WEST LORNE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE TWEEDSMUIR HISTORY

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Compiled by Leola Lawrence

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY 2004

Biooil plant construction completed

■ *Experiments run successfully at world's first biooil plant*

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

West Lorne BiOil Cogeneration Ltd. completed the first test run of its biooil production and is expecting to begin creating power soon at Erie Flooring and Wood Products in West Lorne.

The world's first commercially installed pyrolysis system took wood waste from Erie Flooring and created a brown oil, smelling like chreosol.

The biooil was combusted and heated further, turning a gas turbine and becoming char.

"Early experiments successfully demonstrated this pyrolysis system works," Jan Barynin, vice president of engineering for Dynamotive of Vancouver told the Chronicle on a tour of the plant. "Everyone here is dying to see it going."

Barynin has been coordinating the installation which began in May.

Dynamotive has invested around $3 million in the first-of-its-kind project and the Sustainable Development Technology Foundation of Canada, a not-for-profit government agency, funded $5 million.

Developers hoped Ontario Power Generation would commission the plant to begin generating electricity from its gas turbines before the end of the year.

Once commissioned the plant can ramp up production and produce up to 2.5 megawatts, enough to power the mill, pyrolysis plant and up to 2,500 houses.

Steam created by the plant will be used to heat the wood kilns.

Half of the energy created from the gas turbines will be used by Erie Flooring and the plant itself and the other half can be distributed to the power grid.

OPG also funded around $200,000 for the project.

Barynin couldn't say when the plant would be up to full capacity.

When it is, up to 70 tonnes of wood waste would be heated at 500C per day to create a biooil.

The biooil would be used to turn the Orenda Industrial gas turbines.

The pyrolysis system was being encased behind walls last week and large blue and yellow silos were erected last month to hold wood waste used in the process.

Barynin said the pyrolysis system could create oil from any biomass including agricultural waste.

Currently, Dyanmotive is looking at developing a pyrolysis system in Brazil that would create power from breaking down sugar cane waste.

Barynin said he has received a lot of support locally towards the West Lorne project and Erie Flooring has integrated well with the new system.

Training programs began for about eight employees of Erie Flooring who will operate the West Lorne BioOil Cogeneration plant.

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JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE
Jan Barynin, vice president of engineering for Dynamotive Energy Systems Corp. stands in front of the West Lorne Biooil Cogeneration Plant.



Beef farmers have hope US border will reopen

SCOTT HILGENDORFF
staff

With nothing more official than news reports that US President George W. Bush expects the border to open "soon" to Canadian beef, a local beef industry leader is cautiously optimistic.

"What does 'as soon as possible' mean? It could be one month or a year. That's frustrating," said Ian McKillop, a Dutton-area farmer and Vice President of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association.

Ian McKillop

However, he said the fact Bush has commented publically about the issue is an encouraging sign.

Bush announced last week it was looking good to reopen the border but did not give any specific indication as to how much longer it would take.

The border closed a year ago May 20 after a single case of mad cow disease (BSE) was found in Alberta.

Cattle prices plummeted putting the beef industry in jeopardy.

Prices have slowly recovered as some restrictions were lifted to allow certain cuts of meet across the border from cattle under 30 months of age.

However, live cattle have been prevented from crossing the border since last May.

Struggling beef farmers were helped with more than $1 billion in government aid since the crisis first began but McKillop has said last month the industry was soon reaching a point where it would have to downsize operations.

So far, he said he doesn't know of any local operations that have closed down but said banks are having a tougher time providing loans to farmers whose futures have remained uncertain since the crisis began.

He expects Bush's announcement last week will give banks reasons to be optimistic as well.

The American government held a period of public comment regarding reopening the border.

The comment period closed April 7 but McKillop expected it would take at least a month to go through the more than 3,000 comments the US government received.

He is optimistic the process could take about a month but said that is just speculation.

He doesn't expect any advance announcement beyond a press conference to announce the border is reopening.

Economic development new focus for Chamber

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

The West Elgin Chamber of Commerce has decided to become its own collective economic development officer after failed attempts in the past to get an economic development project in place.

"Lots of studies have been done. Lots of desires have been expressed. But that has to be transferred to buses with wheels on them rolling down the street," said Keith Fretter who chairs a new chamber of commerce committee as part of a recent restructuring to help the chamber focus on economic development.

Fretter and chamber president Tom Jones said the chamber has been spinning its wheels for years now on economic development, spending more time on planning than doing.

Both said chamber membership decided it was time to take some forward steps directed toward bringing new industry and business to the area.

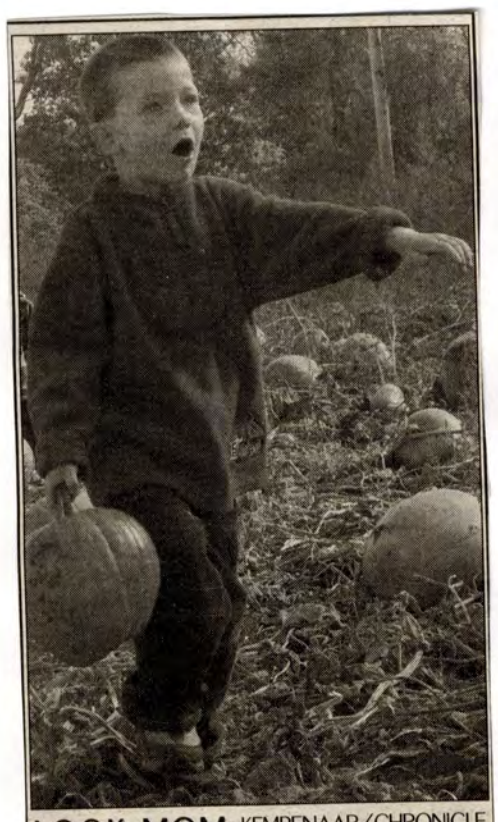
"The object is not to do any more research," said Fretter.

The research has been done including participation in a recent Business Retention and Expansion Committee survey that has helped identify areas of need from local businesses and industry.

From the chamber's own research and that of the Business Retention and Expansion Committee, Fretter said it's time to start taking action.

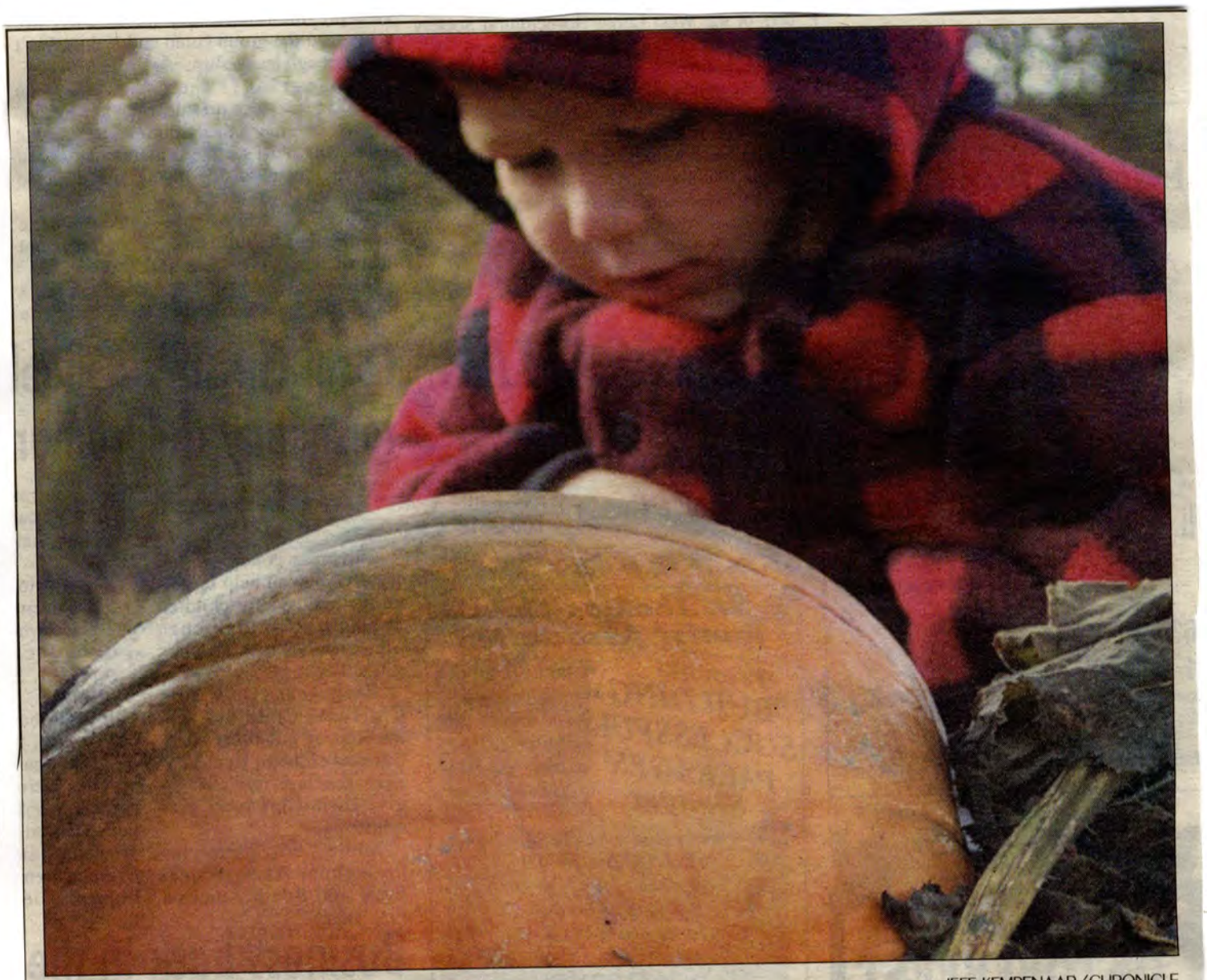
"We need to do some work in getting our ear to the ground," said Fretter, referring to the need of starting to contact industries that are looking for

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LOOK MOM KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Tommy McGill, four, from West Lorne carries a pumpkin to his mom at a Tiny Tots trip to Jamieson's Pumpkin Patch north of West Lorne Oct. 13.



PUMPKIN PATCH KID JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Steven Fodor, three-years-old, from Rodney looks for worms under this pumpkin at a Tiny Tots trip to Jamieson's Pumpkin Patch north of West Lorne on Oct. 13. About 20 kids came with parents to hear the Great Pumpkin Patch story.

Women At Work

After working at the Dutton Advance newspaper and in the commercial printing industry for 22 years, Nancy Mott is committed and loyal to her home community, West Elgin/Dutton.

Her commitment continues on at West Elgin Support Services in West Lorne.

West Elgin Support Services offers a range of services to West Elgin and Dutton/Dunwich in a partnership of community agencies.

The services offered are employment counselling, interview workshops, dexterity testing, access to job posting, job banks, job developing, employer services, access to wage subsidy programs for employers, student outreach in high schools and summer job services. The centre also offers recreational, leisure, literacy and children's programs along with assistance and advocacy for the developmentally disabled.

The centre also coordinates the West Elgin Transportation Network and arranges bookings for the Community Room for West Elgin.

Nancy enjoys helping people and gets great satisfaction from seeing results and getting positive feedback for her work at the centre.



Nancy Mott

She has lived in the area for 33 years and after the Dutton Advance newspaper closed she upgraded her skills at Fanshawe College and started working at the centre in August 2003.

"I consider myself very fortunate to work in West Elgin/Dutton-Dunwich," she says.

She gained a mentor at the newspaper in former owner/publisher Dan Moore who passed away in May 2002.

"I admired Dan's dedication and commitment to his community. I still have that influence with me every day and I think of him often,"

She encourages young women starting out in business today to strive to work at what they enjoy.

"There's nothing like being able to say, 'I love my job!'"

Nancy can be reached at West Elgin Support Services in West Lorne at 160 Main St. (adjacent to the library), by phone at 768-0020 and by fax at 768-0401.

'WOMEN AT WORK' is a special advertising feature of The Chronicle. If you would like to be part of this exciting avenue, to let our readers know of your service, please call Scott to book your space at 768-2220.

Women At Work

Empowering people to make positive change in their lives is a service Alicia Allen is rewarded with.

Alicia is an employment counsellor at West Elgin Support Services in West Lorne.

"I believe our success comes from empowering people and helping people obtain employment by utilizing our services," said Alicia, who measures the success of the centre by the high number of referrals the centre has received.

The centre offers free employment counselling, interview workshops, dexterity testing, access to job postings, job banks, job developing, employer services, access to wage subsidy programs for employers, student outreach in high schools and summer job services.

"We work with many groups in West Elgin and Dutton-Dunwich including students, youth, adults and seniors," she said.

West Elgin Support Services is a partnership of community agencies including Employment Services Elgin, Elgin Association for Community Living, Elgin-Oxford Legal Clinic, OPP, Quad County Support Services, Violence Against Women Services Elgin County and YWCA of St.Thomas-Elgin.



Alicia Allen

Good leadership can lead to success and Alicia has found a good leader, Cathy Grondin.

Grondin is a program co-ordinator with Employment Services Elgin and Fanshawe College and Alicia looks to her as a mentor.

"She is a patient, intuitive leader who encourages you to challenge yourself and grow while you give support," she said.

One way to empower people is to enjoy life yourself, Alicia said.

"I would advise any young woman to stay focused and enjoy the journey instead of focusing on the destination."

Alica can be reached at West Elgin Support Services, in West Lorne at 160 Main St. (adjacent to the library), by phone at 768-0020 and by fax at 768-0401, three days a week and two days on alternate weeks.

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BUSINESS + INDUSTRY 2004



SERVED CHRONICLE

Members of the 4-H Bit and Bridle Club in West Elgin served up dinner at a recent horse information night hosted by Dixon's Feed Service at St. Mary's Hall in West Lorne. Above, Kenzie and Alex Ranson find some dishes they like.

The Chronicle



DEMOLITION AT MILNER RIGSBY CLEARS WAY FOR PARKING LOT JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

A storage building was demolished at Milner-Rigsby to make way for an employee parking lot this week. During the demolition, the façade of the building fell towards Argyle St., scraping the road. Henry Bens, site manager at Milner Rigsby said the demolition will be complete by December. He said there were safety concerns with the old storage building and the floor was deteriorating. Demolition started on a boiler building behind the old storage building that was condemned three years ago. At one time, the almost hundred-year-old building was a cannery for locally grown produce, said Bens. In the photo,Lawrence Bell operates the excavator while Chris Kalita, left, Mark Vandenboomen, centre and John Carrol, right, repair the site fencing. A hydro pôll was struck and shifted during the demolition, but later repaired.

BioOil produced at West Lorne plant

Dynamotive announced this week eight production runs have been completed at the West Lorne Biooil Cogenerational facility, housed at Erie Flooring.

Further production runs were planned for this week as the company aims toward producing electricity by burning down wood waste into a biooil that can fuel a turbine.

In the latest press release, Dynamotive says biooil has been produced from wood and bark remains from Erie Flooring.

Before the plant can generate power, a steady flow of biooil must be produced.

The company has not said when the project will be completed entirely.

The plant has been commissioned to begin generating electricity but has continued testing the new, one-of-a-kind technology.

Engineers demonstrated noncondensable gases can be generated to heat the biomass to create biooil.

The biooil is greenhouse gas neutral and the entire plant is seen as a way to reduce harmful emissions in the air while producing electricity to power Erie Flooring, and neighbouring houses.

Also, the end result of the testing and burning of the biomass was char, which can also be used as to create energy.

The company has yet to test the Magellan Aerospace turbine which will create energy to power the sawmill.

Stockholders eagerly watching the progression at the West Lorne plant hoped it would have been fully operational earlier this year.

While testing, the company now says it will begin marketing the biooil, to sell it as an alternative liquid fuel.

As part of the demonstration phase of the project, 4.8 tonnes of Biooil were fired in the steam boilers.

The Biooil was fired at 5801°C/hr, generating a heat output of 13MMBTU/hr with no hydrocarbon emissions, no suplhur-dioxide, low nitrous-oxide and CO2 neutral.

The company also announced it was to ship 12 tonnes of Biooil May 31 for testing and market development purposes to Classic Power in Toronto which also plans to use the Biooil.

The fast pyrolysis system built and being tested at the West Lorne plant is the only one of its size in the world, says the company.

The pyrolysis system is what creates the biooil fro the leftover wood product.

A new project is planned for the Toronto area to create energy from other wastes.

Erie Flooring fined $45,000

Erie Flooring and Wood Products has been fined $45,000 after an employee was injured in a workplace fall last year.

The company pleaded guilty May 30 at the Court of Justice in London to not having a required guard rail in place when the employee fell from an elevated hoist platform on Feb. 19, 2004.

The employee suffered cuts to his right hand and both arms and required surgery for lacerations to his hand and hip.

The employee was passing wood products from one pallet hoist to another when he fell 6 feet (1.828 metres) into an adjacent pit.

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act the company was convicted of violating a section requiring guard rails to open areas, said Rene Laframboise, program manager for the provincial Ministry of Labour.

Erie Flooring lays off 14

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

Erie Flooring laid off 14 probationary employees last week, a move management did not anticipate they would have to make.

A contract ended earlier than what was negotiated with a company resulting in a reduction in the afternoon shift.

Forty employees were hired in the spring and the company had anticipated they would have work throughout the winter.

The 14 employees worked on the laminated trailer flooring line from 4:30 p.m. to 3 a.m. Monday to Thursday.

They were hired with the anticipation of becoming fulltime employees, but a shortage of work came before the three-month probation term was met.

"We generally tend not to hire people if we know there isn't going to be work," said Alan Vandenbrink, Erie Flooring and Wood Products general manager. "It's not something we anticipated."

The company employs 210 on the active payroll but operates with around five per cent of its staff on short-term disability or maternity leave and three per cent not active due to absenteeism.

Vandenbrink said the company is diversified and usually has inventory built up to keep work flowing, but the unexpected end to the contract left a shortage of work.

West Lorne IGA ready to open LCBO

SCOTT HILGENDORFF
staff

West Lorne's IGA will soon include an LCBO agency store.

Steve Browne, IGA's owner, is hopeful the operation will be running inside his store by the end of the month as work wraps up to restructure the store to include a separate 400-square foot area to house the LCBO agency.

The project also includes becoming a Beer Store retail partner which will see the store selling a range of beer, wine and spirits.

Browne said the first few months will be spent researching the buying habits of local people until they are able to determine what are the most popular beverages and brands customers are looking for in the limited retail space.

Following the same rules as the LCBO, employees will all receive "smart-server" training and customers who look 25 and under can expect to be asked for ID before being served.

Browne said he plans to take good care in working under the laws that govern the sale of alcohol and isn't going to take any chances on losing the LCBO licencing.

For the store, Browne said having the LCBO agency will mean increased traffic and business, helping provide more services to customers and keeping the store viable.

He has been waiting for an opportunity to connect with the LCBO for about six years now and it took almost that long before the LCBO made a space available in this area to house an agency store.

Browne underwent the application process late last year and had word earlier this spring that he was approved to open the agency.

BUSINESS + INDUSTRY 2004



SCOTT HILGENDORFF/CHRONICLE

TURNING OVER THE KEYS

John Vaughan, centre, receives the keys to his new Pontiac Sunfire from West Lorne IGA owners Brenda and Steven Browne. Vaughan won the car in the Great Ontario IGA Giveaway Contest.

Industry coming, could mean 50 jobs

SCOTT HILGENDORFF

staff

Hiring will begin in late August or early September for TFT Services which will begin an automotive subassembly operation at the former E&E McLaughlin facility on Gilbert Street in West Lorne.

Initially hiring six to eight employees, the West Elgin Chamber of Commerce has said the company is expected to hire approximately 50 employees by mid-2005.

"This is a huge step forward for West Elgin. Hopefully there's many more to come," said Tom Jones, chamber of commerce chair.

TFT Services is located in Tillsonburg and is an automotive inspection, sorting and containment company.

The move to West Lorne came after TFT Services signed a deal with a "major Tier 1 supplier to Ford Motor Company", said the chamber in a media release.

"We welcome the company and its management and employees," said Jones, adding the chamber will do whatever it can to assist the industry.

The chamber recently restructured and has placed an emphasis on economic development, citing a need to spend time and effort meeting with industries to help attract them to the area.

Council has tentatively placed $20,000 in its 2004 budget to meet a request from the chamber to help cover the costs of economic development initiatives.

Hiring for TFT Services will be done through Employment Services Elgin.

US mad cow adds to strife faced locally

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

A Monday deadline for public comment in the United States to plans to reopen the border to live cattle should have brought the Canadian beef industry another step closer to the light at the end of the tunnel that local beef producers were seeing.

Instead, that light is growing dimmer.

"This week will have a better indication on how much impact BSE (known as mad cow disease) in the United States has had on Canadian markets," said Ian McKillop, a local beef producer and vice president of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association.



Ian McKillop

"THE INDUSTRY IN ONTARIO JUST CANNOT WITHSTAND ONE MORE PUNCH IN THE STOMACH,"

— McKillop, Ontario Cattlemen

Since Dec. 23, when a case of mad cow was found in the United States, fears grew worse that slowly recovering Canadian prices would be hurt again following Canada's single case of mad cow found last May.

