they thanked the many people who have helped the two organizations throughout the year. Sarnia-Lambton MPP Bob Bailey, Petrolia Mayor Brad Loosley and Lambton Warden Kevin Marriott greeted people at the event Jan. 1. Sarnia-Lambton MP Marilyn Gladu said it is a good time for us to reflect on how we treat our veterans and how we equip our military, so Canada can continue to defend itself, surrounded by trouble in the world.

# January 2024 DOOR BUSTERS

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# EDITORIAL

## Learning from the Past

At this time of year, it’s common to look back at the year past and forward to what’s to come. At *The Independent*, we have been focused on the past not just 2023.

For the last couple of months, we’ve been combing through Petrolia’s history as we prepare a special section in celebration of the Town’s sesquicentennial. And it has been interesting and insightful.

First, the stories of Petrolia’s past and the people who first came here to carve out a living by digging through the clay of then-Enniskillen Township to reach oil are simply amazing. Most were so enraptured by the oil industry that they travelled great distances, ditched careers – some quite lucrative – left wives and children behind all to be contented with trees, muck and bugs in the swampy undeveloped lands. Many were innovators, watching what others did and then adapting their methods to dig deeper or capture more of the liquid gold which flowed so freely from the ground.

When they met a problem, such as transporting the crude over mucky roads to Wyoming, they came up with a solution: first floating barrels of oil down Bear Creek and later, pooling their own wealth to build a rail line when the titans of that industry didn’t see the opportunity in the Oil Region of Canada.

When the industry hit a rough patch, they worked together for the common good to make sure producers were paid for their product. Some looked for new territory where they could ply their trade and teach others to do the same.

They built the Town of Petrolia with the same attitude, tackling problems as they came, using their resources to improve things for all.

And it strikes us that Hard Oil attitude can still serve Petrolia - and the Central Lambton - well. Many of us have come from other communities and offer new insights that can make the region better. When our community hits a rough patch, such as the financial difficulties many now face, we can work together to find new, innovative ways to improve life for our neighbours.

What those Hard Oils did was build a community and 150 years later, we continue the job they started. We face different problems, but these communities still have much to offer to make Ontario a better place.

## 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



FROM THE GLEESON COLLECTION AT THE LAMBTON COUNTY ARCHIVES

Petrolia’s 150th anniversary year has arrived and with it, the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Petrolia fire department. To mark the beginning of the sesquicentennial, a photo from the Gleeson collection which is now being cataloged at the Lambton County Archives of a portrait of a Petrolia firefighter.

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# Bigger houses nixed by St. Clair council

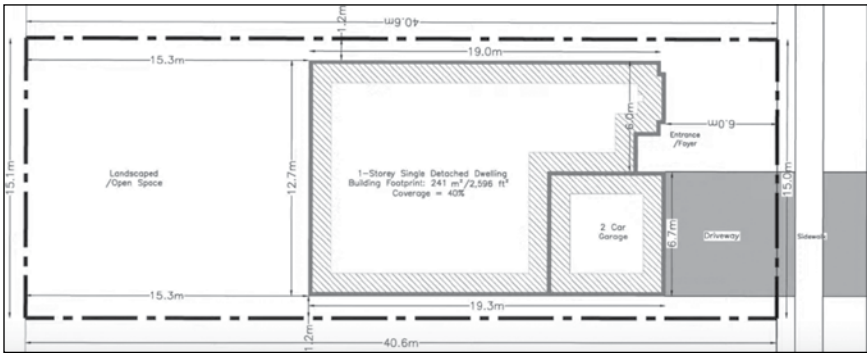
Heather Wright  
The Independent

Southside Construction bid to build larger houses in Courtright has been rejected by St. Clair Council.

Olivia Richards of BM Ross came to council Dec. 18 hoping to convince township councillors to allow builders to use 40 per cent of the 61 lots in the Sutherland Drive subdivision instead of 35 per cent.

Richards told councillors allowing for more coverage of the lots, which are about 41 by 15 meters in size, would allow the developers to provide 1,600 square foot homes with a 2 car garage. The move would mean there would be a six meter front lawn and the backyard would be about 15 by 13 meters. Richardson says that would allow the company to read a “wider demographic of buyers.”