Canada's mad cow discovery forced the closing of borders around the world to Canadian beef including to the United States, which in the fall were reopened to certain cuts of meat.

However, McKillop said the Canadian and American beef industry are so closely tied that a crisis in one country greatly affects the other. Whether or not the American cow turns out to be originally from a Canadian herd, the industry across North America is in a crisis.

"It causes a great deal of stress on producers," he said.

Feed lots have been able to withstand the poor prices and the inability to move live cattle.

Many producers have kept their herds several months longer than planned, meaning increased feed costs and losses mounting in the hundreds of millions of dollars in Ontario alone.

"The industry in Ontario just cannot stand one more punch in the stomach," said McKillop, not wanting to sound dire.

But he said banks that finance the feed lots and large producers would soon be reaching a point where they have to look at their investments in the industry.

"I'm not sure how long before they have to start making some tough decisions on financing farmers," said McKillop.

Sun Media reported Tuesday 80 per cent of calls to an Ontario farm crisis line are from worried beef producers facing financial pressures.

About a month ago, McKillop reported a light at the end of the tunnel.

While beef prices remained low, they had risen slightly, cuts of meat were being allowed into the United States and a process was in place to potentially reopen the border completely.

This week, the American government decided to put on hold any plans to reopen the border to live cattle from Canada until its own investigation is complete on its case of mad cow, throwing back into question the survival of Canada's beef industry.

Combining sound and colour therapy with creativity, Good Vibrations for Sound Health has grown out of Sharon Little's first operation, One Quality Note.

One Quality Note, which Little still operates on the side, began seven years ago as a photo card business but for the past three years, she has been building Good Vibrations for Sound Health.



Sharon Little

Although filled with healthful applications, people have a lot of fun through a range of offerings from music lessons, music improvisation programs, drum circles and more.

"People discover they are musical, whether they have any music background or not," says Little.

She offers music lessons, drum circle programs, creativity coaching, sound and colour therapy, meditation and "authentic music making for the terribly terrified and the classically trained."

She also has the only monochord sound table in the country and provides a highly unique and individualized set of non-invasive vibrational healing and self-transformation techniques.

For inspiration, Little watches and listens to people who are on the leading edge of their professions and looks to people who are creating a unique life that is fully lived and enjoyed.

"I watch what others do and learn from what works and doesn't," says Little.

One of the best parts of being in business is the fun she has leading drum circles and improvisation sessions.

Working with people through sound, colour, meditation and coaching allows her to individualize her work for the client and she enjoys seeing how quickly positive changes are made in their lives while they establish a greater life balance and live more purposefully.

For a young woman starting out in business, Little says, "Find out who you are; what your real outer and inner strengths are, what is in you that is holding you back and how you can overcome those obstacles. Make it a priority to establish a solid connection with others and with your better, higher self, even when your little personality fights back, and take the high road."

Little can be found at 23807 McLean Line outside Rodney or by phone at 785-0797.

'WOMEN AT WORK' is the newest feature of The Chronicle. If you would like to be part of this exciting avenue, to let our readers know of your service, please call Shirley to book your space at 768-2220.

Women At Work

After working for 12-years in greenhouses and flower shops, Marilyn Howse and her mother-in-law, Jenny Howse, decided to put their combined horticulture experience together and go into business.

That was 15 years ago when they opened Dutton Flowers, a flower and gift shop on Dutton's main street.



Marilyn Howse

They offer a full range of floral services for any occasion from weddings to funerals and carry a selection of tropical plants, silks, gardening supplies and they offer world-wide delivery services.

It's a personal business for Marilyn who keeps the individual in mind when she is designing arrangements for her customers or offering unique decorating and gift ideas to them.

In particular, she finds designing funeral flowers a very personal part of the job and important to her.

"I try to make my designs a celebration of their life," said Marilyn.

But any chance to design something personal for someone's home gives her enjoyment in her work.

Jenny became Marilyn's mentor, teaching her much through the years.

"Because of her dedication, our flower shop has been successful," said Marilyn.

For a young woman starting out in her own business, she said patience, determination, caution and lots of hard work are keys to being successful.

Experience in the particular field of interest and believing in yourself are also important.

She said her own success comes from caring and taking pride in offering specialized, personal service to her customers.

"Without my customers, I wouldn't have a business," she said.

Success for Marilyn also comes from having a supportive family.

"My husband, my sons, my father-in-law and a special aunt are always there to help me," she said.

Dutton Flowers is located at 167 Main Street and can be reached by phone at 762-2059.

Farmers feel helpless, says Elgin federation

For *The Chronicle*

"There's a real feeling of helplessness and frustration out there among the farm families."

And for Elgin Federation of Agriculture (EFA) president Donna Lunn that frustration is compounded by the staggering impact of BSE (Mad cow disease) and a new provincial government that has "blindsided" the agriculture industry with its shift on nutrient management.

As a result of bovine spongiform encephalopathy restrictions at the U.S. border, Lunn predicts "there won't be any live animal movement for a long, long time" and that is impacting producers in Elgin County.

"The crucial effects are right to the farms and farm families themselves who have livestock," explained Lunn, elected EFA president in December.

"THERE'S NO SPENDING. NINETY PER CENT OF THE FARM FAMILIES IN ELGIN COUNTY SPEND THEIR INPUT COSTS HERE IN THE COUNTY."

— Donna Lunn Elgin Federation of Agriculture

"That's beef, dairy and sheep. It's not crossing the border so there is no more dairy breeding. We have some of the largest dairy export breeders in the province right here in Elgin and they're really feeling that effect. There are absolutely no breeding animals going across the border."

And the economic impact will ripple through communities across the county.

"There's no spending. Ninety per cent of the farm families in Elgin County spend their input costs here in the county. So then we're talking how it affects our rural infrastructure in our communities as well."

This is troubling enough without the curveball Premier Dalton McGuinty's Liberals threw at farmers who are struggling to cope with nutrient management legislation that requires them to have facilities able to store manure for up to 240 days.

Settling in as EFA president, Lunn said she was not expecting to see the rules change after McGuinty took over as premier.

"The farmers have been asking for clear legislation (on nutrient management) for so many years, and we finally had done so much consultation and planning and so much organizing with the last government. We were really moving forward. And now it's a whole shifting with the McGuinty government."

Lunn said the new government did not consult with the agricultural community when it acted "quickly" to shift the responsibility of first-complaint enforcement of nutrient management matters

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JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

STOOKING

(left photo) Jim West pulls Hugh McFadden on a binder harvesting oats on West's farm. McFadden purchased the Massey Harris binder in 1930. (middle and right photos) Peter Hentz forks a sheaf of oats to Hugh McFadden on the wagon on Monday near Wallacetown. They were participating in a Tyrconnell Heritage Society deomonstration on harvesting grains in the 1900s. Don Lumley helps put the sheaves on the wagon produced from oats grown by Jim West, on the tractor. They will be threshed at the Heritage Farm Show Sept. 4 and 5 at the Backus-Page House.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

FARMING FUN FOR FAMILIES AT FAIR

Jonathan Woolsey, front left, Jan Kool, back left, Brad Tunks and Megan Regnier push a bale around an obstable course during the Farm Olympics on Sunday at the Rodney Aldborough Agricultural Fair. Fair goers enjoyed three warm days at the 150th anniversary celebrations.

Beef farmers move beyond BSE with or without U.S. border open

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

The beef industry got a $488 million boost earlier this month and now advocates are waiting for the province of Ontario to kick in money.

The federal government announced the funding earlier this month based on suggestions from the Canadian Cattlemen's Association.

The Alberta government announced it would contribute $230 million to its beef producers and talks this week will be aimed at the Ontario government to add its normal 40 per cent.

"The funding will help the industry but what we need is the border opening to live cattle," said Ian McKillop, vice-president of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association.

While the federal contribution is less than the $750 million the cattle industry received in 2003, this funding goes directly into programs that will enhance the profitability of Canadian producers with or without the U.S.

Continued on Page

Willy reopens, revamps family garden centre

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

Building on the traditions of her parents, Willy VanDyk is opening up Willy's Plants and Flowers.

"Mom and dad had this business for over 30 years. They retired. I'm trying to start it up again," said VanDyk.

After retiring two years ago, VanDyk said her parents, Joanne and John Bakker were still getting comments from people missing Bakker's Greenhouse on Thomson Line.

"Mom and dad did it for years. There was a need for it," said VanDyk who decided to take on the challenge of revitalizing the business as Willy's Plants and Flowers.

"It will be what they used to have plus my own," said VanDyk.

One tradition she is building on is geraniums grown from cuttings.

It was a specialty of her parents that customers came to expect and is a tradition she is carrying on, although not in big numbers as her parents this season as she works to get the business growing again.

She will keep a range of flowers as well as herbs and vegetable plants which she said were popular items at the store.

New will be some wave petunias and other flowers the original greenhouse didn't have and VanDyk is hoping for a few surprises in the summer including possibly growing cut flowers for people to make arrangements.

"We might be selling some cut flowers at the side of the road," said VanDyk.

They're also looking at fall mums and other products as they work to get the business going again.

It's been a lot of work as she prepares to open her doors in the next couple weeks and VanDyke said her husband George will be getting the "employee of the month" award on a regular basis.

And while her father retired, he's still been known to get his hands dirty helping his daughter in the greenhouse.

As she builds the business, she said she's more than willing to help customers with gardening tips and is welcome to advice and suggestions from other experienced gardeners.

Willy's Plants and Flowers is located on Thomson Line, east of Graham Road.

Besley's celebrate 50 years

The Besley's are humbled that there are a few homes in the area which could pass as Besley's Furniture Store showrooms.

It's no doubt because the family-run business has been the area's predominant furniture and appliance store for 50 years.

"I think just about every house around has at least something from Besley's," said owner Bill Besley.

He started helping with deliveries at 14 with his grandfather El who opened the store in October 1955.

In the same location, Besley's has expanded from its beginnings as just an appliance store.

It took over the Chinese restaurant in the adjacent part of the Main Street building in West Lorne shortly after opening.

In 1999, a 3,000 square-foot warehouse was built behind the store.

The warehouse gave the store more floor space for furniture and mattress display, cornering the display models of appliances in the back.

With only Bill, his wife Tracy and some additional part-time help, Besley's remains a small town, family business.

These are rare, said Bill, "You just don't see (furniture) stores in small towns anymore."

But word of mouth and competitive pricing has kept the business going.

With no commission-based salespeople and free delivery, Besley's continues to offer a relaxed shopping experience not found in the city.

"You can tell if someone just came in from the city. You can tell they have just been attacked by a salesperson," said Bill.

While encouraging customers to shop around, for 50 years and counting, Besley's furniture and appliances continue to be found in area homes.



Changes come to burning process at Erie Flooring JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Jim Schneckenburger puts a handful of wood shavings into the Dutch oven at Erie Flooring and Wood Products Monday. Employees have been instructed to only throw up to three handfuls of shavings into the oven to reduce the amount of black smoke which has been billowing out of the smoke stack, right, for years at the mill.

Man hurt at Erie Flooring

A 48-year-old Rodney man was air lifted from a nearby field after suffering serious injuries while working at Erie Flooring and Wood Products Aug. 17.

Robert Ritchie, was working in the stacking area when he was injured by equipment.

OPP and Thames EMS responded at Erie Flooring before determining he had to be air lifted to London Health and Science Centre.

The Ministry of Labour is currently investigating the accident.

They would not release information about how Ritchie was hurt.

"We're just starting investigating so we can't say just what happened," said Patrick O'Gorman, senior communication officer with the ministry.

Management at the company would not comment on the accident at this time.

Ritchie remained at LHSC in critical condition Monday.

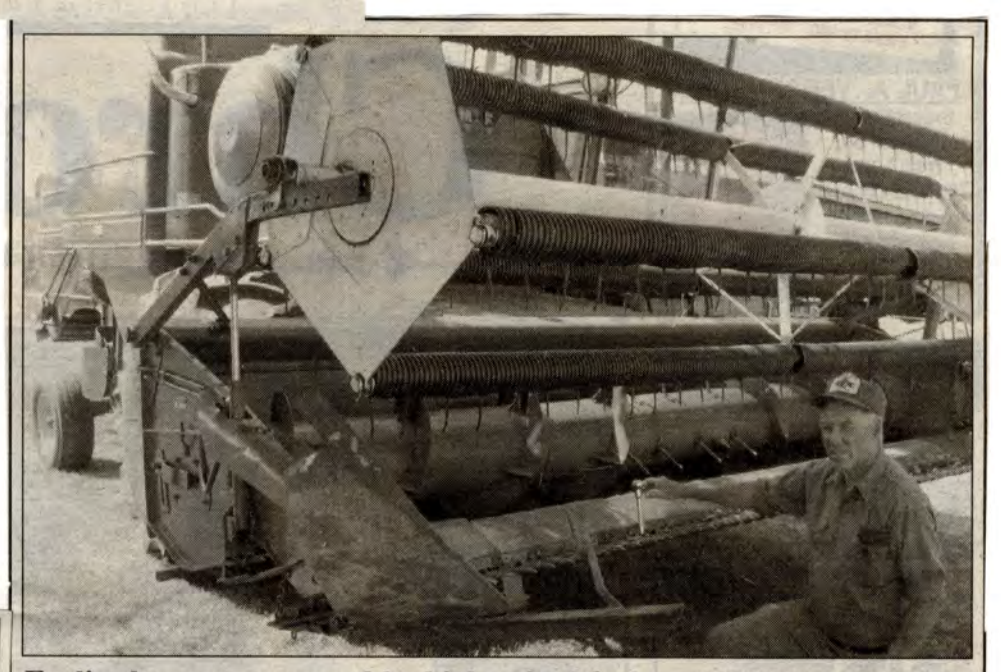
After an initial investigation by the Western Regional Office of the Ministry of Labour, 12 orders were given to the company related to the incident.

"Orders were issued in regards to what has happened to ensure nothing else happens," said O'Gorman, adding the investigation could take up to a year.

Orders given were to improve safeguards for moving lumber piles.

Also included were orders to provide information, instruction and supervision to workers as well as training for rigging techniques.

Along with this, orders were issued to have guardrails added around uncovered areas on the floor and that workers be given a safety latch to prevent falls.



Earlier harvest pressured by high priced fuel JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

A dryer summer could bring an earlier harvest to the area this year. Hugh McFadden was tightening bolts on his combine Monday with plans to begin harvesting later this month. He's holding off on buying fuel, hoping the prices will continue to drop.

Gas prices to impact harvest

Higher gas prices have farmers looking to reduce the amount of time spent in a tractor for this year's harvest.

Extra tilling to cut weeds may be one way farmers will reduce fuel costs, says Ontario Farm Association Vice-President Paul Mistele from Rodney.

But the real hit to farmers may not be until next year when inputs like fertilizers are more expensive from higher fuel costs impacting transportation of the inputs.

"There will be a huge impact on fertilizers," he said, adding with a 30 per cent increase in fuel, costs would rise at the same rate.

Mistele and the OFA have been working on a demand to bring to the federal government to get some of the tax money back.

"Thirty-four per cent of the fuel cost is taxation. Don't tell me they don't have extra revenue. They are raking it in and haven't added a penny to industry producing food," he said.

Mistele, who also has pigs is already dealing with a 20 cent surcharge for each hog hauled away.

He said he will look at cutting back on tilling next year by 60 per cent.

However that would put pressure on him to use chemicals to reduce weeds.

With an early harvest expected from the dry temperatures this year, no farmers should be looking at not harvesting.

"Unless they have a very poor crop," said Mistele.

Harry Mezenburg is also looking at the costs of higher fuel prices on his crop.

With prices for corn around $2.50 a bushel, the expense for each bushel could reach $4.

"I'm established and have been here a long time. But some of the young guys may look at off-loading assets to pay for this," he said.

"Gas prices are going to hurt everyone," he said.



St. Clair Region tree planters tour Erie Flooring JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Aaron Palmer, health and safety representative with Erie Flooring and Wood Products in West Lorne led two bus loads of St. Clair Region Conservation Authority members around the plant Aug. 16. Behind Palmer is a truck load of sawdust. About 70 tonnes of sawdust is produced at the plant in a day. The sawdust is burned in ovens to create steam to run the plant.

BioOil project puts West Lorne on world map

WEST LORNE

SCOTT HILGENDORFF



ACROSS COUNTY LINES

It's a village of just about 1,000 people but it's attracting attention from around the world.

It's not from tourists visiting the local hot spots and beaches. It's from scientists, investors and government representatives interested in the success of a BioOil production facility that began producing green energy this summer from the oil created from the superheating of wood waste.

Housed at Erie Flooring and Wood Products, one of the partner agencies in the more than $12-million project, the plant is putting West Lorne on the map, yet even the village's own residents don't fully understand the significance of the facility.

Because foreign visitors are coming directly to the plant, the community is almost oblivious to the fact various nations have been represented in the village throughout the summer and now fall.

Just last week, the plant gave tours to visitors from Japan, Russia and the United States. There have also been visitors from China.

"They want to import this technology to their country," said Gholam Yavari, director of engineering on the project. He said there should be signs erected at the village entrances, declaring Home of BioOil.

He also said it's something for the village to be proud of and is surprised at how little attention it's getting.

"West Lorne is the centre of attention," he said.

While the project has been under construction and test runs for about two years now, it's only in the past month or so that it has begun to gain national media notice.

The technology itself is not completely new, using a process called fast pyrolysis to convert Erie Flooring wood waste into a product called BioOil, The BioOil, which can also be produced from other agricultural byproducts that normally are considered waste, is then burned in turbines and produces less emissions than traditional fuels.

In the Erie Flooring project, patented technology from the Canadian company DynaMotive, the lead agency in the project, produces the BioOil from sawdust and other wood waste. A gas turbine has been modified to use the BioOil to produce enough electricity to power Erie Flooring and neighbouring homes, with excess power available to be supplied to the overall provincial power grid.

According to DynaMotive, BioOil is considered a greenhouse gas-neutral fuel source, which is partly why it's generating worldwide attention, as countries around the globe work toward lowering greenhouse emissions under the Kyoto Accord.

At Erie Flooring, several benefits exist to the project. Locally, residents have complained for years about the thick black smoke produced as waste is burned at Erie Flooring. This summer, a petition was started by local residents demanding the pollution stop. The problem is expected to be resolved with the operation of the new BioOil facility.

An extra benefit is that steam created in the pyrolysis will be used to heat the facility and in the drying of its finished products.

DynaMotive expected two years ago the Erie Flooring project would attract global attention, and the company proved true to its word as it works to expand investment into its technology.

The overall project has received $5 million in federal funding from Sustainable Development Technology Canada, as part of its investment in the production of more environmentally friendly fuel sources. The project has also been supported by a consortium of partners, including Magellan Aerospace Corp., Orenda division, UMA Ltd., and Ontario Power Generation.

While some of the visitors have been representing private corporations, Yavari said they are also reporting back to their various governments, looking toward gaining approvals to develop the technology overseas.

Locally, West Lorne goes under the radar of many passersby on Highway 401, but the sleepy little community is the centre of some very positive world attention.

"Right now, West Lorne is on the map," Yavari says.

Scott Hilgendorff is a freelance writer based in Elgin County. Across County Lines appears Thursdays and Saturdays.

Border open, costs keep cows home

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Area beef farmers are waiting for market prices to adjust to the border to the U.S. opening last week to Canadian cattle.

"It's not the rose we thought it would be," said Dave Clark, a Dutton-area beef farmer.

Cattle under 30 months old entered the U.S. last week from Ontario and Alberta for the first time since May 2003 when a case of mad cow, or bovine spongiform encephalopathy was found in an Alberta cow causing the border to close.

Clark is not as keen to send meat south as he thought he would be when the border opened.

Producers can get more per pound selling to slaughterhouses here.

Clark was waiting to see how that will affect the price of cattle here.

Clark would rather see the prices rise in the U.S. to make a better market for all producers.

"I'm not keen to ship. There's no economic feasibility," said Clark.

He has 700 feeders and 150 cow calves.

While there is demand for cattle across the border, Clark is daunted by the red tape to get it there.

He said regulations require him to pay a certified veterinarian the cost to verify the age of the animals.

Also, in the last two years, cost of shipping across the border has risen with fees



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Uffen Incorporated moves into old Chronicle building

Uffen Incorporated has relocated to 242 Graham Road in West Lorne from its home office in Rodney after 10 years of business. Ted and Louise Uffen have renovated the office to accommodate a meeting room for training sessions. Uffen Inc. assists other businesses in registering and maintaining ISO-type management systems as well as training internal auditors.

Tobacco farmers move on

A handful of tobacco farmers bought out of the industry earlier this year have moved on to experiment with new crops.

For the Fischer family farm between Rodney and West Lorne, cash crops will keep them going but they're hoping three new crops will make the farm successful once again.

Dennis and Sandra Fischer sold quota for 40 acres worth of tobacco in May in a buyout program.

"It was a fair deal," said Dennis. "It didn't put the farm ahead or behind."

More than 700 of the Ontario tobacco producers holding quota participated in the buyout auction.

Changes in the tobacco industry have left western Elgin County with 15 tobacco farms.

The clearing price in the buyout was $1.05 per pound of basic production.

The program had its snags though for the Fischer family, the tobacco had already been planted in the greenhouses as they waited for the federal government to chip in money to the program.

But now, the family is looking ahead after 50 years in the tobacco industry.

"There was a lot of pride. I was never ashamed to grow it," he said.

Now, the Ontario government is working on legislation to ban smoking in public in 2006.

In May of this year, $50 million dollars was given by both levels of government to the Flue-Cured Marketing Board.

In a bidding war, farmers like the Fischers sold their quota.

Modern kilns weren't as modern at the family farm and the next generation wasn't interested in growing tobacco.

So the Fischers sold.

Now, they have several types of berries growing. The orchard is doing well and their daughter has taken to managing it.

Currently, the Fischers are also growing black tobacco also used for cigarettes but not part of the marketing board and buyout program.

In between their cash crops, grows 12 acres of hemp and bird seed.

Dennis, who researches soybeans at Ridgetown College full-time, is optimistic about the future of hemp.

"It's not going to be as high paying as flue-cured tobacco but if industry and the public get behind it to produce it in quantity, it can be used for a lot of different things," he said.

The hemp in the field now will be sold for seed production.

"We have to try something," said Dennis.

While moving on, Dennis said every day he thinks about his decision to leave the industry and whether it was right or wrong.



Moving on JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Dennis and Sandra Fischer have moved on from the tobacco industry to try crops like hemp and blueberries.

Kolar teaching Black Arts at new Dojo in West Lorne, rare fighting style taught by few around the world

Jim and Kate Kolar aren't starting an army of martial arts experts, but their new dojo in West Lorne is preparing a lot of residents for the worst the streets can bring.

The West Lorne family's company Security Training Solutions has been giving self defence training and teaching various martial arts programs in the village since 2003 and has now opened up a Dojo on Graham Road in the downtown core.

When Jim returned from serving with Canadian Forces in Afghanistan earlier this year, he wanted to expand his lessons from a dozen students twice a week at St. Mary's Catholic School.

Renting space in one building, immediately Kolar found more people interested in learning.

Now almost 40 people take lessons and train with the company three nights a week in two store fronts.

Kolar won't stop there, he hopes to add more lessons during the evening in the new year and eventually hopes to be open during the day.

In January, Bill Hill will begin teaching Tai-chi at the Dojo.

Kolar taught martial arts to the military while in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Kolar is one test away from becoming only the third person in the world to be a grand master in the Black Arts.

The Black Arts Society is a martial arts system developed by Grandmaster Gus Michalik at the army regiment in London.

It combines the best of many martial arts streaming mainly from Hap Ki Do, Kenpo and Ju-jit-su.

It's a basic self defence system teaching simple movements in combinations with touching pressure points.

Kolar said martial arts are still competitive like a sport but as it has become more popular in sport, the art and meaning of the movements have been lost.

He said knowing pressure points on the body is not incorporated in many martial arts classes but knowing how to manipulate them is the most effective mode of self defence.

"We don't like fighting," he said, adding it doesn't have much of a practical use here in western Elgin County.

However, he said crime in London is up 75 per cent, and criminals often use weapons, particularly a knife.

His training teaches people how to defend themselves from a knife wielding assailant by grabbing people at a pressure point and disarming them.

Security Training Solutions and Kolar have already trained police forces and army regiments and in the new year will begin training more Canadian Forces all over the world in Black Arts.

Jim is a black belt in seven different styles and Kate is a black belt in four.

Once a black belt is obtained, the belt holder can begin teaching others.

Kolar hopes to have many black belts helping at training courses in coming months.

Many students have advanced quickly and satellite Dojos could be in operation in neighbouring villages withing 2006.

Kolar is filling the Dojo with equipment from weapons to exercize machines.

A part of teaching martial arts is physical fitness.

If students aren't interested in taking tests and earning different belts, they can come and get a good work out.

"When people have come here, they don't leave," said Kate.

Doing hundreds of jumping jacks, Kolar's programs have become a successful method of exercise, he said.

For the youth coming, he is prepared to train students to become the next Tae Kwon Do Olympic Champions.

Some students are already prepared to compete in an upcoming tournament in London in January.

Students also learn discipline and are givin homework assignments to make sure they continue to learn the principles of close quarter combat.

As well, the youths learn self-confidence and self-esteem.

"They can learn not to be afraid of anyone," he said.

In the past the Kolars have also given lessons as part of the YWCA drop in clinics in Rodney and Dutton.

Right now, family lessons are available Monday nights, followed by advanced courses.

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 pm. kids get lessons and adult lessons follow.

For more information, call the Kolars at 870-3998.



Youngsters learning Black Arts and self defence CONTRIBUTED

Tanner Lamb and Austin Arn practice grappling and take downs during a youth course held at the new Security Training Solution's Dojo in West Lorne. While kids mostly get to play around and learn basic martial arts, the new Dojo has many different styles of teaching available including the Black Arts, a rare style focussing on manipulating pressure points.

Mitsubishi visits world known biooil plant in West Lorne

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

West Lorne is known all over the world now for production of biooil.

Engineers and investors from all over the globe have given attention to the West Lorne BioOil Cogenerational Facility.

And in the next few weeks the plant will be able to produce biooil consistently, 24-hours a day.

It's been a long road, with planning having started five years ago, to ground being broken two years ago and the deadline for completion passing one year ago.

But the future for the world's first commercialized fast pyrolysis system, which creates biooil from wood waste, has a long road a head.

"West Lorne is the biooil capital of the world," pronounced Jorge Kawaguchi a director with Tecna, a Argentinien-based energy company.

He's seen the plant progress from start to its now near finish.

And now he has begun designing a larger version of the plant to be built in Toronto to turn garbage into fuel.

The $20 million West Lorne plant has been developed and built by Dynamotive Energy Systems of Vancouver with assistance from the federal government and partners.

The fast pyrolysis system developed almost 10 years ago and 10 years later, the first commercial plant has been built here in West Lorne.

Please see Alternative, *page 6*



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Mitsubishi visits

One of many businesses and foreign governments to visit the West Lorne BioOil Cogenerational plant was Mitsubishi two weeks ago. Kenici Mizoguchi, of the company's world wide plant business, travelled from the Japanese headquarters to see the plant.

Women At Work

Imagine being able to prioritize what is important to you as a woman, and work your own business around those priorities. Mary Kay Ash prioritized Faith, Family and Career and that philosophy continues to be supported as the company continues to grow.

Working as an Independent Beauty Consultant for Mary Kay Cosmetics can provide that flexibility for today's woman. Wendy Vergeer of Rodney has started her own business with Mary Kay that allows her to work around her personal priorities and a full time job.

"I'm in business for myself but not by myself. Mary Kay offers a sisterhood where we all care about each other's success," said Wendy.

Mary Kay offers a complete line of skin care and cosmetic products as well as body care, fragrance, and even products for men and teens.

With the company's "Try Before You Buy" policy, customer satisfaction is 100 per cent guaranteed.

Mary Kay has been rated the #1 brand of skin care and colour cosmetics in the U.S. for the last 13 years and is also known as one of the highest paying direct sales companies.

There are no quotas and the territory for marketing is Canada. Since beginning Mary Kay last October, Wendy has been learning under the guidance of her Unit Director, Shannon Shaffer of St. Thomas. Shannon is an Executive Sales Director who has been with Mary Kay for 13 years. She is a dynamic young mom making an executive income, and drives the prestigious Mary Kay trade mark, the pink cadillac and is currently ranked fifth in Canada. "She is incredible at what she does and wants to share her knowledge with those who want to learn from her," said Wendy. "You have to look to those who are where you want to be for advice and listen!"



Wendy Vergeer

Mary Kay Consultants are trained to know the importance of customer service.

"I have been involved with Customer Service in different aspects all my life," said Wendy. "Today's consumer demands it. I truly value my clients and want to provide the best product and the best service around. Mary Kay offers the product, I offer the service-100% guaranteed!"

Anyone interested in learning more about Mary Kay or would like to try the products can contact Wendy at 785-2015 or on her web site - www.marykay.ca/wvergeer. Mention that you saw this article when you contact her and your name will go into a draw for a gift certificate for Mary Kay products.

Farmers open tap and grill in West Lorne



KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Tap and Grill opens
Darlene and Dale Jones of the Dutton area opened Jonezees, a tap and grill in West Lorne last month.

Owners of Fingal Farm Supply have opened Jonezee's Tap and Grill on Main Street West Lorne.

Darlene and Dale Jones have mixed emotions after their opening night June 18.

While they were excited and tired from serving drinks and food to more than 200 people the Saturday night, an altercation in front of their business left a sour taste the next day.

"It was so busy in here and everything was going really well," said Darlene.

However one man, who had been drinking in the new restaurant went on a rampage, tearing benches out of the sidewalk along Main Street.

"It was the worse thing that could have happened. We don't want to get a reputation where things like that happen here," said Darlene.

While police are still looking for the man, he won't be allowed back in Jonezee's ever again.

Though the rough start is behind them, Darlene knew it would be difficult opening a bar in West Lorne.

Aside from that, she knew there was a need and demand for grilled food and alcoholic beverages with meals.

"I've been asking our customers what they did before they came here and they said they 'went to St. Thomas or London'," she said. "People want to get good food and a drink nearby."

The couple have a lot of experience with restaurants having operated Cookers in St. Thomas for about 11 years.

Jonezee's features a variety of appetizers, entrees, desserts and an extensive drink list.

The large kitchen area features a grill to charbroil the homemade burgers.

The couple has made large financial investments to improve the building which had been empty for about three years.

The tap and grill has a sports theme with a huge T.V. screen, smaller T.V.s around the restaurant, pool tables and arcade games.

Also, a large dance floor, full on opening night, is located at the back of the main room beside the jukebox.

A booth for the DJ, who performs Friday and Saturday nights' is beside the dance floor.

The Jones', who farm near Dutton, hope the restaurant is a success in the long-term where entertainment will be featured regularly.

Jonezee's can host work parties or other special events.

They are open 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Tuesdays to Thursdays, 11 a.m. to 2 a.m. Fridays and Saturdays and Sundays 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Turbines fired at biooil facility

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Turbines were fired to generate power for the first time at the biooil plant, bringing the plant one step closer to completion.

Tom Lamb, chief engineer at West Lorne BioOil Co-generational Ltd. reported on the progress of the project garnering attention from around the world at the annual general meeting for the West Elgin Community Health Centre June 22.

While engineers have had headaches trying to complete the plant, Lamb is sure the use of oil created from wood waste to generate electricity will take off around the world.

The plant is the only one in the world of its size and is hoped to become a way to create energy without emitting greenhouse gases and other pollutants.

Lamb, who is also the chief engineer for Erie Flooring and Wood Products, a partner in the co-generational facility, said changes to the way wood is burned at Erie Flooring has reduced the amount of black smoke and soot coming from the plant in the last few months.

Although Lamb wouldn't say when the plant would be completed, he said the stack which has poured black smoke over the village for years would not be used anymore.

The project has reached costs of anywhere from $16 million to $40 million, Lamb has heard.

The parent company, Dynamotive from Vancouver has covered the brunt of the investment in the project with shareholders anxiously watching around the world.

"We as humans have done things to damage the environment; not intentionally. But through knowledge we are learning to correct what we have done," said Lamb. "This project will be a great asset to the environment."

He boasted this plant will stop the eye soar of black smoke billowing over West Lorne.

Lamb, who spent 30 years with the Canadian Navy as an engineer said working with stubborn sawdust has been the biggest problem at the plant.

The plant has been contracted to produce 100 tonnes per day of biooil from the sawdust produced at Erie Flooring.

Currently machines within the plant are not the right size to create that much biooil and are planned to be refitted.

The turbine, fired over the weekend, will produce 12,000 pounds of steam for Erie Flooring.

Dynamotive Energy Systems, a company from Vancouver funding the project said the turbine performs as good as a diesil turbine.

For the first time the turbine created electricity sent back to the provincial grid.

The turbines will eventually create 2.5 megawatts of electricity to run the plant, Erie Flooring and up to 2,500 homes.

With the turbines being fired, it's a benchmark in the project which started last June and was originally supposed to be complete in one year.

Lamb said once the company gets this pyrolysis plant completed for the first time in a commercial setting, it will be able to reproduce the plants at varying scales within a one year production cycle.

Lamb, will be in charge of eight employees that will run the plant on an ongoing basis when it is completed.

He said Erie Flooring produces around 70 tonnes of saw dust a day.

The plant is hoped to turn that into four-and-a-half tonnes of biooil an hour.

Right now the plant is only able to process one-and-a-half tonnes because of problems with the movement of sawdust.

West Lorne has been put on the map with this project. Recently a minister of the environment from Russia toured the plant, said Lamb, a native of Wallacetown.

New business expected to hire 60

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

While full production isn't expected to begin until May, wheels are turning at a new automotive industry in West Lorne.

TFT Global Inc. West Lorne Division moved into 215 Gilbert St. in July, 2004 and began shipping wheel assembly products to plants in the United States for testing earlier this year.

While full production is expected to start in May, nine employees have been hired to start the assembly line.

"We're anxious to get going," said Brian Sweetman, operations manager. "We have enough people to run the plant now but hope to have 60 on three shifts next year. It all depends on volume (of demand)."

The jobs range from maintenance and office administration to supervisor positions.

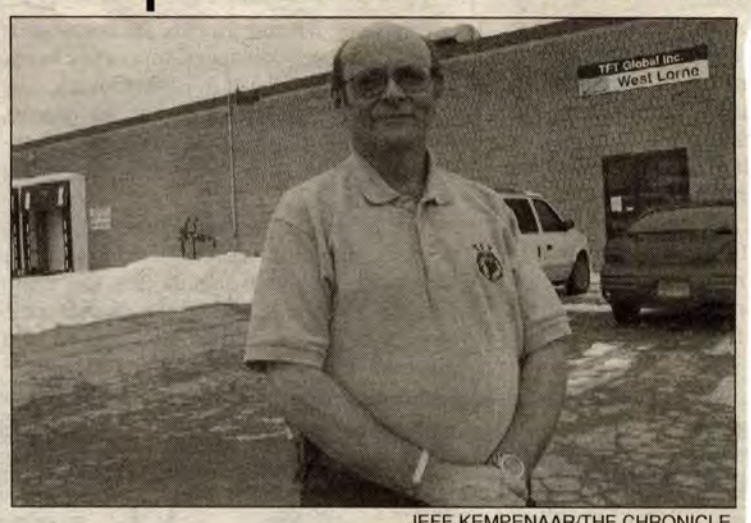
"We are a community based company and have found adequate skill levels in this area," said Sweetman.

He said 300 people applied to work at TFT Global, through West Elgin Support Services.

While going through resumes he has found lots of semi-skilled, qualified people flexible to work in any area of the plant in the future.

"We've got some good people here, with positive attitudes. We'll continue to hire in the community," he said.

Benefits and competitive salaries are being offered by the company, which is based in Tillsonburg.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

TFT Global Inc. is set to begin full production in July
Brian Sweetman, operations manager at TFT Global Inc., West Lorne Division is optimistic about long-term operations planned by the company and the automotive industry.

The West Lorne plant is the fourth division in the company which includes operations in Tillsonburg, Toronto and London.

TFT Global is a subsidiary of Efficient Quality Services of Southfield Michigan.

Primarily, EQS and TFT Global had worked in sorting and containment of products on assembly lines in big automotive and aerospace plants.

"Basically, we go in when something goes bad," said Sweetman.

Acting as a second tier producer, the West Lorne Division is the first production plant in TFT Global's portfolio.

It will assemble computerized wheel safety systems for Accuride in London,

BUSINESS + INDUSTRY 2005

U.S. border opening to beef

Protectionists may use second case of BSE to stop opening

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Local beef farmers found some relief in last week's United States Department of Agriculture's announcement to open the border to live cattle under 30 months on Mar. 7.

"We're relieved it has gotten to this stage but until the first load of cattle crosses the border we can't be too confident," said Ian McKillop, local beef farmer and vice-president of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association.

Ontario cattle producers have lost $450 million, after subsidies, since May 20, 2003 when one case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, or Mad Cow, was found in Alberta, closing the border.

New rules will allow all cattle under 30-months-old to go to U.S. feedlots or slaughterhouses.

Also, boneless meat from all cattle over 30 months from selected breeds will be allowed across the border.

Currently boneless meat from cattle less than 30 months old is crossing the border.

The rules were created by the USDA and will be debated by U.S. congress before March 7.

While McKillop was delighted with the announcement, he said protectionist groups will make a lot of noise to keep the border closed.

He worries that a second confirmed case of BSE in an eight-year-old Alberta dairy cow found last week could give the protectionists more ammunition in their fight to keep the border closed.

USDA officials were told about the new case before announcing the border opening.

McKillop said Canada has taken many measures to protect human and animal health and Canada is considered a minimal risk country by world standards.

Minimal risk countries are allowed two cases of BSE for every million cows according to world standards.

The new case is in a cow, fed before 1997 when measures to stop ruminant to ruminant feeding were put in place, a cause of BSE.

Along with halting rendered animal meat being fed to the Canadian herd, Canada no longer imports cattle from the United Kingdom where BSE was found in the 1980s.

JAN 05

Please see Rural, *page 2*



Congratulations

Cindy Jones Trudell and Jack Ripley of Ripley's Quality Home Care in West Lorne received the

PLATINUM SALES AWARD

They are in the top 100 of 1,800 companies in Canada that sell NHB Cabinets

RIPLEY'S HOME CARE
768-1991 - 693-4511

Local businesses win awards

Monte McNaughton, store manager of McNaughton Family Shopping Centre in Newbury, Ontario, was recently named Young Retailer of the Year in the over $2 million sales category. He was the only Canadian to win the award. The 2005 Young Retailer of the Year program, which is coordinated by the North American Retail Hardware Association, recognizes outstanding achievement by six hardware retailers age 35 and younger.

While Newbury is a town of just 402 residents, McNaughton's has drawn traffic from larger cities, all of which have large home centers. To help bring in more customers, McNaughton, 28, obtained an M&M Meat Shops franchise that sells frozen meats as well as vegetables, desserts and prepared meals. In 2004, he opened a Beer Store and a Liquor Control Board of Ontario Agency store. Having these two additional businesses has given people in his town, as well as neighboring towns, more reasons to shop in his store.

In the past year, McNaughton has helped create tremendous growth in some of the basic categories the store offers such as kitchen cabinet sales. In addition, he has significantly expanded his flooring department to include all of the major flooring types and installation. Sales in that department have grown dramatically. Other strong departments for McNaughton include appliances, paint and automotive.

While McNaughton's business building has been successful, he continues to seek the advice and wisdom of others. The store has conducted focus groups with customers and industry professionals to see what new products they should be stocking in their store.

Monte will be traveling to Colorado in July to accept his award at the North American Retail Hardware Association's annual convention.

Ripley's wins sales award

With less than three years as a team under their belts and competing against more than 1,800 stores in Canada, Jack Ripley and Cindy Jones Trudell were recognized as Platinum Sales Award Winners by the cabinet distributor company Can-Save.

The recognition places the duo, operating from Ripley's Quality Home Centre in West Lorne in the top 100 of all the Canadian stores retailing NHB cabinets manufactured in Peterborough.

Can-Save recognized and awarded the team at their product expo in Barrie two weeks ago.

"You have to believe in your design and your products," said Cindy who has been designing kitchens for several years prior to their merging.

She operates Creative Designs by Cindy Jones Trudell as an interior designer and Jack owns Ripley Quality Home Centre.

In partnership with the two ventures they design and retail cabinets, countertops and all other materials required for any interior renovation.

Jack said, "It is an impressive honour to have been able to receive an award for our efforts."

"With hard work and determination look at what you can achieve," said Cindy.

Burned complex to get roof first

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Building a new roof over the West Elgin Community Complex is the first rebuilding step.

Cowan Insurance was getting everything out of the building last week and looking at getting a roof for the entire complex.

Design changes to the building are being prepared but a new roof is needed to keep the weather out.

Everything within the brick walls will be gutted and the bricks will be treated for smoke damage.

"The insurance company wouldn't put $1 million into a building that still smelled like smoke," said Administrator Joanne Groch.

Redesigns were called a necessity at council Feb. 23.

Some changes include; changing trusses and floor joints so the roof could stand without wall supports.

As well, adding a second exit to the basement would be designed to allow the basement to be used for meetings as was planned when it was built in 1994.

At that time, the building wasn't big enough to need a second exit, said Coun. Mike Mooser.

Over time, fire code changes required a second exit and the basement could no longer be used for meetings.

Council discussed finishing the basement but Groch said it may cost the municipality extra.

Insurance will cover up to $1 million to rebuild the complex to the state it was before the fire.

"This is an opportunity to design the building to be a useful space for the community," said Mayor Graham Warwick.



Taking out rubble JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Justin Elgie of London walks through what was the community meeting room towards the kitchen at the West Lorne Community Complex which was gutted by fire Feb. 16. Hickman Mount of London continues to clean out the rubble in the building.

CURRENT EVENTS 2004



Irene Puddester, left, and Rosalie Krebsz, right, serve up cake at Miller Park in West Lorne for Canada Day. Hundreds of people enjoyed games, music and fireworks.