Neighbours were not thrilled with the



Southside's drawing of a 1,600 square foot home on the Courtright lots.

idea.

Some neighbours voiced concern about water problems. Southside has not committed to draining the property. Some residents worry larger houses closer to their properties could make the water problem worse.

Others say it is unfair to allow the developer to have larger homes, when they are limited to using 30 per cent of the lot.

Mayor Jeff Agar wondered why the company has approached council so often. The issue has been ongoing since 2021. Southside had previously asked council to approve 40 per cent lot coverage so granny suites could be built on the lots. That was turned down. Council also turned down this request sending Southside back to the drawing board to move the subdivision forward.

# Brigden Church opens food cupboard for community

Blake Ellis  
Local Journalism Initiative

Inflation and the rising cost of groceries has many families struggling. It's led the Brigden United Church to open the Little Caring Cupboard in mid-December.

The Little Caring Cupboard is a small food cupboard for those who need urgent support. Located at the back door on the west side of the Brigden United Church, it is accessible to anyone in need 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Co-Chair Barb Steadman of the Brigden United Church Board, said they looked at other programs who

offer similar services in Bothwell, Thamesville and the Petrolia Community Refrigerator at St. Paul's United Church.

A double stand-up cooler was purchased, said Steadman. The church decided to start small for its new program.

Right now the cupboard is fully stocked and so far there are not many people taking items from the cupboard. Steadman said this could be because very few know about the new program yet or many families have been given hampers over the Christmas season.

The Little Caring Cupboard has been set up at the backdoor of the United Church says Steadman because it makes it a little more private for people who need the service. The cupboard is checked everyday to make sure it is well stocked.

The response from the community has been good with people offering donations for the cupboard.

The secretary is at the church every Thursday so a bin is put out on the church's front step for anyone wanting to donate items.

Non-perishable items are welcomed including for example packs of apple sauce, tuna, hygiene products, granola bars, crackers and peanut butter.

Steadman said right now the cupboard needs pasta sauces and paper towels.

# Pared down project planned for Enniskillen's Krall Park

Blake Ellis  
Local Journalism Initiative

Enniskillen Township council is going to try again on the renovations of the Krall Park washrooms.

Council gave the go ahead to have drawings made up and for the project to proceed to tender in early 2024.

Council was presented at its Dec. 18 meeting with drawings for the washrooms and pavilion at the Wallacetown fairgrounds. It is a wood structure with a pavilion, which includes men and women washroom, as well as an accessible washroom.

Administrator-Clerk Duncan McTavish said a local contractor gave a cost

estimate to build the structure at \$194,000. There will also need to have a septic system installed for \$30,000, as well as cement pads in the dugouts, safety netting around the backstop and an accessible walkway from the parking area to the new building.

Deputy Mayor Judy Krall was presently surprised when she saw the recommendation was to build what is in Wallacetown. "This is very basic. This will do," said Krall, who has been to the Wallacetown pavilion. She questioned whether the pavilion has to be that big, and wondered whether it could be smaller. The total area of the building is 1,440 square feet.

McTavish estimates the total project can come in at its budgeted amount of \$330,000.

Tenders were received earlier in year for the project with prices over \$500,000, which stopped the project from proceeding.

The municipality installed accessible washrooms at Marthaville Park with it officially being opened last May, with support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, which again is giving funding for the Krall Park project.

The municipality has approached Travis Bouma to undertake the design work for the building permit and to supervise the construction phase at an estimated cost of \$10,000.

•THE INDEPENDENT

# Enniskillen changes meeting times to accommodate councillor

Blake Ellis  
Local Journalism Initiative

Council meetings for Enniskillen Township will begin at 4:30 p.m. instead of 7 p.m. in the New Year.

Councillor Chad Burke made the request for an earlier start time for the meetings as his doctor has advised him to ask for the accommodation for his personal health. A request was made during the Dec. 18 council meeting.

Burke would like to have the meeting completed by 6 p.m. He says it just too much for him to be working all day, then having to attend a council meeting

at 7 p.m.

Council had previously granted Burke a leave of absence at its June 19 meeting to grant him a leave of absence from June 19 to Sept. 5, due to his health.