SUBMITTED

Rylie Hunt, from Dutton, left, Brieanna Morley, West Lorne, centre and Trina Lusse, West Lorne, right.

West Lorne and Dutton riders win again

At the last dressage show of the season, held on Oct. 24 2004 at the DeRegt's farm in Melbourne, area riders were successful.

In the junior sections:

Brieanna Morley riding Custom Blend received a first place and two second places.

Victoria Marchand riding Serene received a first place and two third places.

Rylie Hunt riding Custom Blend received a fifth place.

In the adult section:

Trina Lusse riding her own horse, Gabriel received three second places.

All riders are from Coyote Ridge Riding Centre in West Lorne.

The girls competed against riders from London and Windsor.

Trucks could be moved off of Munroe Street

■ *Complaints of noise and tree damage taken to council*

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

West Elgin council is looking for a new place for local truck drivers to park their transports in West Lorne.

Trucks are currently being parked along a gravel lot on Munroe St. adjacent to a series of trees that were planted as part of a Millennium project established for 2000 celebrations.

Fred Kirshner, who lives on Munroe St. and other concerned West Lorne residents went to council June 10 with a complaint about one driver backing his trailer into one of the trees.

"We are looking very seriously at the lot behind the health centre," said West Elgin Mayor Graham Warwick. "They would be out-of-sight and not be an annoyance to the health centre."

Warwick said he has told the road superintendent to expedite drainage and gravel work needed in the lot so transports can be moved from the Munroe St. lot, owned by CN Railroad.

Shaun Dowling, who also lives on Munroe said: "They shouldn't even be allowed to park here in the core."

Dowling said he has been awakened repeatedly during the night by the crashing of trucks dropping trailers, and idling truck engines. "It was so bad. To have diesel fumes in the yard and 20 trucks parked there."

Warwick said the lot behind the health centre could hold about a dozen trailers.

"I have nothing against the drivers," said Downing. "It's poor town planning to have it on railroad property."

Kids have been seen playing on the trailers that have been parking on the lot for more than seven years. More transports are parking there now, said Downing. "I can't cope with it anymore."

"They pose more hazards than noise and smell," said Dr. John McKishnie who added, the exhaust for the trucks could cause problems from asthmatics. "They should park out of town, away from where people live."

One local driver, Jeremy Vojin, from Eagle, said most of the drivers that park their trailers there are considerate. He said he always turned his refrigerated trailer off so the noise wouldn't bother neighbours.

"We don't allow reefers to run in Rodney or West Lorne," said Warwick.

"What are you supposed to do with an 82-ft trailer?" said Vojin. "There are some ignorant odd balls who just back up without paying attention."

Vojin has been parking his trailer in West Lorne for three years and drives his truck home to Eagle. "Just watch your back end." Vojin suggested.

Warwick said one driver threatened to sue the municipality if parking was taken away. Transporters began parking at the Munroe St. lot when council told them not to park on village streets.

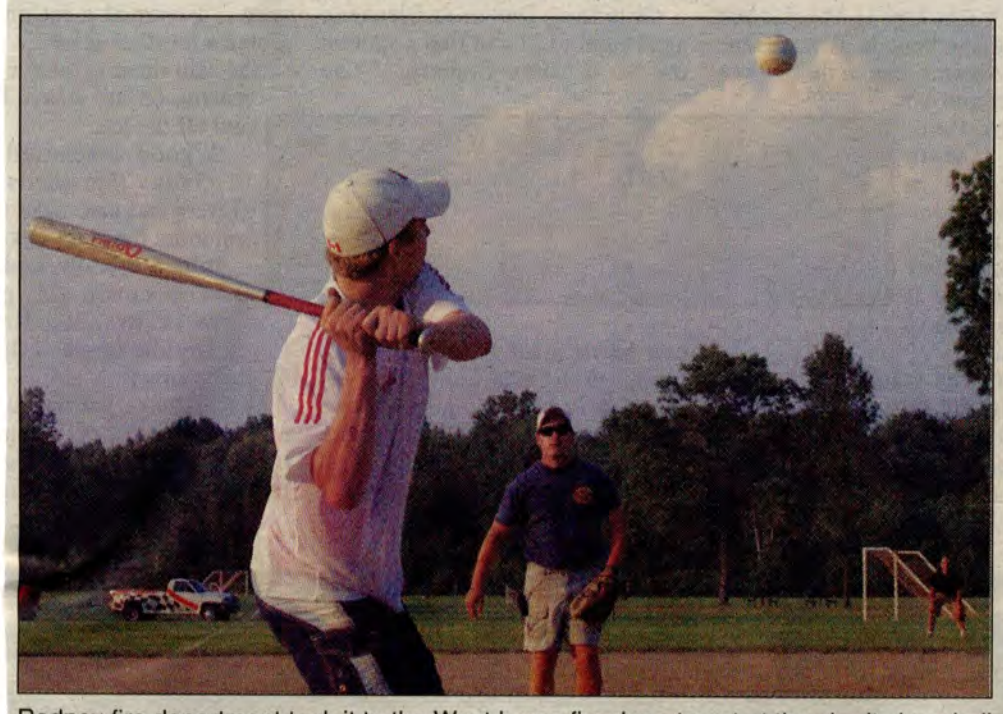


TRUCKS COULD MOVE — JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Trucks parked along Munroe St. in West Lorne could be moved to the lot near the West Elgin Community Health Centre after complaints of noise and tree damage.

Oh Canada!

Photos by Jeff Kempenaar



Rodney fire department took it to the West Lorne fire department at the charity baseball game on Canada Day at Miller Park in West Lorne.



West Elgin Legion Branch 221 colour guard joined the 2884 West Elgin Army Cadet Corps. in a parade on Canada day. On June 12 the cadets graduated from their annual inspection. Many of the cadets are furthering their training in leadership and marksmanship. Master Warrant Daniel Balint is headed to Leadership Courses in Banff Alta. and Sgt. Mathew Loos is going to Borden.

CURRENT EVENTS 2004

Meet your federal election candidates

Joe Preston -- Conservative


Preston

Joe Preston is running for his first time in a federal election on June 28, but he is no stranger to community work.

The Conservative Party candidate for Elgin-Middlesex-London has organized two United Way campaigns and raised funds for St. Thomas-Elgin General Hospital.

Preston says he came by volunteering genetically from his parents.

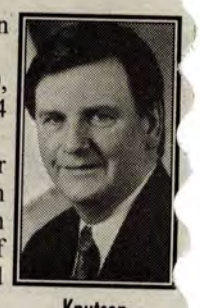
As owner of the St. Thomas Wendy's franchise for the past 14 years, he just moved to the city three years ago.

He and his wife of 28 years, Geri, have two children, Adam, 25, and Kate, 22.

As a party member for the last three years, Preston was in line to take the EML nomination last fall when he decided against running for the mayor of St. Thomas.

When the Conservative Party merged with the Canadian Alliance, Preston won a three-way race and the nomination.

Gar Knutson -- Liberal


Knutson

Gar Knutson admits his fourth federal campaign will be his toughest battle.

First elected in 1993, then again in '97 and 2000, Knutson is optimistic he will earn the votes in 2004 for the Liberal Party in Elgin-Middlesex-London.

Over the past 10 years Knutson has been a member of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment, the Standing Joint Committee on Scrutiny of Regulations, and the House of Commons Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans.

In 2002 Knutson was named secretary of state and one year later he was re-appointed to Cabinet by Prime Minister Paul Martin. There, he was assigned to the newly created portfolio of minister of state for new and emerging markets.

Knutson and his wife Christine have three children: William, Michael and Clare.

With a law degree and masters in business administration, he managed a small corporation and was a part-time instructor at Fanshawe College in London, Ont.

Will Arlow -- Canadian Action party


Arlow

The Canadian Action Party candidate, Will Arlow, is a bold doer.

The 46-year-old is running in his third federal election on June 28.

Arlow was raised on a farm in the Edmonton, Alta. area but decided against following his parents' in the beef and cash crop business.

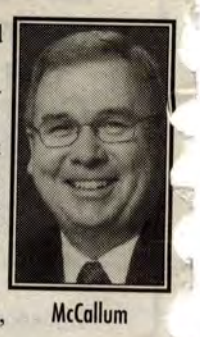
Bored by high school, he dropped out at the end of Grade 11, when he began to study history and globalization.

Arlow worked in construction and built his own oil patch business in Alberta. When the province's economy collapsed, he made his way east.

He started an industrial caster supplying business in the Lower Mainland. He now lives in Staffordville and continues his caster supplying business.

Married in 1995 to his second wife Deborah, Arlow has five children aged from 15 months to 24 years old.

Tim McCallum -- NDP


McCallum

For 30 years Tim McCallum has been affiliated with the New Democratic Party.

The 49-year-old couldn't pass up running in Elgin-Middlesex-London in the June 28 federal election.

McCallum, a control operator at CASCO in London Ont., has spent most of his life in this area.

He attended West Elgin Secondary School and worked in radio at CKSL before starting at CASCO in 1981.

McCallum lives in Dutton with his wife Freda. They have two daughters, Lisa, working in London, and Sara, a Queen's University student.

An NDP veteran, he has earned respect in the party as a campaign manager for Hugh MacGinnis in the 1995 provincial election.

He strengthened his skills as campaign manager for Dave Lapointe in the 1999 federal election and by running for Minister of Parliament in EML in the last campaign.

Elgin-Middlesex-London Riding

Federal election -- June 28

Preston takes EML riding from Knutson


Gar Knutson, right, MP Elgin-Middlesex-London, conceded victory to Joe Preston, M P elect at his campaign's celebrations at St. Anne's Centre Monday night.

CURRENT AFFAIRS 2004

Body discovered by West Lorne man

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

Police are investigating the death of a 24-year-old Tilbury man whose body was found Friday by a West Lorne man.

Vic Fisher found the body around 5:30 a.m. last Friday when he came across the man's Ford F-150 pick-up truck on Second Line, east of Iona Road in Southwold.

Fisher was taking scrap metal to John Zubick Ltd. Scrap Metals when he found the truck stopped in the middle of the road. Fisher then pulled up behind the truck, which had Quebec licence plates, and went to tell the driver to pull off the road so he wouldn't get hit. It was still dark.

"I tried to shake him, but his arm was cold," said Fisher. "When I felt his arm, I got out of there."

"I saw no blood or signs of commotion," he said.

Fisher went to the second house up the road to call police. He filed his statement with a London OPP sergeant but was surprised the finding hadn't been reported in the media until Monday.

"I wanted to know 'what was going on?' It should have at least got an honourable mention somewhere," he said Monday to the Chronicle.

The OPP would like to speak to anyone else who may have driven by a vehicle which was parked or stopped in the middle of Second Line between the hours of 11 p.m. on June 17 and 5:30 a.m. on June 18.

The cause of death was not determined and name of the man was not released at press time. Elgin OPP Staff Sgt. Ryan Cox said it was a sudden death.



WRAPPED UP JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Katie Welch is wrapped in duct tape at the West Lorne Baptist Church which was host to the Survivor All-Star's Community Vacation Bible School. With her is volunteer Bob McLandress. Religious characters were introduced each day with games, crafts and lessons. The event included United, Catholic and Baptist churches.

Dogs stolen from West Lorne

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

The Ingram home has been a little quieter and a littler sadder this past week after four of the family's dogs were reported stolen.

Police continue to investigate, but had no new information before press time.

Rose Ingram, mother of three, left her home at Kerr Road and Thompson Line for West Lorne around 3 p.m. on Monday June 7. She returned 15 minutes later but didn't notice the dogs were missing until her seven-year-old daughter, Brenda, got off the school bus and went to play with the dogs.

Missing was the family's eight-year-old male poodle, Corky, two one-year-old Shih-poos, Nosey and Pepper, and a puppy, Baby.

"They probably were stolen and sold," said Brenda.

The fence pen was locked at the east side of the Ingram home. She found the pen had been flipped on its back with the front cage door in the air. Her youngest child, Josh, five, was sitting at the pen crying.

"They would never run away," said Ingram. "It's like they stole a kid from me."

Three days before the dogs went missing someone called animal control about the condition of dogs, said Ingram. Waterford Animal Control came out to inspect the dogs' shelter and make sure they were being fed.

The animal control officer had no concerns at that time and was able to provide descriptions of the dogs to the police, who were called to investigate.

The Police notified animal control in Glencoe and other kennels in the area to be on the look out. Cream coloured Corky is about 30 centimetres tall with bad teeth.

The family has two dogs now, Katie, the mother of the three Shih-poos that are missing, and Snoopy a Snoozer.

Ingram values the dogs at $2,400 but sees them more



NEW PLAYGROUND ARRIVES SCOTT HILGENDORFF/CHRONICLE

Through fundraising efforts of parents and students and support from community groups and businesses, new playground equipment recently arrived at Aldborough Public School. It took less than a year to raise the money needed for the project.

Road invention saving time and money

RYAN MCLANDRESS
for The Chronicle

A machine created by the West Elgin Road Department is showing local innovation and saving tax payers money.

Road Superintendent Paul VanVaerenbergh says that he had this idea in the back of his mind when he took the job in January 2004 to create a road packer that would lengthen the lives of gravel roads in the area.

"I thought about it a lot before we actually began planning the design," says VanVaerenbergh who acknowledges that the final design was as a result of the input of all the guys at the road's department.

They call this new invention the packer which does essentially that; after the gravel roads are graded, they use this packer that compacts the road, making it smoother, harder while reducing the washboard effect.

Before, they would only grade the road which left loose gravel that in turn would break down and blow away.

The packer was manufactured using all locally bought materials to create the 1,800 pound machine.

It's made of nine deflated tires attached to a steel frame that was welded together by Dave Tuffin. The packer was designed to attach to a hook-up that was already on the grader, making it easily transferable to another grader.

According to VanVaerenbergh, the road's department got the go ahead and the funds from council to put their idea in motion. In the end they were under budget.



PACKING IT DOWN RYAN MCLANDRESS/CHRONICL

The West Elgin roads department has invented a packer that is saving time and money

The packer is the first of its kind according to VanVarenbergh, who says that he has not seen anything like it around. As a result, a patent is in the process to protect the design.

VanVaerenbergh says that the brains behind building it was Tuffin who he says took the design and made it real.

""He (Dave) took it from paper and brought it to life," says VanVaerenbergh.

The municipality has been using the machine for just over a month now and they are already seeing the results.

"Because it compacts the road better, water runs off it, instead of just sitting on it like it used to before," says VanVaerenbergh who says that water is damaging to gravel roads.

"Water is a road's worst enemy... this is what causes pot holes and the washboard effect," says VanVaerebergh.

As a result of the packer, VanVaerenbergh says that the big money saver is in road maintenance. The roads don't have to be grated as much, which in turn saves a lot of time also.

They are also saving money in other areas as well. Before the packer, they used to use a combination of calcium and salt brine which keeps the gravel compacted and together.

The packer requires only the use of salt brine which is a natural resource anyways. Calcium is no longer needed which is saving the municipality money.

With the first packer going over so well, VanVaerenbergh says that they are looking at building another one to go with their other grader, which is starting to gain notice.

"I have been approached by other municipalities in Elgin County that are interested in it (the packer)," says VanVaerenbergh who says that he is open to other municipalities using the design.

VanVaerenbergh says that they are extremely proud with their invention.

"There's a real sense of accomplishment here with the guys."



THINKING SPRING...

While snow was in the forecast for this week, Adam Ecker of the West Elgin parks and recreation department joined Jeff Slater to hang spring banners along West Lorne's main streets.

Chronicle photo

High speed arrives

Local group left in dust in race to provide high speed Net access, preparing for David and Goliath battle against Bell's internet

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

Salesmen are going door-to-door offering high speed Internet service and according to Golden.net representatives, Rodney is now connected.

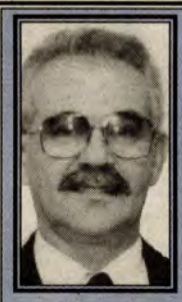
That's and Donna Lunn of the Elgin Community Futures Development Corporation angry.

For three years now, the organization has been working toward increasing the services available in rural Elgin County, a project that lead to the corporation forming a consortium of business and municipal partners that are now on the verge of providing high speed Internet access to all of rural Elgin County.

But just months before the millions of dollars being spent could see the project come to fruition, competitive companies announced they were bringing high speed Internet access into Dutton, West Lorne and Rodney, using Bell infrastructure.

"I'm not pleased that this is happening at this time," said Lunn at a recent West Elgin council meeting.

The Chronicle learned Bell nearly had its high speed Internet infrastructure complete and broke the news to Amtelecom Inc. in Aylmer last month, the lead agency that successfully applied to establish and operate the high speed service through the Elgin Community Futures Development Corporation.



"You get little Davey going, you never know what might happen"

— Coun. Mike Mooser

Mooser

Since then, Lunn said she has been on conference calls with Bell executives regarding the issue.

Calls from The Chronicle to Bell's corporate communications department last month and again on Monday were not returned.

"It's a predatory trade practice that can endanger farmers getting high speed, if Bell is allowed to cherry pick the villages," said West Elgin Mayor Graham Warwick.

Bell originally had no plans to provide Internet access to the area which prompted the formation of the Elgin County group.

Now, more than $3 million in provincial and federal grants, corporate contributions and municipal funds have been invested in providing high speed access across the county.

Until now, only Aylmer and St. Thomas have had the service, viewed essential now for economic development and agriculture.

Warwick said Amtelecom's upcoming service is now at a disadvantage with Bell coming into the urban areas. Bell's infrastructure can now be used by competitive companies such as Execulink and Golden.net as well as Bell's Internet company, Sympatico. He's concerned the revenue from the more densely populated villages leaves less available to make the local project viable.

"Bell is leaving us out here in the rural areas with nothing. That's hellishly unfair. This just doesn't make sense to me. I'm going to make sure they realize it and the rest of Ontario realizes it," he said.

"It's like David and Goliath," said Lunn.

"You get little Davey going, you never know what might happen," said Coun. Mike Mooser, also upset by what is happening.

Lunn expects by the end of the summer Amtelecom will have full service to the county.



Eagle Trading Post owner Larry Hudson, right, with his wife Betty talk to insurance adjuster John Lutes beside the destroyed store on Tuesday, Oct. 12. JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Morning fire guts Eagle Trading Post

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

Larry and Betty Hudson were a wreck Tuesday morning as they assessed the damage done to their business by a fire that gutted the building.

"We owned the place for 17 years and didn't want it to end like this," said Larry.

Fire destroyed the Eagle Trading Post on Saturday around 5:30 a.m.

A passing motorist spotted the fire and called 911.

West Lorne volunteer fire department responded to the fire on Talbot Line and Graham Road.

The business that sold vacuums, tools, furniture, appliances, etc. was completely gutted by the fire.

Cause of the fire is unknown and the Ontario Fire Marshall's Office is assisting the Elgin County OPP with the investigation.

The Fire Marshall told the Hudsons it appeared the blaze was started in the electrical wiring in the attic.

The Hudson's had been privately trying to sell the building for the last year.

They are both in their late 60s and were hoping to retire soon.

Before they retired they were trying to start a business in their hometown Tillsonburg.

They had purchased new furniture for that store but were storing it in Eagle.

The value of the new furniture was not expected to be covered by insurance.

The Hudson's were trying to sell the building for around $150,000 and the stock was was valued around $50,000.



OPP scenes of crime Const. Karl Johnston, left and cadet Shawn Stephenson show some of the $210,000 worth of marijuana and growing equipment seized from a West Lorne-area residence last Wednesday.

Submitted photo

Grow operation busted

Elgin OPP have uncovered what they describe as a "significant" marijuana grow operation in a rural West Lorne house.

Officers conducted a search of a home on Graham Road last Wednesday where they found 328 marijuana plants growing in the basement.

A 41-year-old Toronto man and a 53-year-old London woman were arrested and charged as a result of the search.

Community Services Officer Jennifer Wilks said the plants had a potential street value of $210,000.

"They were nearing the bud stage, so about two to three weeks from full maturity," she said about the plants.

In addition to the marijuana, officers seized growing equipment worth $9,000 and $11,845 in Canadian currency they said was associated with the operation.

The search also revealed the pair had bypassed the electricity consumption meter supplying power to the residence.

The pair face charged of production of a controlled substance for the purpose of trafficking and theft of hydro electricity.

This was a beautiful home built in 1964 by the late Harold and Peggy Mitchell. Peg was a valued member of the Women's Institute. Harold had owned the Maple Leaf Dairy.

CURRENT EVENTS

Snow days weathered well

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

Unusually cold and stormy weather has added to a little pressure on teachers to get through the curriculum but local principals say the unusual number of bus cancellation days has not been too tough yet.

"To a certain extent, we can absorb a few days," said Larry Schneider, West Elgin Secondary School principal.

The high school has seen five days without busses including two between Feb. 2 and Feb. 6 but the semestered system has made it easier to cope with, said Schneider.

Of the five days, two were in January during the first semester, one was during exams and the last two were at the start of the new semester.

Had they all occurred this semester, Schneider said it would have been harder to absorb.

Regardless, he said this is the most number of snow days he's seen since being at the school for 20 years, although he's been told there's been worse winters in the past.