Enniskillen's Clerk-Administrator Duncan McTavish wondered if meetings pertaining to drainage projects or court of revision could be scheduled in the midst of the council agenda at 5:15 p.m., instead of at the beginning council proceedings like it is done now. This would allow people who work 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., a better opportunity to attend these sessions.

Councillor Wally Van Dun suggested the start of the meeting be at 5 p.m., but Mayor Kevin Marriott said this would make it more difficult to be done at 6 p.m. McTavish will be monitoring whether a 4:30 p.m. start will make it more difficult for members of the public to attend. If it is, changes can be made to the timing for drainage meetings or court of revision.

Council passed changes to its procedural bylaw to allow for the change in the meeting times. The first council meeting of 2024 will be on Jan. 15 at 4:30 p.m.

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# Petrolia’s 150th anniversary begins on a high note

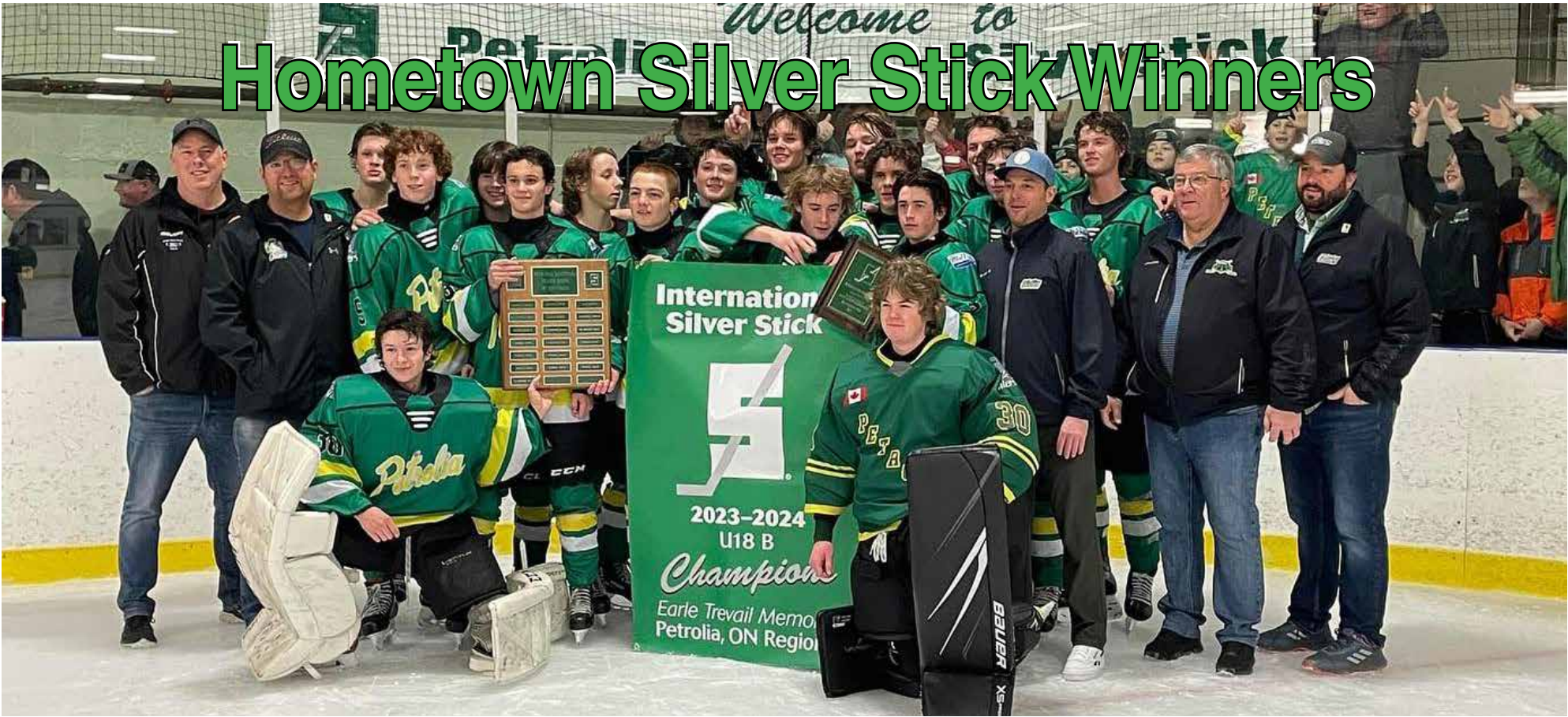
Year-long celebrations kicked off Jan. 1 with a Opening Gala. Local politicians, Mayor Brad Loosley, Deputy Mayor Joel Field, MPP Bob Bailey, MP Marilyn Gladu and Lambton Warden Kevin Marriott offer congratulations



Victoria Hall was alive with music Jan. 1 as the town kicked off a year-long celebration. Fiddling siblings Jesse and Leah Grandmont hosted the event with Leah giving new meaning to the name Petrolia - as in the Pet-Troll-Leah she presented to everyone involved in the night's festivities. VPP Artistic Director David Rogers signed his troll for the Grandmonts after performing Music of the Night from the Phantom of the Opera. The Lambton Youth Choir performed three numbers on the Victoria Hall Stage and five different artists, Mike Gallant, Mark Moran, Joan Spalding, David Cavan Fraser and Mike Murphy all entertained with songs about Petrolia. And VPP Artistic Director David Hogan and Petrolia 150 Chairperson Denise Thibeault sang Happy Birthday.







The Petrolia Oiler U18 pose after winning the B championship at the Earle Trevail Memorial Silver Stick in Petrolia Dec. 30. They play at the Internationals this weekend.



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE PHOTO

It was a perfect weekend for the Petrolia Oilers U18 team, winning the B title at the Petrolia Regional Silver Stick Tournament. The Oilers met Mooretown in the final and walked away with a 4-0 victory. Earlier in the tournament, Petrolia posted a 6-0 shutout against the Flags. The team heads to Forest next weekend for the International Silver Stick finals. To the right, Kaiden Edwards slides into Brady Cotteril of Lambeth during the semi finals Dec. 29. Below, Janice Trevail, the daughter of Earle Trevail, who the Petrolia tournament is named for, drops the puck at center ice at the Greenwood Recreation Centre Dec. 27 during the opening ceremonies. Tyler McGrail and Nolan Patchett were awarded the Rev. Canon Menzies scholarship. Jen Weed, the daughter of Rev. Menzies and Rev. David Hewett, who currently serves at Christ Church Petrolia and is a sponsor of the scholarship, presented the award to the Petrolia players.



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO



# SPORTS



The East Lambton Eagles U18 team captured the C Division title Dec. 30 in Petrolia



BLAKE ELLIS/LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

East Lambton used overtime to its full advantage to capture the C division at the U-18 regional Silver Stick in Petrolia. The Eagles blanked Wallaceburg, 1-0 in OT in the semi-finals and then scored in extra time to beat Lucan, 3-2 in the championship game which is pictured above. The win was a bit of revenge for East Lambton, who fell to Lucan 3-2 Thursday – the team’s only loss in the tournament. East Lambton now advances to the North American finals in Lambton Shores next weekend. Pictured at the top is the team photo after the win, below right is the on-ice celebration and in the centre right, Sam Hayter and Michael MacKellar chase the puck in the finals Dec. 30.



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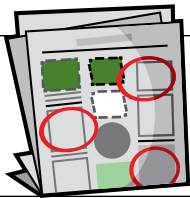
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## Death Notices