The Avon-Maitland School Board which neighbours the local Thames Valley District School Board, has seen 14 snow days this semester and is facing a struggle of getting through the curriculum. Development and early dismissal days have been cancelled and teachers there are being asked to reduce non-essential components of classroom time.

Locally, Schneider said teachers just have to tighten up some components and are able to get through the crunch fairly easily.

"It's inconvenient but so far, the impact has been negligible," said Schneider, who is also hoping there aren't any more snow days with several more weeks of potentially snowy weather left.

It's been a little harder at the elementary level where class time is not semestered but Jane Falls, Dunwich-Dutton Public School principal said they are also managing well.

They've had four days without busses but the school has been open to walkers. Only one day saw parents keeping most of their children at home and Falls said they've been operating as normally as possible on days without busses.

She said there's usually about 200 students, about half the student population, who can walk to school allowing teachers to carry on with the curriculum as normally as possible.

For those taking busses, she said it sometimes means some extra homework to get caught up but overall, one of the biggest challenges has simply been teachers living in London being able to get in when area highways have been closed due to the weather or accidents.

"We try to have as regular a day as we can," said Falls.

The Chronicle

Open winter leads to rare sightings in annual Christmas Bird Count

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

A warm, snow-free start to the winter saw some unusual finds in the annual Canadian Christmas Bird Count, Dec. 27. Seventy-five volunteers helping the West Elgin Nature Club, counted 16,098 birds including several species that should have been further south by now.

Two included a house wren and a hoary redpoll.

A record high count of redtail hawks was also counted. One hundred and eighty-seven of those were found.

"They keep moving with the food supply. This has been an open winter. It holds our seasonal birds here a lot longer," said Ken Reinke, an organizer of this year's count.

For the hawks and other birds, an "open winter" means more food available and less reason to move further south. At the same time, there are other birds, such as tree sparrows, that migrate further north that haven't arrived in this area yet.

"Leaving here or getting here, it's all thrown off by an open winter," said Reinke.

A brown thrasher and a northern mockingbird, which should be south by now, were also found while only a few snow buntings, normally common this time of the year, were seen.

Normally 1,000 to 3,000 snow buntings are tallied in the count but only a few were found this year.

The numbers vary slightly each year and Reinke said similar counts are done across North America, helping with research from migratory patterns to species in danger or making a comeback, like the wild turkey - 87 of those were found.

Reinke said a few generations ago, people used to have to travel to the Jack Miner's Bird Sanctuary to see Canada geese, but now, the birds are common.

Volunteers counted birds in a circular area surrounding Rodney, West Lorne and Dutton, extending north to the Thames River and south to the Lake Erie Shore.





Members of the West Elgin Choral Society perform a Valentine's Concert at the Elgin International Centre Saturday (left photo). Pat Campbell plays piano while Wane Carroll leads the choral group during the performance (right photo). The performance was held as a fund raising event for the Four Counties Health Services Foundation. More than $2,400 was raised at the event that saw couples dancing to romantic songs and music.

Chronicle photos

The Chronicle



Nicholas Knapp of West Elgin's Parks and Recreation Department works his way through chunks of frozen slush on the sidewalk on Graham Road. Last week's winter weather left sidewalks a mess and made clean up hard.

Chronicle photo

Too much snow tough to clean up

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

West Elgin had to take some extra steps this week to try to make downtown sidewalks safer in West Lorne this week after a woman complained of a fall on the west side of Graham Street.

Within two hours of learning someone had fallen, Parks and Recreation Superintendent Jeff Slater had some help from the roads department to get some sand on the sidewalks.

"It's so cold, the stuff we use to melt the ice is not working really well," said Slater.

They don't use salt but a compound that doesn't track as badly into stores but Slater said what does melt refreezes over night because of the cold.

West Lorne resident Jean Fenn fell Wednesday on the slippery sidewalk.

"I went flat on my back," said Fenn who was not badly hurt but upset the sidewalks were still covered in snow.

"You have to walk really slow and be careful," she said of navigating the snow and ice-packed sidewalks.

While some businesses shovel and scrape, Slater said the municipality has looked after the sidewalks in the downtown core .

He said last week, it was impossible for them to cope with the wintry weather.

It's one of the worst winters in the past several years for cold and snowfall and while they try to keep the sidewalks cleared to concrete, Slater said it's been impossible this year.

After last Tuesday's winter storm, the sidewalks had been coated in a slush that froze and is now virtually unmoveable by the sidewalk plow and snowblower.

"Our equipment is having a hard time moving it," Slater said.

"It's like concrete balls out there," he said of the frozen slush that plows had pushed from the road to the sidewalk edges.

CURRENT EVENTS 2004

The Chronicle



CHRISTMAS TUNES PLAYED

JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

The West Elgin Community Band played classical tunes and Christmas sing along as it presented It's a Wonderful Time of the Year in the cafeteria at West Elgin Secondary School on Nov. 29. About 80 people came to sing along and listen to music.

Gas tax may relieve West Elgin transportation needs

JEFF KEMPENAAR

staff

West Elgin is receiving $16,800 from a provincial gas tax transfer to fund public transit.

"This is great," said West Elgin Mayor Graham Warwick. "We have people who could use this money."

Rural transportation issues have long posed a challenge to the area.

Warwick said there is need for parents wanting to send their children to the Early Years Centre in Rodney where no public transit is available.

Three people moved to London to be closer to medical facilities for treatment because they could not commute from West Lorne said Warwick.

Then, most recently a Toronto man looking to move his family to the area contacted the Chronicle. He had a job interview in West Lorne but could only get a bus to Wardsville.

Warwick suggested a transportation bus could take patients that are treated in London from West Elgin and paid for with this new funding.

"We need a bus to London," said Warwick adding Bobier Villa in Dutton expressed interest in tapping into the bus route.

The municipality signed a letter of intent to spend the money on the bus to Four Counties Health Services, Newbury, from West Elgin Community Health Centre.

The money will cover operating costs this year and a deficit incurred from the purchase of the bus.

It is part of around $67,000 made available for transit from the province.

Future money's must be spent on capital expenditures that increase transit service and ridership.

Joanne Groch, West Elgin, administrator-treasurer, said the bus created a budget deficit around $6,000 this year.

The Chronicle



KAREN CONCALVES/CHRONICLE

This Elgin County OPP cruiser was struck at the intersection at Graham Road and Pioneer Line and came to rest in front of the Bank of Montreal on Oct. 31

Cruiser hit in West Lorne

An Elgin County OPP officer suffered minor injuries as the result of a crash between her cruiser and another vehicle at the intersection of [illegible] Pioneer Line, with emergency lights and sirens activated.

As the officer proceeded westbound on Pioneer Line 2001 Dodge Caravan, was not injured. The officer was transported by ambulance to the Four Counties Health Services in Newbury where

Election called: local candidates hit the campaign trail

FOR THE CHRONICLE

Signs of a federal election sprang up in St. Thomas moments after Prime Minister Paul Martin announced Canada is to go to the polls June 28.

And leadership and accountability emerged as early issues in Elgin-Middlesex-London.

Incumbent Liberal MP Gar Knutson and NDP hopeful Tim McCallum said the election will hinge on leadership; Conservative rival Joe Preston called it an election about accountability.

"People have a choice in this election whether they want Paul Martin to be prime minister, or Steven Harper — and I think everything else is secondary," said Knutson as he handed out election signs at his campaign HQ on Curtis Street at St. Catherine Street.

"I think it's going to come down to leadership, and Paul Martin, after campaigning for the prime minister's job for 13 years, has been a huge disappointment," said McCallum on the phone from work. His campaign office was being set up Monday on Talbot Street at Elgin Street.

"From my point of view, it's going to be accountable government — it's a government that does what it says it's going to do," said Preston, assembling signs at his campaign headquarters on First Avenue at Wellington Street.

With the sponsorship scandal looming over the election, Knutson said, "Certainly our whole record will be an issue, including the sponsorship issue."

But he also added, "Paul Martin has said quite clearly he wants to get to the bottom of it and I think Canadians trust him to do just that."

Preston said sponsorship is a bigger issue than Knutson alludes. "We certainly have heard it at the door. It's the biggest issue we've had; can governments keep their promises, can governments be honest with the people."

And McCallum added, "It's going to be a big deal in the sense there is a real unease on the part of the public how good Liberals are at managing dollars."

Both Knutson and Preston called for majority governments to be formed by their parties. McCallum predicted a Liberal minority with the NDP gaining a record number of seats (beating 43 in the 1988 election) — but even then, possibly, not holding their traditional balance of power, if

Continued on Page 17





ST. MARY'S AUCTION DRAWS OVER 100

JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Left: Anne Bray bids to the excitement of Ruth Mooser at the St. Mary's St. Thomas More School auction Nov 7. Over 100 people bid on items at a silent and live auction held at St. Mary's Hall in West Lorne to raise money for the school. The amount money raised was not available.

Road superintendent appointed in West Elgin

By Scott Hilgendorff

The Chronicle

Paul VanVaerenbergh has been named the acting road superintendent for West Elgin.

He replaces Rick Jackson who retired from the position in December.

Formerly a foreman, VanVaerenbergh assumes the position on a six-month trial basis as the municipality works for the first time with some changes in the road department's structure.

VanVaerenbergh is being replaced by the lead hand and the lead hand position no longer exists.

Instead, there is an on-call employee now who is available in instances such as when a storm hits and extra work is needed plowing the roads.

The on-call person comes in and is paid an hourly wage, cutting down the amount of overtime paid to salaried staff and money saved by downsizing the position.

Mayor Graham Warwick said while it doesn't save an entire salary because of the hours that will still have to be paid when there is extra work to do, it is still a cost-effective idea the municipality is trying.

"It's a good thing in a rural community to have," said Warwick of having a person available in times of extra need.

"It's a rural way of being cost-effective," he said.

CURRENT EVENTS 2004

Kittmer to join world honouring Rick Hansen at Wheels In Motion



WARM UP MCLANDRESS/CHRONICLE

Colin Kittmer warms up near West Elgin Senior Elementary School. He is preparing for Rick Hansen Day.

RYAN MCLANDRESS
for The Chronicle

Nearly 20 years ago, Rick Hansen set out in his wheelchair to travel around the world to raise awareness about spinal chord injury and people living with disabilities.

Two years, two months and two days later Rick completed the more than 40,000 kilometre journey.

On June 13, the world will commemorate Rick Hansen on Rick Hansen Wheels In Motion Day which is a chance for people to raise funds for spinal chord research.

West Lorne resident, Colin Kittmer remembers that day in 1986 when Rick Hansen wheeled through nearby Eagle. He, and a group of students ran from the high school in West Lorne, all the way out to Eagle to catch a glimpse of Rick Hansen and hear him speak.

Kittmer recalls that there were other dignitaries there yet he can't remember their names. The only thing he can remember is that he heard Rick Hansen speak. He remembers feeling overjoyed at the opportunity to meet this international celebrity.

He also remembers thinking something else.

"At the time I never thought that I would ever be in a wheelchair myself," he says.

How times have changed since then for Colin Kittmer. He has since retired from West Elgin Secondary School where he taught math and computers for 32 years. In an accident that occurred in September 2000, Kittmer fell from a tree. He was paralyzed from the upper chest down.

He has had to work hard since then, as being in a wheelchair requires immense upper body and arm strength.

Even though Rick Hansen Day is not a race, Kittmer still must be in good shape to complete the five kilometre wheel. He performs arm exercises daily on a weight machine that he stores in the garage. He also says that the most important preparation for events like these is just to get out and practice.

"The big thing is to just get out and wheel because there is nothing that replaces that, just like running... because you have to get your heart rate up," says Kittmer who tries to get out at least once a day.

He competed in a relay race this past April for the second straight year for the Canadian Paraplegic Association. The teams of eight competed amongst each other on an indoor track and managed to raise over $40,000 for spinal chord research.

Kittmer is now preparing for the Rick Hansen Wheels in Motion Day in which he and 25 of his friends and family will complete the five kilometre track.

Participants can walk, run, wheel or rollerblade with all pledges collected going to spinal chord research in London at Parkwood Hospital.

Kittmer is very pleased with the care that he received at Parkwood Hospital so he is excited to be able to give back.

Anyone who would like to participate can visit the website www.rick-hansen.com. If you would like to donate, you can reach Colin Kittmer at 768-1671.

The Chronicle



HANGING BASKETS SCOTT HILGENDORFF/CHRONICLE

West Elgin Parks and Recreation staff were out last week hanging flower baskets along West Lorne's Main Street, prior to the holiday weekend.



Gar Knutson with West Elgin mayor Graham Warwick at the opening of the new medical facility.

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CURRENT EVENTS 2004

Gas prices taking toll

■ One resident considers a move closer to work

RYAN MCLANDRESS
for The Chronicle

Rising gas prices are taking their toll locally and have prompted one area resident to look at moving out of the area and closer to his place of work.

West Lorne resident, Paul Swick travels to Stratford five days a week to work and has already seen his expenses increase.

"It has increased my costs to twenty dollars more per week," says Swick, which in the long run can add up fast.

Prices locally have topped 89 cents/litre and have been as high as 93 cents in surrounding communities.

As a result, Swick has been forced to look at alternate ways of conserving fuel.

"I am looking at a smaller more fuel efficient vehicle or a camping trailer in order to stay up there during the week," says Swick, who admits that he has also been considering the possibility of moving closer to Stratford.

The increased cost of gas is also affecting local farmers who may see their profits suffer.

Matt Breen farms 200 acres of land outside of Iona and he is seeing the difference as a result of the fuel increases.

"It's going to affect me a bit. You get the same price for your crop whether fuel is cheap or not. My expenses will definitely increase this year," says Breen who admits that he can't make cutbacks on the farm because the crops have to be planted regardless.

> "IT'S KIND OF DISHEARTENING WHEN YOU SEE THE PRICE OF FUEL INCREASING SO MUCH AND IT REALLY MAKES YOU WONDER,"
>
> **— Paul MacDonald, Earl MacDonald and Son Transport**

He can make some changes on his truck however.

"I am going to put a different air filter in my truck to get better mileage, and just basically do an engine tune up," he says.

According to Breen, buying gas in bulk as his family does, used to save them a large sum of money. He says lately though, there has been little difference in price as it cost his family nearly 83 cents a litre to fill their bulk tank up.

The rising gas prices are also putting a strain on the community's volunteer services, including the volunteer driving that residents like Dirk Buth do.

Buth drives for the Cancer Society and the West Elgin Support Services when he can. He drives patients to various appointments at the nearby hospitals and says that because of the necessity of what he does, cutting back is not an option.

"We have to take the patients no matter what. It's a labour of love. When someone has to be there, we go. We just have to live with it," says Buth who says that he does receive a percentage of his mileage but would not comment on how much.

Buth also says that the rising gas prices are a bad thing, not only for drivers like himself, but for the economy as well.

"I don't like the rising gas prices because it is bad for the economy as a whole. I think that it's bad for the

Continued on Page 2



RYAN MCLANDRESS/CHRONICLE

ADDING IT UP

Frank Ganhadeiro watches as the numbers add up Tuesday while he gets a fill-up in West Lorne.

Safety first, before trees, says mayor

■ New tree/road committee formed

SCOTT HILGENDORFF
staff

Safety has to come first but West Elgin council is joining with tree preservationists to form a new committee that will look at ways to protect local heritage trees or at least keep the lines of communication open if a tree has to come down.

"We don't take safety lightly," said Mayor Graham Warwick at council's May 13 meeting.

He defended the need to cut down an almost 300-year-old Shumard red oak tree that he said had been marked to come down two years ago.

> "WE DON'T TAKE SAFETY LIGHTLY,"
>
> **— West Elgin Mayor Graham Warwick**

It was cut down after Warwick said a "scientific approach" was taken to determine if the tree was unsafe or not.

The tree bore a plaque marking it as one of about 150 trees that were identified as significant by the Heritage Tree Committee in western Elgin County.

Individual maps were prepared for eastern and western Elgin County and St. Thomas identifying the best examples of each species of tree found in the areas.

Many of the trees are rare or unique like the Shumard oak that was cut down in West Lorne on Graham Road. That tree was the only one of its kind from the original woodcover found in the county, a rare specimen normally found only as far north as Essex County in Canada.

Warwick said an expert opinion was sought before deciding the tree had to come down.

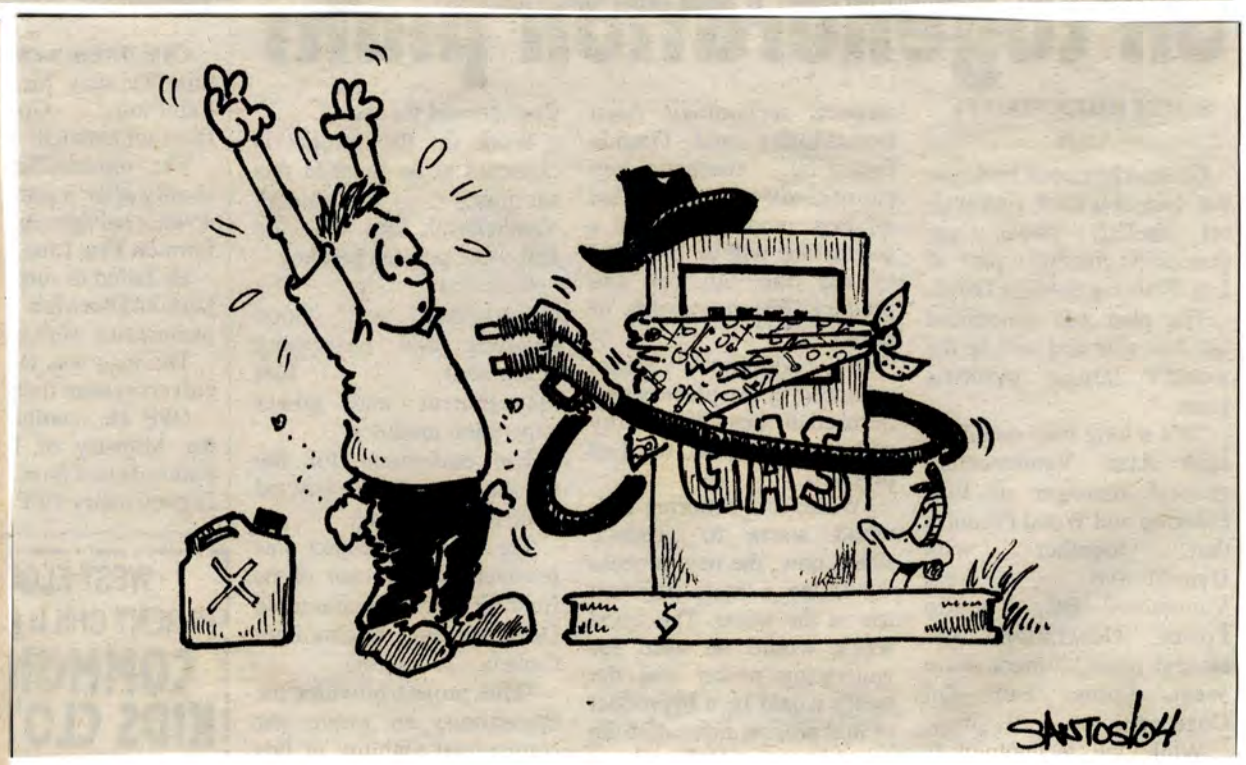
"If it's unsafe, a heritage sticker isn't going to make it unsafe," said Warwick.

Bill Prieksaitis, who attended the meeting to unveil a new sign marking trails at Joe's Bush, was one of the people involved in identifying the local trees. He said they picked as many trees on municipal property as they could, thinking those trees would be protected and more easily accessible than some found on private property that could be cut down at a property owner's whim.

He presented council with an agreement that was originally set up several years ago to protect the trees but after reading it to council, agreed with Warwick that it really didn't set out any protection.

Warwick said the municipality also remains liable under any agreement if someone is injured should a dying tree fall or limbs be blown off causing damage.