Dec. 26, 2023 - Jan. 2, 2024

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26

**PAREKH, Subhash Rasiklal Vithalji**  
Age: 70  
D.J. Robb Funeral Home

**IWANIW, Sandra (nee Dobie)**  
Age: 76  
Van Heck Funeral Home

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28

**GEORGE, Chief Maynard T. "Wabgance"**  
Age: 66  
Denning's Forest Funeral Home

**REID, Cindy Lee**  
Age: 67  
Gilpin Funeral Chapel

**SNIDER, Michael Burnet**  
Age: 88  
Smith Funeral Home

**HUFFMAN, Rose**  
Age: 79  
Smith Funeral Home

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29

**RICHTER, Edward Bruce**  
Age: 91  
Gilpin Funeral Chapel

**MASSEY, Margaret Aileen**  
Age: 87  
Badder Funeral Home

**JACKSON, Victoria May "Vicky"**

Age: 75  
Badder Funeral Home

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30

**DUNCAN, Alice Agnes May (nee Whitehead)**  
Age: 87  
Needham-Jay Funeral Home

**COTTRELL, Sanford Brady**  
Age: 62  
D.J. Robb Funeral Home

**VALENTINO, Guilhermina "Val"**  
Age: 77  
McKenzie Blundy Funeral Home

**ZAVITZ, Norma Louise**  
Age: 85  
Gilpin Funeral Chapel

**EBERLY, Elizabeth (Betty) Mildred (Cruikshank)**  
Age: 85  
Gilpin Funeral Chapel

**JAKUES, Melissa Ann**  
Age: 49  
Smith Funeral Home

**TOMS, Havelyn**  
Age: 90  
McKenzie Blundy Funeral Home

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

### Retirement Announcement

## Retirement Announcement

### Dr D Gail Tanner

is pleased to announce her retirement from the practice of Optometry effective 31 December 2023.

All patient records will be maintained at 413 Wingfield Street by Kniaziew Optometry.

There will be an  
**Open House Meet & Greet**  
held at the Petrolia Lions Hall on  
**January 3, 2024 from 4 pm to 7 pm**  
"Best Wishes Only"

Used Eyeglass donations for upcoming Rayjon Eyeglass Clinic trips will be gratefully accepted.

"I opened two gifts this morning.  
They were my eyes"  
- Zig Ziglar



### Birthday Announcement

## Happy Birthday!



**Let's Celebrate:  
Janie Webster  
is turning 75!!**

January 13, 2024 • 2pm to 6pm

Wyoming Legion

Best wishes only, entertainment and food provided, cash bar.

### Thank You

## Thank You!

The **Alvinston Foodbank** thanks you for your support in 2023. The Community of Brooke-Alvinston has shown great generosity to help feed our neighbours in need. As we look ahead in 2024, your continued donations will ensure that no family in our area is without sufficient food in times of crisis.  
*We couldn't do it without the many volunteers, your efforts don't go unnoticed, your quiet contributions allow us to serve each other.*

*Thank you again & Happy New Year!*

### Annual General Meeting

**AGM: The Petrolia & Enniskillen Agricultural Society** will be holding their Annual General Meeting on Tuesday January 16, 2024 at the Petrolia Lions Hall. Potluck dinner begins at 6:30pm, meeting starts at 7:30pm. All are welcome.

**Classified  
Deadline: Monday  
@ 12 Noon**

### For Sale

**FOR SALE:** Wooden toboggans & sleds. LIKE NEW CONDITION. Great for Christmas gifts. Assortment of sizes. *ALSO:* Huge Supply of Avon Decanters & Hockey cards for sale. Call: 'Dave' at 519-882-2548

### For Sale

**HAY FOR SALE:**  
4X5 rounds.  
519-882-0564.  
Bygrove Farms

### Upcoming Events

**January Events for  
Petrolia 150th  
Birthday Party!**

**January 7th  
Come out to  
the YMCA from  
1-3:30pm  
Free swim!**

**January 21st  
Greenwood Rec.  
Centre Free Skate!  
1:50-2:50pm**

### Hall Rentals

## Wyoming Lions

**554 Main Street**

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## LOCAL MATTERS.



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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?

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**Classified Deadline: Monday @ 12 Noon**

### In Memoriam

*In loving memory of a dear husband*

**ROBERT "BOB" D. ELLIOTT**

November 11, 1935 - January 6, 2020

*Those whom love us never go away.  
Unseen, unheard but always near.  
Still loved, still missed and very dear.*

Always in my heart,  
Margaret Elliott

### Thank You

**"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.



### ADVERTISING POLICY

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 date.