Continued on Page 2





CANDLES LIT FOR THOSE LOST JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

The Angel Tree Ceremony planning committee lit candles and stood by the Christmas tree at the West Lorne Complex Dec. 17 to honour loved ones lost. Back row: Jean Birt, left, Gwen Steward, Marion Redinger, Joy Scafe. Front row: Helen Okolisan and Anna Podebry
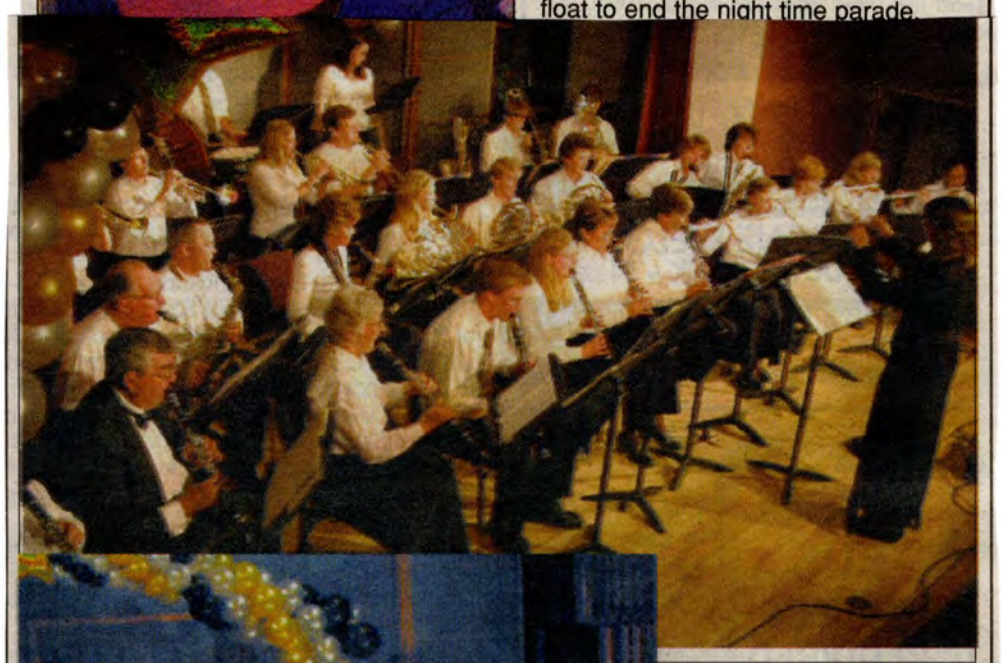




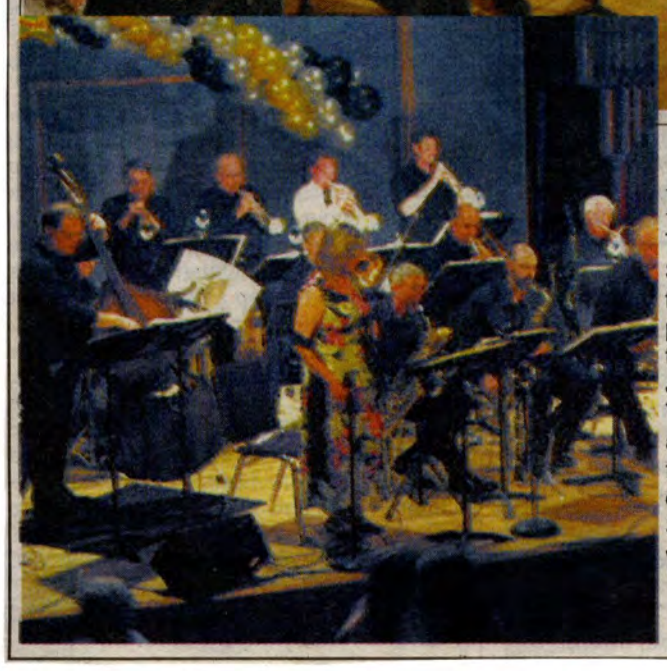
JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

WEST LORNE HOLDS NIGHT TIME SANTA CLAUS PARADE

Top, the West Lorne Girl Guides dressed as angels and sang Christmas carols during the Optimist Club Santa Claus parade that saw hundreds crowd Graham Rd. and Main St., Nov. 26 in West Lorne. Middle: Colton Arsenijevic, from West Lorne meets Santa Claus at the West Elgin Community Health Centre after the parade. Bottom left, Jessie Linton and Mackenzie Fink waved to Santa as he went by on the Optimist float to end the night time parade.







CONTRIBUTED

Big band electrifys
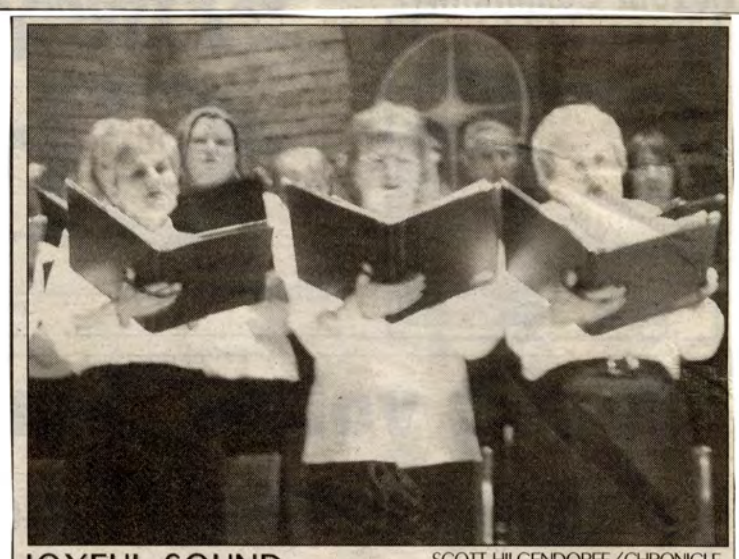
The West Elgin Band, led by Sharon Little, above, performed stirring concert band pieces at WEDS Theatre of the Performing Arts in Dutton June 3. Below, the Prime Time Big Band from London also played at the show, performing jazz music to dancers and at full house. Sharon Beeler, vocalist sings with the big band.



SANTA VISITS WEST LORNE

JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Ashley Lowes of West Lorne was feeling a little shy when she met Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus at the West Elgin Community Health Centre after the Optimist Club of West Lorne's Santa Claus Parade Nov. 26. Well over a hundred children told Santa what they would like for Christmas.



JOYFUL SOUND

SCOTT HILGENDORFF/CHRONICLE

Members of the West Elgin Choral Society, under the direction of Wayne Carroll, perform "There is no Rose". The society performed A Ceremony of Carols Saturday night at St. Mary's Church in West Lorne.

Dutton and West Lorne host Cancer fund raising events

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

While the Great Ride 'n Stride for Cancer doesn't take place until Sunday in Dutton and West Lorne, some walkers, cyclists and even horse back riders have already completed the fund raising event.

"I've got guys out there riding bikes now," said Wayne Gaudon last Thursday.

He's organizing Dutton's event, hosted by the Dutton and District Lions Club.

Gaudon is expecting a big crowd this year.

One participant who recently lost his wife to cancer has 15 family members taking part this year.

The event was established by the Canadian Cancer Society and encourages participants across Canada to walk, cycle, job and even in-line skate along routes after collecting pledges to participate.

Locally, the event takes place in Dutton and West Lorne on Sunday with registration at 12:30 p.m.

Registration in Dutton is at the Dutton Lions Den and in West Lorne, it's at the West Elgin Arena.

The walk begins at 1 p.m. in both communities.

West Lorne's route takes participants up Graham Road to Pioneer Line while Gaudon said in Dutton, participants generally pick their own route.

"Some ride to Wallacetown and back," he said, while seniors often choose to walk a route around the community centre.

While pledge sheets have been circulating for weeks now, Gaudon said people can write out pledges on a piece of paper or simply bring donations to the registration on Sunday.

Proceeds from the event go to the Canadian Cancer Society.

Payne critically injured

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

A 64-year-old West Lorne man was critically injured after being hit by a car on Monday on Graham St. in West Lorne.

Ron Payne was crossing the street from the west side, near Home Hardware, when he stepped into the street in front of a car being driven by a 16-year-old from Rodney.

The accident occurred just before the lunch-hour and the downtown was busy with students getting lunch.

Witnesses saw Payne struck by the Oldsmobile Cutlass. He was lifted by the vehicle onto the windshield, breaking it, before falling to the pavement.

Employees at PJs Pizza and Home Hardware called 911 and several people assisted Payne until paramedics arrived.

A witness said one 16-year-old student ran to a nearby apartment and got a towel which he personally held to Payne's bleeding head.

Other students students stepped in to direct traffic and Payne was conscious, talking to the students and adults who gathered around to offer assistance.

He was taken to Four Counties Health Services in Newbury before being transferred to the London Health Sciences Centre's South St. Campus.

Police did not say whether the driver was male or female in a release, but the driver was not hurt.

Graham Street was closed for approximately two hours while OPP investigated and reported no charges will be laid.



Graham St. was closed for about two hours Monday afternoon to investigate an accident that critically injured a 64-year-old West Lorne man.

Chronicle photo

The Chronicle



JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Trucks lined up in West Lorne last Thursday and Friday while construction reduced one lane on the Highway 401 eastbound.



SCOTT HILGENDORFF/CHRONICLE

HERITAGE TREE COMES DOWN
Bill Prieksaitis, who helped the Heritage Tree Committee identify this Shumard red oak, measures the stump of the tree, determining its age at approximately 276 years old. The tree was cut down after being determined unsafe by the West Elgin Roads Department but Prieksaitis disagrees with that assessment.

Heritage tree cut down, preservationists upset

■ *276-year-old tree had to come down: road superintendent*

SCOTT HILGENDORFF
staff

When a tree fell in West Elgin, everyone heard it.

A 276-year-old heritage tree, the only one of its kind in the county, was cut down to the dismay of local naturalists and the Heritage Tree Committee.

Ironically, it was Earth Day when the rare, Shumard's red oak was cut down.

"Let's see a little compassion for these old girls," said Bill Prieksaitis of the Rodney area.

He helped the Heritage Tree Committee identify more than 150 species of trees in western Elgin County.

The committee identified the best of the species but in the case of the Shumard, it was the only one they could find.

It's rare in Canada, most commonly found in Essex County but rare even there where the region has only three percent of its tree cover left.

The trees were put onto maps for local people interested in seeing the trees and tourists visiting the area.

Three maps were produced for each of eastern and western Elgin County and St. Thomas.

Continued on Page 2

October 28, 2004

Compensation needed for detours

Editorial

Countless transport trucks detoured through West Lorne and Dutton last week because of construction delays near Dunborough Road on Highway 401.

There was no official detour through the area. Trucks were warned by CB ahead of time of the delays and chose the detour.

The volume of truck traffic for at least three days was almost the same as the volumes seen when a collision on the super highway forces traffic to detour.

Local municipalities have long fought with issues surrounding these detours.

Hundreds of cars and trucks come off the 401 and hit local side roads not built for the traffic volumes or vehicle sizes of a 400 series highway.

To counter it, municipal staff have posted road blocks and lobbied to have emergency detour route signs clearly posted to Highway 3, a highway that can handle the traffic a little better.

Last week's detour was not planned and trucks were not directed off the highway but chose the quicker route around the construction.

That route took most of them down Pioneer Line and may have placed months of wear on these roads.

They were travelling at high speeds and in some places, chewing up the shoulders.

In addition to the excessive wear and tear, it placed a high volume of speeding traffic on a highway that sees minimal police presence.

MTO and OPP measures along Highway 401 have helped reduce the traffic volumes detouring through local roads but it again raises the issue of who pays for these roads.

The provincial government has some obligation to find a formula for providing grants to 401 municipalities whose roads need repair and upgrading more frequently from the extra traffic when detours occur.

SH

CURRENT EVENTS 2004

Chronicle community



Hope Mytroen paints a pink flower on a canvass at Sue Gallant's art camp in West Lorne recently.



More than 150 people, many bikers, attended a special Christian outreach service at the West Elgin Arena in West Lorne July 26 with Dr. Jerry Savelle, an evangelist with the Chariots of Light Christian motorcycle club. The event was hosted by Melody Fellowship Church.



Eva Marton serenades Dutton residents at Music in the Park.



Heather Bell, right, Alicia Oliveira, Meagan Jeffries and Amy Oliveira were among the students learning to sew by creating a shoulder bag at Heather Bell's Sewing Studio where she held a sewing camp for children earlier this month.

JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

AUG 14/10



CYCLISTS COME A LONG WAY KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Lynnette Kobernik from California cycles into the West Elgin Secondary School parking lot last Thursday. She was one of 24 cyclists travelling with Cycle America. She started the tour in Seattle Washington and will finish in Boston Massachusetts. The group spent the night in West Lorne behind the school.

Closer eye is required on Line Fences Act

BY PAUL MISTELE
Ontario Federation of Agriculture Executive Committee

COMMENTARY

Ontario's Line Fences Act contains details that are of vital importance to land owners, particularly farmers. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture keeps a close eye on the Act, monitoring compliance and any efforts to modify the details it contains.

A recent article in Municipal World, a magazine for and about different aspects of municipal government, suggests "Section 20 of Ontario's Line Fences Act needs to change." That's the section that sets out the responsibilities for fencing former railway rights-of-way in Ontario.

Wording in Section 20 states: "if a former railway right-of-way is acquired by a non-abutting landowner, then that person, Crown agency or municipality, as well as whoever acquires it from them, is solely responsible for constructing, keeping up and repairing the fences along the former railway right-of-way."

Recent court cases have upheld Section 20, making municipalities still 100 per cent responsible for these fences. This probably accounts for the Municipal World article suggesting "Section 20 of Ontario's Line Fences Act needs to change."

OFA, working in concert with local interests, played a role in gaining the court decision that upholds the Act as it is written. For Ontario farmers, that section of the Act is critical, especially for those who own land that abuts these abandoned railway rights-of-way. These strips of property are ideal for trails used by the general public seeking recreational areas.

On a regular basis, the use of adjoining farmlands is assumed to be included in the trails, and without constantly maintained fences, there is nothing to discourage such use. Farmers aren't interested in playing the role of the cordial host when it means damage to crops and livestock escapes. They want a secure fence between their property and the trails, and they need to know it is not their responsibility to build such fences.

The October, 2002, Divisional Court ruling made it clear when it stated the wording of Section 20 of the Act is "precise and unambiguous" and that "the municipality is liable for the entire cost of fencing when fencing is sought by the abutting landowners."

The author of the Municipal World article, Michael Graves, is director of corporate services and clerk for the town of Tillsonburg. Tillsonburg along with Bayham Township became owners of an abandoned railway right-of-way in the early 1990s. When the abutting landowners requested fences along the proposed recreational trail, the municipalities refused to pay, leading to the landowners taking the issue to the courts for resolution.

OFA worked with the farm property owners to defend their interests at that time, and continues its resolve to see Section 20 of the Line Fences Act remain unchanged and enforced. It protects a basic right of farmers to have security for their properties, and leaves it to the "non-abutting property owner who acquired the right-of-way" to provide that fencing.

The Municipal World article suggests abutting property owners – usually farmers – should be expected to pay a share of the cost of such fencing when it is requested. From a purely economic standpoint, farmers gain nothing but security for their property. An investment in fencing to separate abandoned railway rights-of-way from their farmland yields absolutely no economic return.

OFA supports Section 20 of the Line Fences Act and will continue all necessary efforts to keep it enforced across the province and unchanged!

Petty vandalism costing thousands, community leaders have had enough

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

Petty vandalism is costing west Elgin County residents more than $13,000 in time and resources to clean up and fix damaged properties in the municipality say parks and recreation supervisors.

"Things are going to break and are expected to, but when they are broken senselessly we have to fix stuff that didn't need fixing. It is a pain and a waste of time," said West Elgin parks and recreation superintendent Jeff Slater.

About $5,000 will be spent to fix floorboards and benches at the grandstand in Rodney after vandals broke through the floor to get underneath the bleachers.

"God knows what they are doing under there," said Slater. "I remember when the trick was to soap people's windows

In Rodney vandals have cut volleyball nets, stole the rope on the flagpole in the park and smashed windows at the pool in Rodney. In West Lorne, they have'graphitisized' the skate park and burned the picnic tables in Port Glasgow.

"We won't replace most of these things if it is just going to happen again," said Slater. "We're just throwing money away."

Since the parks department removed the dug outs at the ball diamonds there has been a reduction in vandalism and Slater's crew usually leave the skate park alone unless there is something profane scrolled on the pads.

Dutton/Dunwich parks and recreation manager Connie Redmond said a community policing committee is being incorporated in Dutton in the next week and the municipality has taken action against vandalism by creating a bylaw that closes off municipal property to unauthorized people from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.

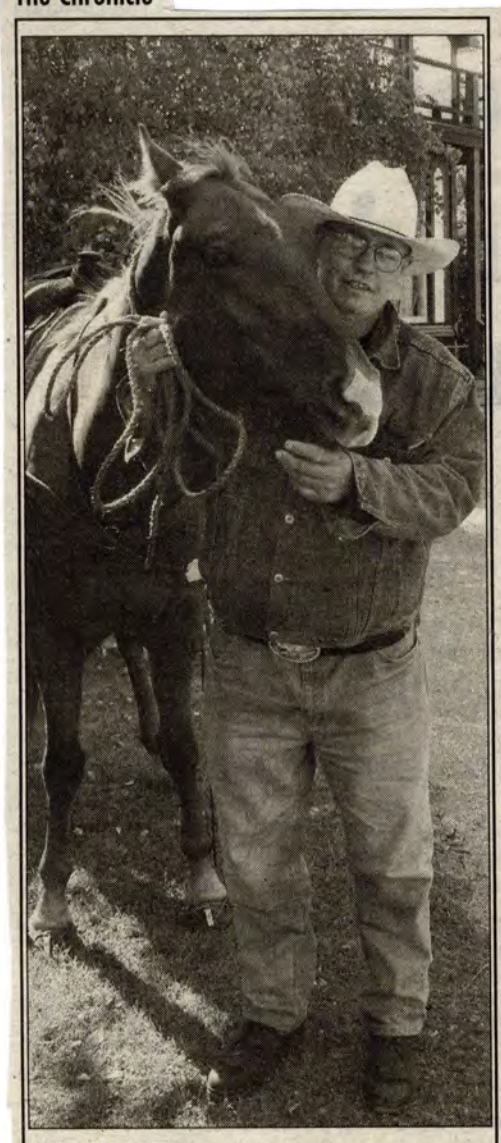
Redmond said the municipality has spent $3,000 in repairs not including labour.

She said the new gazebo has been a target of late. Rope lights were stolen twice, spindles were broken and vandals have carved into the wood.

Continued on Page 2

CURRENT EVENTS 2004

The Chronicle –



JOURNEY KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Al Williams from Simcoe stopped in Eagle on Oct. 4 to feed his horse Kid Lightening. The two are journeying from Windsor to Niagara Falls to raise awareness on mental illnesses and depression. The ride is called the Southern Ontario Awareness Ride. OCT/04



CONTAINING THE BLAZE JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Firefighters from Dutton/Dunwich, Southwold and West Lorne worked Friday afternoon to contain the blaze that destroyed the historic McIntyre Hotel.

Cause undetermined

■ *Investigation results could take a month*

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

Cause of the McIntyre Hotel fire will not be known for about a month as the Office of the Fire Marshall and Centre for Forensic Sciences examine items from the scene.

There were no signs of arson, said Fire Investigator Bryan Fischer, but he would not speculate on the cause.

No one was injured in the blaze that destroyed the Dutton landmark but paramedics treated one firefighter for smoke inhalation.

Diane Van Bridger, the McIntyre building landlord and bar manager said the fire was started in a second floor laundry room near an office in the rear of the building.

It spread north in to the laundromat building before the wind blew the heat and flames southward, destroying the entire McIntyre Hotel and threatening several other businesses to the south.

By 9 p.m. the south side of the hotel was a smoldering heap of rubble and the laundromat and one of two apartments above it were gutted.

Ten trucks from Dutton/Dunwich, West Lorne and Southwold along with 24 volunteer firefighters contained the fire to the two buildings by blasting 82 litres of water per second into the buildings.

The fire lasted eight hours and damage to the McIntyre was estimated at $500,000 by Dutton fire chief Dan Lundy and Van Bridger but the financial toll to the business community could rise.

Insurance adjusters were still expected to be surveying each building for costs of damage and to decide what other buildings should be demolished.

The apartment at the rear of the laundromat building was damaged heavily by smoke and water.

One building in question at press time houses Jerry Galbraith's Investors Group had extensive damage to the roof. The building suffered smoke damage.

McNeil Insurance suffered minor smoke damage and moved to the vacant building owned by Murray Brown. He is offering the store to other businesses that suffered damage or were evacuated Friday.

Apartments above Panther Products, Marg's Accounting and the Dutton Flower Shop had water and smoke damage. It was unclear how many businesses would open before press time.

Mac's colourful history missed

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

As the McIntyre Hotel burned Friday, a congregation of lost regulars and sympathetic friends of the long-standing watering hole shared hamburgers cooked by a neighbour and toasted their destroyed home away from home.

"It was so much fun here on a Saturday night," said Diane McAlpine who had operated 'the Mac' for three years before selling it back to Tom Van Bridger, the McIntyre's current owner. "I put my heart and soul into that place, every last dime."

A. McMillan built the McIntyre Hotel in 1857 along the wooden boardwalks and mud streets.

J.H. McIntyre bought the hotel in 1888 and changed the name to the McIntyre House Hotel.

There were 26 bedrooms, several sample rooms for travelling salesmen, a dining room and a stable at the back. There was an overhanging porch and painted decadent woodworking on the facade that would be changed over time by various owners.

Before the fire there was four apartments and an office on the second floor above a dining area, banquet room, bar and dance floor on the main floor.

The hotel put Dutton on the map and was a place where generations of regulars and tradesmen would meet to share fables and truths, glory and pain and always a good laugh.

To many, it became an eyesore or a place with a rough reputation but to many others, it's a place that will be missed.

A group of regulars held a vigil behind the McIntyre as it burned.

McAlpine said she had a long love affair with 'the Mac' and it drove her and her husband to the brink of bankruptcy to keep it up to code. "It was a riot here. There would be line-ups, and honestly there were less fights than compared to the 150 or so peaceful people."

"People said it was a bad place because there was fights and bikers," said McAlpine. "But it was so much fun and everyone would be there. I'm going to miss it." JULY/04

Lutheran Church will build on God's Word at Vacation Bible School

Grace Lutheran Church in West Lorne will be experiencing a bit of construction this summer during its Vacation Bible School Aug. 16 to 20 at 9 a.m. until Noon each day.

It's all part of this year's theme, Construction Inc.

It is just one of the ways organizers hope to have children between the ages of four and 12 join the crew and become closer to God.

Brick by brick, leaders will build on God's Word through a variety of crafts, stories, skits, music and other fun activities all free of charge.

Anyone interested in registering their child for Construction Inc. Vacation Bible School at Grace Lutheran can phone Joy at 768-1097.

Registrations will also be accepted on Aug. 16 at the Church.

It's an excellent opportunity for children to have fun, hear the Gospel, and meet old and new friends.





STAGE IS SET FOR FUN...

Rob Pristas as Martin waves, unseen to Ethan's best friend who is trying to help him get on with his life after Ethan was widowed five years earlier. Pat Kell, right photo, plays Theresa Pike, who is trying to win Ethan's affections. Only seen by Ethan, played by Kevin Hull (right), Martin's "shadow being" is trying to make up for past mistakes in his own life. Joining the cast as young Ethan and Martin are Darren Downie and Kory Preston. The WEDS production runs April 16, opening night, April 17, April 23 and April 24 at 8 p.m. An April 19 matinee takes place at 2 p.m. The doors are open a half-hour before the curtain rises.



FRESH FRUIT AT FARMER'S MARKET RYAN MCLANDRESS/CHRONICLE

Emily Moreau and Jake Fischer sold fresh blueberries at the Farmer's Market at the West Elgin Community Health Centre Saturday, July 31.

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SCOTT HILGENDORFF/THE CHRONICLE

Farmers' Market Fun

Elyssa Vandebelt, four, of Cambridge dropped by the West Elgin Community Health Centre's Farmers' Market Saturday morning where Dotsy painted her face to look like a tiger. Elyssa was visiting her grandparents in West Lorne. The market runs monthly through October with the next event taking place Aug. 13 in the health centre's parking lot. There's room for more vendors offering fresh produce and agricultural products.

Power outage is planned in West Lorne

Residents in Eagle may be affected, outage Aug. 12 for system upgrade

KEMPENAAR
staff

If the power is out when you wake up this Sunday don't be alarmed; it is a planned outage by Hydro One.

The outage is supposed to last four hours starting at 6:30 a.m. on Aug. 12 in West Lorne.

The outage will be contained to the West Lorne area although residents in Eagle may experience an outage as well.

Crew supervisor Paul Maciejewski says tests on the lines today will be the final indicator of any possible outage there.

Hydro One plans to switch sources of power to Eagle from West Lorne to Dutton in order to keep the water pumping plant active.

"The pumping plants, Erie Flooring and (Rockland Flooring) Millner-Rigsby Co. Ltd. will keep going," says Maciejewski.

The outage will give crews time to replace four or five poles that carry hydro lines from the power transformer station on Pioneer Line in West Lorne.

The transformers are part of an old system that is being upgraded now.

Power station crews were commencing the transformer upgrade last week and the project is expected to be complete next week.

Maciejewski says he can draw a straight line where power will be out.

West Elgin band running out of wind

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

The West Elgin Community Band is running out of wind.

When the band meets in the West Elgin Secondary School music room Monday, Sept. 20 they will be short brass, woodwind and tuba players.

Music selected for this season may not include the bottom end, or bass sounds, that drive the most music pieces, says band member Heather Bell.

The band currently has about 20 members but players that kept up the bottom end have either moved to London or cannot make the band practices every Monday.

"We'll take people with any instrument," says Bell, but the band really needs some key players.

She said it isn't a huge commitment and a great way to relieve stresses from working all day, raising a family and maintaining a home.

"It's a hoot," she says.

The band plays around two to three concerts in the winter and fall and also participates in the Christmas parades in West Lorne and Rodney.

From marching songs, Christmas carols, Messiah, plus movie and TV theme songs, the band has a lot of fun learning new songs and playing for audiences, says Bell.

While the band is looking for people who can read music and play scales, Bell says, anyone who took music in high school would be able to pick up an instrument and play along.

"It's just like riding a bike," she says.

Saxophone players, trumpeters, trombonists and more percussionists are needed to fill out the sound of some of the band's tunes.

The door is open to young music lovers too, hoping to keep their skills up if they don't get to take music in school this semester.

Practices begin at 7 p.m. for the band. The Junior Band starts at 6 p.m. Snacks and good conversations are available during breaks.

The band is still active but if it does not continue to grow and maintain the right instruments to play fun pieces it would take a lot of energy to start up again.

Call Heather Bell for more information at 768-1284.

Man assaulted with beer bottle at West Lorne home

A 20-year-old male was struck in the face with a beer bottle at a house party Saturday night on John Street in West Lorne.

The man was taken to Four Counties Hospital with severe but non-life threatening injuries.

He was attacked by the accused after arriving at the party with a number of friends.

Elgin County OPP responded to residence and made an arrest after 1 a.m.

Jeff Thyssen, 21-year-old from West Lorne was charged with aggravated assault and held for a bail hearing.

Noisy summer in West Elgin

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

It was a noisy summer in West Elgin with 22 noise complaints called into the OPP, said Const. Jennifer Wilks at the West Elgin Neighbourhood Watch meeting Sept. 14.

While break and enters were down in West Elgin, there were 16 minor thefts including bicycles and lawn mowers and Wilks stressed neighbours need to keep an eye out for each other's property, not just houses.

The report, covering from July 1 to Sept. 4 was also presented with a warning to citizens to be on the look out for drug activity in cornfields in the area.

Andy Kieraszewicz said he was surprised by a Kent County OPP drug investigation on his property.

Officers arrived in unmarked cars and dressed in civilian clothing instead of police uniforms, he said at the meeting.

Kieraszewicz's son thought it seemed strange and called the Elgin OPP to see if they knew of the investigation. They did not. Elgin OPP investigated the sting and found it was a drug seizure.

A local aviator found the crop, took pictures and reported it to Kent OPP.

Police operating an under cover drug operation would usually be dressed in green or gray emergency response uniforms, said Wilks, and she would like the OPP to be better informed of other detachments investigations.

She said any suspicious activity should be reported to the police and warned that some organized group of drug growers or dealers may dress like undercover police to steal another group of grower's marijuana from a field. "One group of druggies may know about one other group of druggies and storm (into a field or home) dressed as police officers," said Wilks.

Six drug occurrences were reported by the OPP this summer in West Elgin.

Wilks also said there were a lot of unnecessary calls to the OPP.

There were 17 false alarms attended to by the police and 21 911 hang-ups.



HAVING FUN AT A SERIOUS EVENT...

Helen Kovacs, left, Helen Mooser, and Rosalie Krebsz wore some silly hats as they participated in the Great Ride 'N Stride for Cancer on Sunday in West Lorne. The event raised more than $4,000 in West Lorne and more than $7,000 in Dutton.

Chronicle photo

Current Events 2004



BIBLE SCHOOL BUILT FOR FUN JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

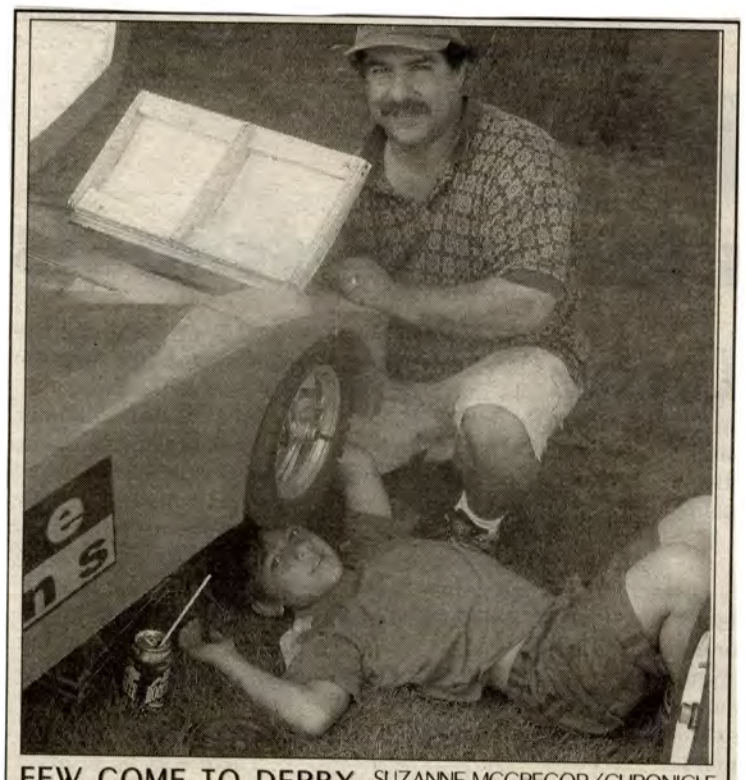
Grace Lutheran Church hosted the Construction Inc. Vacation Bible School in the name of Christ last week in West Lorne. Performing a skit called A Special Report, left to right, Jessica Wilson-Evetts, Jessalyn Betsch, Shelby Nielson, Francis Sobieralski, Caitlyn Van Raes, Stephanie Emery, Jaimee Parcels and Rebecca Betsch.

The Chronicle 2004



IN TRAINING CONTRIBUTED

Jacob Dunn walks Eckoe, a golden retriever being trained to help children with autism like Jacob, with trainer Mavis Bedford. Jacob is one of 25 children in Canada who will receive a service dog.



FEW COME TO DERBY SUZANNE MCGREGOR/CHRONICLE

Josh Peltier fixes a wheel with his dad Mark from Windsor at the Downhill Derby in West Lorne last Saturday.

The Chronicle



STAMP OF APPROVAL CONTRIBUTED

Postmaster Randy Vandendriessche makes a presentation to Karen Carroll of West Lorne who won the postmark design contest held in conjunction with the Rodney Aldborough 150th Fair. More than 20 entries were received in the competition to design a postmark for the fair used to cancel stamps on mail leaving the Rodney Post Office. The postmark had to incorporate the fair theme: "Farming, Family and Fun" and was judged by members of the Rodney Aldborough Agricultural Society. Runners up in the competition including Eric Betsch and Melanie Knapp, both of West Lorne. The Post Office will be at the fair Sept. 17-18 with an exhibit where people can create postcards using commemorative stamps and the anniversary cancellation post mark.

Life with autism made easier with National Service Dog

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

Young Jacob Dunn is getting help with his homework; not from his mom or the teacher, but from a golden retriever.

Jacob, who is autistic, is one of only 25 children in Canada who will receive a dog from National Service Dogs, a breeding, training and dog placement charity that provides assistance dogs to the physically and visual challenged under 18.

Four-year-old Jacob can be a handful for his mother Linda and father Scott. The neurological disorder effects Jacob's ability to deal with over stimulation and can lead to dangerous situations.

Dunn said Jacob has run out on Pioneer Line in front of the family's home and can be difficult when she takes Jacob and his two brothers for groceries.

"Safety is the main issue," said Dunn. "Having a trained dog would make life a lot easier."

A service dog can prevent a child from bolting into the street by bracing its feet and slowing the child down. A dog can also have a calming affect on an autistic child.

Mavis Bedford from Glencoe is training Eckoe, a one-year-old golden retriever for National Service Dogs and Jacob has been socializing with Eckoe since May assisting with Bedford's training of the dog to become a caregiver for the child.

The Dunn family doesn't know for sure if they will get Eckoe yet because she is a little small for Jacob, but the boy and dog have bonded, said Linda.

"We have never seen Jacob make a friend like this before," she said.

The dog is free from the service with one promise: the family must raise money for the next child hoping to get a dog.

The cost to breed, train, feed and place the dog during the first two years of the dog's life is around $12,000.

Dunn said she is looking at ways to raise money and help support Jacob.

Eckoe started five months of intense training and then will have one week of in-house training with a professional trainer and the family to help the dog and family adjust.

Jacob just finished junior kindergarten and under goes six hours of intensive behavioural intervention a day. Dunn said he continues to improve as he grows and she is hopeful a new companion for Jacob would give him a greater aptitude for learning and reduce stress on the family.

"It's amazing. They can answer the phone, turn off lights, and open doors," she said.

If Eckoe can be given to Jacob he will leashed to the boy, and be at his side day and night. He will also sit next to Jacob's desk in school this fall.

"It would be great if she can help him with his homework too," said Dunn.

CURRENT EVENTS 2004

Jan 04

The Chronicle

Open winter leads to rare sightings in annual Christmas Bird Count

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

A warm, snow-free start to the winter saw some unusual finds in the annual Canadian Christmas Bird Count, Dec. 27. Seventy-five volunteers helping the West Elgin Nature Club, counted 16,098 birds including several species that should have been further south by now.

Two included a house wren and a hoary redpoll.

A record high count of redtail hawks was also counted. One hundred and eighty-seven of those were found.

"They keep moving with the food supply. This has been an open winter. It holds our seasonal birds here a lot longer," said Ken Reinke, an organizer of this year's count.

For the hawks and other birds, an "open winter" means more food available and less reason to move further south. At the same time, there are other birds, such as tree sparrows, that migrate further north that haven't arrived in this area yet.

"Leaving here or getting here, it's all thrown off by an open winter," said Reinke.

A brown thrasher and a northern mockingbird, which should be south by now, were also found while only a few snow buntings, normally common this time of the year, were seen.

Normally 1,000 to 3,000 snow buntings are tallied in the count but only a few were found this year.

The numbers vary slightly each year and Reinke said similar counts are done across North America, helping with research from migratory patterns to species in danger or making a comeback, like the wild turkey - 87 of those were found.

Reinke said a few generations ago, people used to have to travel to the Jack Miner's Bird Sanctuary to see Canada geese, but now, the birds are common.

Volunteers counted birds in a circular area surrounding Rodney, West Lorne and Dutton, extending north to the Thames River and south to the Lake Erie Shore.

Beginner band taking shape

By Sharon Little

Study after study shows that playing a musical instrument makes you smarter. Talk to the members of the West Elgin Community Band and you find that a two-hour rehearsal on Monday evening relieves stress, is something they look forward to at the end of a long day and is more fun than washing dishes and watching TV.

Don't miss this chance to learn a new skill. If your child is learning or going to be learning an instrument in school, learn along with them. It's a great way to do something with your son or daughter where both of you are starting from scratch.

All would be band musicians from Grade 6 and up are encouraged to sign up for the West Elgin Community Beginner Band which starts Monday Feb. 2 and runs until June. An information session will be held January 19 at 6:30 in the WESS music room. The Beginner Band is for beginners and teaches you how to read music and play a woodwind, brass or percussion instrument.

No background experience is necessary. We also welcome rusty players who would like to start playing again, but need some help getting back into playing. Information on instrument rental and purchase will be available.

If you already play an instrument or played in High School, the West Elgin Community Band, in its 12th year, welcomes new members.

WESS High School students who would like another place to play or who aren't taking music are welcome. If you played an instrument in high school, it's like riding a bike. It will come back to you! The West Elgin Community Band is a safe and supportive environment in which to make your musical comeback.

For more information or encouragement, call Sharon Little 785-0797 or Heather Bell 768-1284

JAN 8, 2004

The Chronicle



Keith Kelly checks the thermometer at his weather station in New Glasgow.

Chronicle photo

Kelly predicting warm winter

For *The Chronicle*

For almost 50 years, Keith Kelly has been making that 20-second morning walk out his back door to record temperature statistics for Environment Canada, all for a calendar.

A detailed weather calendar that the public would pay about $8 for off a newsstand is Kelly's sole reward for his work as a weather watcher.

Across Elgin county, he's known as the last word on reliable weather forecasts and, unofficially, the guardian of near half a century of weather records.

Can't remember what it was like on June 8, 1973? Kelly can tell you what the temperature was and give a general description of the conditions.

His records, which may seem to have trivial value to some, have been used as evidence in legal cases.

> "IF I'M WRONG ON THE WEATHER, I'LL BE RIGHT ON THE PRECIPITATION OR VICE-VERSA,"
>
> — Keith Kelly

Kelly recalls a pair of lawyers coming to his farm home just west of New Glasgow one day and asking him to check his records for a certain day. Those lawyers were embroiled in a case involving a crop damage claim and the records verified general conditions on that day.

"They paid me $35 for my information," he said. In another case, his records confirmed it was wet outside on a day when footprints formed part of the evidence in a criminal case.

Kelly, 78, started his practice of weather watching in 1957, providing information for the Elgin Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association.

"They wanted to know when there was frost at blossom time," he said. At that time, Kelly was farming on the family homestead where a house built in 1905 by his father and local tradesmen is still standing. That simple, two-storey brick home was framed with logs cut on the farm, Kelly notes proudly.

His great grandfather, who came to Canada in the 1870s, was a horticulturalist and a weather watcher.

Kelly makes his morning observations at 8 a.m. and then returns at 5 p.m. for the end-of-the-day figures.

A simple white box, that looks like an oversized bird house, sits on a pole in the yard, open to the wind, so buildings can't deflect temperatures from reaching it. It holds a thermometer and not far away is a simply cup-like device, mounted on a pipe with a gauge inside used to measure precipitation.

Kelly's records are handwritten in a wide, ledger style book, and mailed monthly to Environment Canada.

"It (the weather station) has only been rebuilt once in all that time," he said. "The thermometer breaks from time to time. On one occasion, I shook the thermometer and broke it when it hit the dog in the head."

Where does the weather watcher get his daily forecast?

He said he either listens to the radio or checks the Weather Network on TV.

He's confident he's usually right one way or the other.

"If I'm wrong on the weather, I'll be right on the precipitation or vice-versa."

Kelly hasn't missed his daily check very often over the years and when he can't make it, wife Marie, son Bruce or one of the neighbours fills in.

He has some advice for the average homeowner who wants to keep an eye on the weather outside.

Hanging a thermometer on the outside wall of the house won't provide an accurate reading, since it will be fooled by reflected heat. The thermometer should be in an open area.

FORECAST

A warm, messy winter lies ahead according to predictions from local weather expert Keith Kelly.

"We're going to have a more moderate winter than last year," Kelly said this morning."But it is going to be fairly messy."

Kelly predicts a fair amount of precipitation, mostly wet snow, and says we can expect the usual January thaw.

Elliott given house arrest after impaired driving causing death conviction

For *The Chronicle*

A superior court justice ruled Friday that a Wallacetown mother of three "acted entirely out of character" when the vehicle she was driving skidded off Talbot Line, killing two people following a night of drinking in Talbotville.

Justice Chester Misener said the case "has unusual features" which did not warrant a penitentiary sentence for 31-year-old Kim Elliott, but instead house arrest for two years less a day and a 10-year ban on driving.

Two months ago, a jury found Elliott guilty on two counts of impaired driving causing death and a third count of impaired driving causing bodily harm in the April 28, 2001, accident which claimed the lives of Harry Darcy Beech, 46, of Fingal and Deborah J. Ferguson, 28, of St. Thomas.

Two charges of dangerous driving causing death and another of dangerous driving causing bodily harm were stayed.

Assistant Crown attorney Doug Walker had called for a sentence of three to four years plus a 10-year driving prohibition to "send a clear message that the courts intend to get tough."

However Misener noted, "if judges think they have really deterred this (impaired driving) over the past 18 years, I would be less than honest if I didn't say we have utterly failed. And I don't get any joy out of that."

Defense counsel William Johnson painted a picture of Elliott as a "hard worker" who has suffered internal head injuries as a result of the accident that cause her to have post-traumatic memory loss. As a result she has suffered "a more heinous penalty."

Misener concurred and added any "sentence must take into account the circumstances of the offender" who he described as a "compassionate mother."

In sentencing Elliott to house arrest, Misener insisted she "does not represent any danger to the community."

Elliott must also perform 200 hours of community service and is governed by a two-year alcohol ban.

MADD frustrated by message sentence sends out

Twice in the past 18 months, a Woodstock, Ont., Superior Court judge has imposed conditional sentences in cases involving impaired driving causing death.

And having made those decisions, Justice Chester Misener acknowledges not everyone will agree with the rulings.

That includes the president of the St. Thomas Chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) who is dismayed with Misener's statements last week that it is up to groups like MADD to lead the fight against drinking and driving through education programs.

"It's very frustrating," admits Lindsay Hoshal. "For the judge to come and say it's up to MADD to solve this problem, well we can only do so much.

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CURRENT EVENTS 2004

The Chronicle



Nicholas Knapp of West Elgin's Parks and Recreation Department works his way through chunks of frozen slush on the sidewalk on Graham Road. Last week's winter weather left sidewalks a mess and made clean up hard.

Chronicle photo

Too much snow tough to clean up

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

West Elgin had to take some extra steps this week to try to make downtown sidewalks safer in West Lorne this week after a woman complained of a fall on the west side of Graham Street.

Within two hours of learning someone had fallen, Parks and Recreation Superintendent Jeff Slater had some help from the roads department to get some sand on the sidewalks.