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## 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](http://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](mailto:christchurchpetrolia@gmail.com)

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](http://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](mailto:fbcpetrolia@gmail.com) | website: [www.firstbaptistpetrolia.ca](http://www.firstbaptistpetrolia.ca)  
Find us on Facebook! [www.facebook.com/First-Baptist-Church-Petrolia](https://www.facebook.com/First-Baptist-Church-Petrolia)



# Calendar of events

PLEASE CALL AHEAD TO CONFIRM  
DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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

To be included in this listing email the required information to:  
**[office@petrolialambtonindependent.ca](mailto: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
Mon	1-4p	Watford	Shuffle Up and Deal Bid Euchre @ E. Lambton CC	519-786-2808
Tues	7p	Watford	Euchre @ Watford Legion	519-876-2660
Tues	7p	Petrolia	Petrolia Toastmasters @ St. Andrew's Church	519-339-6606
2nd Wed	7p	Petrolia	Bingo @ Petrolia Lion's Hall	519-882-8728
3rd Wed	7p	Sarnia	Monthly Meeting @ Horticultural Society	519-332-5837
3rd Wed	1p	Petrolia	Music Jam, lunch at noon @ Petrolia Legion	519-882-1557
3rd Thurs	7p	Oil Springs	Optimist Meat Bingo @ Youth Centre	519-834-2152
Thurs	7p	Brigden	Pool Night @ Brigden Legion	
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	6p	Alvinston	Catch The Ace @ Alvinston Legion	519-898-2100
Sat	4:30p	Brigden	Meat Raffle @ Brigden Legion. Dec. 2nd and Dec. 16	
		Brigden	NEW LEGION HOURS: Thurs 6-9p; Fri 6-9p; Raffle Saturdays 4-8p; Non-Raffle Saturdays 6-9p	

UPCOMING EVENTS			
DATE	START TIME	LOCATION	EVENT/ CONTACT INFO
Oct 6 - Mar 16	Gallery Hours	Sarnia	<b>A FAMILY PALETTE: FRANCES-ANNE JOHNSTON, FRANZ JOHNSTON &amp; FRANKLIN ARBUCKLE</b> Acting as a purposeful feminist recovery project, the exhibition focuses more deeply on Frances-Anne. For more info, please visit: <a href="http://www.jnaag.ca">www.jnaag.ca</a> .
Nov 3 - Jan 12	Gallery Hours	Sarnia	<b>RE VIEW - EXHIBITION 4:</b> A series of exhibitions over the next year and a half titled Re View. For more info on the Re View exhibition series, please visit our 10 Year Anniversary page.
Jan 6 - Feb 3	Gallery Hours	Bright's Grove	<b>Looking Through Their Lens Exhibit at Gallery in the Grove</b> consists of a diverse collection of photographs by Glenn Ogilvie, Shaun Antle, Mary Kilbreath and Scott Clarke. The exhibit runs Jan 6 until Feb 3rd. Visit <a href="http://www.galleryinthegrove.com">www.galleryinthegrove.com</a> or 519-869-4643
Jan 9	7pm	Point Edward	<b>BLUEWATER ANGLERS GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING</b> POINT EDWARD COMMUNITY HALL, 210 Monk Street. Guest speaker :Gage Frazier from Anderson's Pro Bait. Seminar : "Whipping From Boat And Shore for Walleye". Draw prizes - 2 custom whipping Combos and pencil plug prize packs. Seminar will explore the whipping technique used in the St. Clair River for targeting walleye from boat and shore. Hoping to see you there!
Jan	Gallery Hours	Sarnia	<b>FAMILY SATURDAYS</b> take place year-round with changing themes each month. The program is free and open to everyone, though children must be accompanied by an adult. For further information on Family Saturday Studio Drop-Ins, visit the program and events page on the JNAAG website.
Jan	Various	Brigden	<b>BRIGDEN LEGION JANUARY EVENTS:</b> January 5 Euchre 7pm, January 12 - Pool 7pm, January 13- Meat Raffle 4:30pm, January 19- Trivia 7pm, January 20- Hosting District Pool tournament at Brigden Optimist Hall - Pool starts at 10:30am, January 26- Pool, January 27- Meat Raffle 4:30pm. Legion is Open Thursday Friday and Saturday from 6-9 . Meat Raffle Saturdays we open at 4.



# SPORTS

# Killer Bees dump Dunnville

## The Independent

The Alvinston Killer Bees improved to 8-4-1 on the Western Ontario Super Hockey League season with a 5-1 win at Dunnville on Saturday.

Matteo Lalama stopped 23 of 24 shots directed his way for the goaltending victory. Owen McGowan, Carson Perry, Rylan Bowers, Alex Cunningham and James MacEwan scored for the Bees who broke open a close contest with three unanswered goals in the final frame.

Alvinston is now within four points of third place with 17 points with several games in hand on the teams ahead of them in the standings.

Sam MacGee was named Beekeeper of the Game for Alvinston.

The Bees visit Strathroy on Friday and host Orangeville on Saturday in Alvinston. Game time for the latter is 6:30.

Meantime, a pair of former OHL players now playing for the Alvinston Killer Bees are the top two stars in the Western Ontario Super Hockey League this week.

James McEwan led the Bees to a 13-3 win over Elora last weekend with three goals and four assists and was chosen as the leagues first star of the week. The second star went to former Sting Franco Sproviero who had a goal and five assists in the one-sided victory.

## Sebastian wins ISC honours

Ty Sebastian has been named the ISC East player of the year for the 2023 season. He led the Toronto Batman to a national championship and seventh place finish at the ISC World tournament last summer in Wisconsin. Sebastian, who played with the then Alvinston Indians a decade ago, also won the Huron County title with the Brussel Tigers and the Ontario Challenge Cup tournament with the Walton Brewers.

Jace McGrail of the Sarnia Legionnaires has been selected to a GOJHL all-star team of 18-year-olds that will play a game at Ridley College next week. Ridley is a St. Catharines-based private prep school. McGrail, from Wyoming, is fifth in Legionnaire scoring this season and tops among blueliners with five goals and 18 points in 30 games. The Lambton Jr. Sting grad is in his third season with the Legionnaires after being selected in the tenth round by the OHL's Peterborough Petes in 2021. The Legionnaires return to regular season action on Thursday when they host the St. Thomas Stars.

After dominating Czechia for two periods on Tuesday, a bad bounce cost Team Canada a 3-2 loss to Czechia in the quarter-finals of the World Junior Hockey Championships in Sweden. The winning goal off London Knights defender Oliver Bonk was scored with 11 seconds in the final period. Ironically, Bonk's father, Radek, played internationally for what was then the Czech Republic before a lengthy NHL career mostly with the Ottawa Senators. The Canadian team was coached by Sarnia Sting head coach Alan Letang.

The Sting rallied from a 3-0 deficit to beat the Spitfires, 6-5 in overtime on Sunday afternoon in Windsor. Easton Wainwright had the game-winning goal 36 seconds into the extra period after Ryan Abraham had been called for a hooking infraction very late in the third period. Wainwright also had two assists. Ryan Brown scored twice and added an assist and now has three goals in three games since returning from injury. His seven goals is among the top ten of rookie goal scorers in the league. With the two points, Sarnia moves to within four points of Flint for the final playoff spot in the Western Conference. Sarnia is two points up on Windsor for last place in the conference. The Sting is home to the Peterborough Petes on Wednesday at 7:05.

Twenty-one teams take to the ice in Mooretown this weekend for the U21 Silver Stick tournament. The host team is playing in the B Division against East Elgin, Haldimand, Lambton Shores, Mid Huron, Newcastle, Saugeen Valley and Thorold. The Flags opening game is Thursday night against Lambton Shores. The finals will be held Sunday. All the games are at the Mooretown Sports Complex.

## Squires in first place with win over Tilbury

The Petrolia Squires staved off a late rally to beat the Bluebirds, 4-3 in Western Ontario Super Hockey League action Saturday in Tilbury.

Zach Van Eyk had what proved to be the game-winning goal late in the second period.

Curtis Helps, TJ Harris and Jesse Ferguson also scored for Petrolia who never trailed in the contest.

The Squires are now 12-5 and have leapfrogged Tillsonburg into first place in the standings. Petrolia has 24 points. The Thunder has 23.

The Squires will host Tilbury this Friday at Greenwood. Puck drop is 8:30.

Meantime, Sean Parker turned aside 46 shots and Ryan Fraser rang up five assists to lead the Petrolia

Squires to a 6-3 win over the Jets in WOSL action in Strathroy Friday. The home team outshot the Squires, 49-36.

Brendon Merritt scored twice for the winners. Kraig Wright, VanEyck, Harris and Jesse Ferguson had the others.

Petrolia, now 11-5 on the season, is at Tilbury tonight at 7:30.





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