"It's so cold, the stuff we use to melt the ice is not working really well," said Slater.

They don't use salt but a compound that doesn't track as badly into stores but Slater said what does melt refreezes over night because of the cold.

West Lorne resident Jean Fenn fell Wednesday on the slippery sidewalk.

"I went flat on my back," said Fenn who was not badly hurt but upset the sidewalks were still covered in snow.

"You have to walk really slow and be careful," she said of navigating the snow and ice-packed sidewalks.

While some businesses shovel and scrape, Slater said the municipality has looked after the sidewalks in the downtown core .

He said last week, it was impossible for them to cope with the wintry weather.

It's one of the worst winters in the past several years for cold and snowfall and while they try to keep the sidewalks cleared to concrete, Slater said it's been impossible this year.

After last Tuesday's winter storm, the sidewalks had been coated in a slush that froze and is now virtually unmoveable by the sidewalk plow and snowblower.

"Our equipment is having a hard time moving it," Slater said.

"It's like concrete balls out there," he said of the frozen slush that plows had pushed from the road to the sidewalk edges.

Trailer taxes hit parks hard

Weeks given to pay thousands in assessments

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

Trailer park and campground owners are still reeling from the impact of being hit with thousands of dollars in extra assessments for trailers now deemed permanent structures.

"The municipality only gave us six weeks to pay it. It was due Dec. 31. As a business owner, we were forced to go out and find financing to pay the tax bill," said Wendy Dupuis who operates Lakewood Trailer Estates at Port Glasgow.

> 'THEY WANTED US TO HELP PROMOTE PORT GLASGOW AND THEY'VE TAKEN THE MONEY OUT FROM UNDER US,"
>
> **— Wendy Dupuis, Lakewood Trailer Estates**

She found herself facing a $31,000 tax bill in November for 2003 assessments on trailers, barely a month after the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) was given legislation from the Ministry of Finance to assess trailers on campgrounds again. There had been a moratorium on trailer assessments since the 1990s.

The tax bill came after her own taxes were already paid and left the park owners scrambling to find the cash to pay or face further penalties for being late.

"They waited for all the trailer parks to close. All the campers are gone," said Dupuis. With the campers gone, they now have to wait until spring to collect the money from the trailers that were assessed.

Complicating matters, Dupuis said when they were suddenly faced with an assessor at their door, they denied him access to the individual, privately owned trailers, uncertain if they could legally let him in the park.

It resulted in an estimated assessment and has left Dupuis unclear who in her park was assessed or by how much of the $31,000 tax bill.

Not only does Dupuis have to try to reclaim the money from individual trailer owners, but she will soon be facing a 2004 assessment because of the late timing of the additional

Continued on Page 2

FEB 4/04 **Opinion**



CURRENT EVENTS 2004

High speed Internet arriving

JAN 29 /04

As Elgin Connects/Amtelecom get ready to launch Bell appears to be ready too

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

Affordable high speed Internet access is just weeks away from Dutton, West Lorne and Rodney.

Calls to Bell Telephone failed to confirm Bell's Internet company was nearly finished installing the equipment necessary to allow high speed Internet communication on its urban lines.

However, Execulink, one of Bell's major Internet competitors in the region, confirmed last week it expects to be offering high speed Internet access to Dutton, West Lorne and Rodney by the end of February.

At the same time, a consortium of Elgin County business and support services are also weeks away from bringing some parts of rural western Elgin County on-line with high speed Internet.

"It's good news," said Peter Fleming, chief administrative officer at Execulink.

Execulink and any other Internet providers can offer the service once Bell has the infrastructure in place and while no calls were returned from Bell, Fleming said

Continued on Page 2

First year exciting for Elgin archives

JAN. 8, 2004 — The Chronicle

For *The Chronicle*

The first year of operation of the Elgin County Archives was an exciting one.

"It has been beyond expectations," said archivist Brian Masschaele, who has built the archives from scratch. "And it's because of the vision and the resources of county council."

Open since November, 2002, in the basement of the county administration building on Sunset Drive, Masschaele says he has been impressed by the amount of community outreach and is very pleased with the quality of new acquisitions.

One of the newest is a 1934 congratulatory booklet commemorating the election of Mitch Hepburn as premier of Ontario (the only Elgin MPP to become premier) and signed by all the members of his cabinet.

Other significant acquisitions this year include Alma College records (1877-1994 and Elgin Historical Society collections (1850-1959).

And the acquisitions keep coming.

"We represent an unbiased, publicly accessible option that ensures valuable records," Masschaele said. "Records will be properly preserved for future generations."

Since its opening, the archives has had 228 patron visits, including two visitors from Japan who were researching a missionary from the Bayham area.

There have also been 1,200 telephone, letter and email inquiries from close to home and from around the world.

Masschaele says most of the research has been genealogical-based, but such things as dating buildings, zoning/planning research and railway history have also been researched. The archives also does record management for Elgin county.



Elgin County archivist Brian Masschaele stands among the rows of historical documents being preserved at the county archives.

Masschaele says one of the best advancements for the archives has been the creation of a Web site at www.elgin.ca. He says the Web is perfectly suited for genealogical research, which is now a multi-billion dollar business, because it provides the ability to make a connection with historical records without having to travel.

Besides large collection acquisitions, the archives does accept smaller private donations, but the records must have significance to history in Elgin county.

He says one of the toughest parts of being an archivist is deciding which items are significant and which ones aren't.

"What you keep and what you throw away will ultimately shape the future course of history," he said. "That is a huge responsibility and isn't to be taken lightly."

In the year ahead, Masschaele says the archives' priority will be to enhance its Web site and to continue the process of transferring records from the seven municipalities in the county. He says expansion will eventually be necessary.

For now, Masschaele says, the archives are still in the awareness phase and he is doing what he can in terms of outside presentations and media engagements to bring attention to what the archives has to offer.

The Elgin county archives are open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and by appointment Tuesday evenings from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Chronicle read faithfully

JAN 8/04

LETTER

Dear Editor:

In my youth, in the parochial environs of Iona Station and even Dutton, I did not expect to enjoy and be rewarded by the journalistic and literary contribution of the small western town of West Lorne.

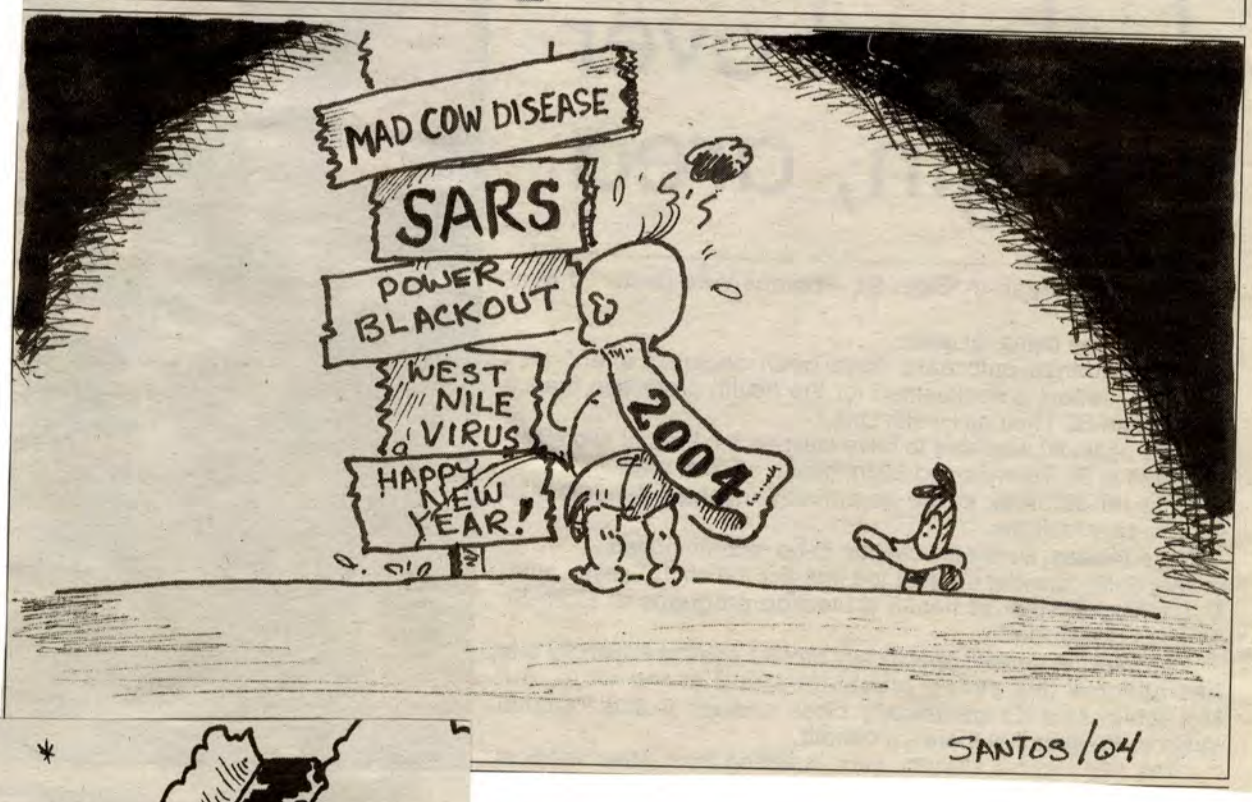
Now it has come about; I am both astonished and delighted to have "The Chronicle" remind me of the daily affairs, concerns and accomplishments of this favoured part of the world.

I read every issue faithfully for the wide ranging news and comment on clans and community that I remember with both joy and affection. Do not be in doubt: I not only thank you but applaud.

Yours faithfully,
John Kenneth Galbraith

JAN 8, 2004 — The Chronicle

Opinion



OUR WINTER 2004



Local cadet one of only 16 selected for expedition of a lifetime to Costa Rica

Army cadet Master Warrant Officer Daniel Balint is bound for the adventure of a lifetime.

The 17-year-old West Lorne resident is one of 16 teens from across the country selected for the 2005 Army Cadet League of Canada International Expedition.

This year's expedition will take the cadets to Costa Rica for a two-week adventure beginning on Aug. 29. While in Costa Rica, the cadets will raft down the Rio Pacuare and hike through the tropical jungles of Corcovado National Park. They will be rappelling in the Mt. Chirripo area, snorkelling along the coral reefs off Cano Island, mountain biking near Drake Bay and exploring the Punta Rio Claro Wildlife Refuge.

The Army Cadet League's International Expedition program is the ultimate test of army cadet expedition training, affording cadets the opportunity to increase their positive self-perception, further develop leadership abilities, and increase their interpersonal skills. The trips develop knowledge, interest and respect for different cultures, promote international goodwill and reward outstanding cadets for their performance and excellence. Those who participate will meet exciting new challenges, enjoy mind-expanding experiences and cement friendships that last a lifetime.

The selection of participating cadets is highly competitive and limited to those 16-18 years of age. They must have attained Master Cadet designation or at least have National Star Certification in the army cadet training program.

They must hold the Army Cadet Fitness test Gold Level and have demonstrated a high level of personal discipline through an exemplary record of cadet service. More than 1000 candidates from across Canada were eligible for the 16 appointments. Four of those selected come from Atlantic Canada and another four from Ontario, three each come from Quebec and the Prairies, and two are from B.C

The Canadian Forces provides logistical, administrative and operational support for this international expedition program in its ongoing partnership with the Army Cadet League of Canada. Previous expeditions have seen Canadian cadets visiting such diverse destinations as South Korea, Australia. Morocco, Iceland and the Philippines.

Ambassadors contestants ready for Rodney Fair

The Rodney Agricultural Society's annual Ambassadors contest is set to go Friday night at 7 p.m. in the Recreation Centre.

As part of the opening ceremonies the following three candidates will present speeches on this year's theme, Celebrating Our Roots Everywhere.

With this topic, the contestants can speak about the history of the Rodney Fair, how it helps celebrate our roots and youth or about West Elgin, its roots and family and farming in the area.

One of the contestants will take the crown from Richa Sharma, last year's winner who finished third at this year's Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto last month.



Szanadue Brower

Age: 17
Hometown: Rodney
Third year student at WESS.
Daughter of Venus.

Sponsored by the Rodney Legion



Ashley Dinga

Age: 17
Hometown: Rodney
Fourth year student at WESS.
Daughter of Lynne and John
Works at Fairles Foodmarket

Sponsored by the Rodney Lion's Club.



Craig Watterworth

Age: 17
Hometown: West Lorne
Fifth year student at WESS.
Son of Pat and the late Don.

Sponsored by the Coalition for Rural Schools.



WEDS Kids show off multi-talents at weekly show

JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Left: Taylor Cundy performs an emotional monologue from the movie Uptown Girls. Right: Allison Kornaker, Lindsay and Melanie Lang and Kylie Willson finish their performance of Cotton Eye Joe on stage at the WEDS Theatre Aug. 12. The West Elgin Dramatics Society Kids summer program finishes for the year. The program gives youth a chance to learn and have fun with music, theatre and

CURRENT EVENTS 2005

Kolar returns home from serving in Afghanistan

When Warrant Officer Jim Kolar arrived in Kabul, the city of four million was in the dark.

Six months later, when the sun fell on the city destroyed by war, lights flickered and beamed through the streets of the Afghanistan capital.

The turn around came with the help of hundreds of Canadian peacekeepers, including Kolar, a reservist from West Lorne

The 36-year-old West Lorne man returned home to his family Aug. 13 after taking part in a military rebuilding operation for six months.

He arrived in Afghanistan in February, where he stayed at Camp Julien with 1,000 Canadian soldiers and 400 civilians with a civilian-military cooperation unit (CIMIC).

The unit of six people supervised reconstruction projects in Southern Kabul as part of Operation Athena with the International Security Assistance Force.

Kolar saw a lot of change in Kabul in his first tour outside of Canada.

"Every day I saw things get rebuilt. They have electricity in some parts for the first time in 30 years. It's mind boggling how much has been done. A tremendous amount of work has been done to modernize the city again," he said. "I wish we could have done more."

During the 1960s the modern city was a cross roads between Russia and Pakistan/India.

Then, in 1979 Russian troops landed at Kabul airport to war with the Mujahideen, a rebel group opposing the Communist government of the time.

After the Russians left 10 years later, the country fell into civil war.

"They destroyed their own city," said Kolar.

The city fell into the hands of the Taliban and Al Qaeda, an oppressive regime, breeding terrorism.

That terrorism was unleashed around the world including the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York on Sept. 11, 2001.

On Oct. 7, 2001, with the United Nations support, the United States attacked Kabul, causing the Taliban to flee.

Canadian troops arrived in Kabul and set up Camp Julien in early 2003.

Kolar, a reservist with the Canadian military for 17 years, watching the events, wanted to help and applied for the position with CIMIC.

Kolar took a year of absence as a computer engineering teacher at TOIS to help complete 75 different projects while in Kabul including rebuilding bridges, water wells, roads and schools.

He received a Commanders Coin for his hard work in completing 75 projects.

His job was to liaise with local mayors, police chiefs and elders to find needed projects and local contractors to complete the projects.

"Education was one of our major goals. For them to rebuild the country they need to be educated," said Kolar.

Donations would come from all over the world.

Kolar would coordinate projects to bring those donations to the Afghani people.

Temporary tented schools were set up while buildings were repaired.

One damaged school housed 8,000 students.

"It was a bit smaller than Aldborough," said Kolar.

While life in Afghanistan has been set back a century, Kolar said the people are honourable, friendly and hard working.

"It's going to take a decade to get back to where they were but they have a good start.

"There's some bad people there. Afghanistan is not a safe place," he said but added Kabul is safe now that the Taliban have left. "There's more Taliban-type people in Toronto."

Camp Julien is closing this December, moving to Kandahar, being controlled by the U.S in the tumultuous southern part of the country bordering Pakistan where the Taliban and Al Qaeda still operate.

This September is the Afghani election, a milestone for peacekeepers.

Kolar is set to go back to his job in a month but is contemplating going back to help in Afghanistan.

He said he felt safe there.

"Often the bad people would attack soft targets like the U.N. or Red Cross. They wouldn't shoot at us because they knew we would get out of our trucks and shoot back," he said.

While Kolar's perspective on life has changed, "I get grumpy when I hear people complain here," he's glad to be home.

"It was great to see my family, my wife Kathy and my three girls."



CONTRIBUTED

Local man met with local elders while in Kabul

Warrant Officer Jim Kolar, right, of West Lorne met with local Wakils, or elders while serving with a Canadian civil-military unit in Southern Kabul. He often would liaise with elders to decide which projects needed to be started while the city was being rebuilt after war.



Plenty of families spend time at Rodney Fair

JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

With overcast skies for most of the weekend, people still came and enjoyed the same family, farming and fun as every year at the 151st Rodney Fair. Right photo, Amy and Alicia Oliveira along with Kelsey Vandenburg whirl around on the Scrambler, Saturday afternoon. At the ambassador contest Friday night, Szanadue Brower (centre) wowed the judges with her interview, speech and answer to the impromtu question to win the Ambassador contest over Craig Watterworth and Ashley Dinga.

CURRENT EVENTS 2005

Cameras watch our parks

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

With little public knowledge four security cameras have been installed around the park in Rodney to try and prevent further vandalism.

Early last month a fire was set on the diving board at the West Elgin Pool, closing the pool for a week while water samples were tested for traces of gasoline.

CRACKDOWN ON VANDALISM

Earlier this summer a fire was started at the skateboard park.

Fear that these fires were just experiments and that a bigger fire could be started, the recreation department and OPP are taking extra precautions to prevent further crime.

"Think about what else is in the park. We have a big concern this is going to escalate even more. All kinds of things could happen," said Recreation Superintendent and Deputy Fire Chief Jeff Slater. "We don't want to see anyone get hurt."

What he does want to see is a crime in progress on the video cameras.

"They're there and I hope they work," he said, not saying where they are located. "This is arson. Something has to be done."

Recent vandalism has pushed the recreation department to take action and stop anymore crime.

Vandalism has pushed residents to take discipline into their own hands.

It has also pushed police to frustrated ends, trying to lay charges.

Please see Cameras, *page 2*



Youth getting bad rep

JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Alex Millen, 14, Devi Dermo, 14, Bill Neunes, 16, Cassandra McGall, 12 and Jessie Pease, 17 say troublemakers vandalizing the park in Rodney are giving all youth a bad reputation. Cameras have been installed in the park to watch the comings and goings of people after hours to prevent further crime.

Kids say vandalism a cause of boredom

CRACKDOWN ON VANDALISM

Boredom leads to vandalism, say a handful of youths in Rodney.

"There's nothing to do around here," said Jessie Pease, 17. "Rodney is such a small town. All you can do is walk around."

He and a group of five youths in age from 12 to 17 were playing on the swings in Rodney at 9:30 p.m. Aug. 25 before their curfew.

"We used to play basketball but the rims got busted," he said.

He said the people causing vandalism in town are giving all the youth a bad reputation.

"I've been staying home a lot lately because I don't want to be suspected of causing trouble," he said.

Alex Millen, 14, was wearing a red bandanna as he hopped the fence beside the Rodney jail with Pease.

He dresses like a gangster, he admits, but the style is given a bad reputation by criminals in gangs south of the border.

"We just feel comfortable and think we look cool," said Devi Dermo, also 14.

She and Millen suggested that the skateboard park needs to be upgraded and made bigger to make it appealing again to youths.

"I'll sell cookies to raise money," joked Millen.

As well, he suggested that teen dances be organized at the recreation centre so the youths have something to do and can see their friends from outside of town.

Please see Youth, *page 2*

Daffodil Society sponsoring families

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

The Daffodil Society has begun its Christmas family sponsorship campaign.

Organized by the welfare branch of the society, low income residents, strapped trying to provide a Christmas to their families turn to the local group for a little extra help.

Sponsorships include buying food, gifts, clothes and hygiene products for families or individuals in need this time of year.

Gifts for children of low income families are usually valued at $25-$35.

"A lot of times these low income families can't provide a lot of gifts for Christmas," said Ken Willson, who has run the campaign for the last few years.

He said the campaign has been around since he came to the community in the 1960s.

It has received support from just about every organization at one point in time either through sponsorships, donations or contributions with the annual food drive that begins next month.

"It's the one thing that makes me so proud to live in the community - to support a venture like this - I've never seen an area support their community so much," said Willson.

Churches, service clubs, families and businesses often come together to complete a sponsorship package.

They can call the society and find out suggestions for donations to meet needs identified.

The society trys to get the ages, sizes and sex of children in families and then match them with donations.

Last year, donations came in after Christmas leaving the society with a stockpile already at its Main Street Dutton location, next to the Adult Centre.

Willson isn't sure how many people will need help this year as he is still registering.

Usually the welfare branch helps 10-12 people a month either delivering food to people without vehicles or drop ins.

But at Christmas sometimes up to 70 families come for a little extra help.

The society is financially in good shape said Willson, but if a high number of people come for help, he will turn to the community for money.



Cancer walk raises money at Arena

Students from West Elgin Secondary School joined the Ride and Stride for Cancer at the West Elgin Arena on Sunday. More walkers came out this year than past and raised $4,729 with more still coming.

CONTRIBUTED



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Washroom open for business

Water Department Superintendent Lloyd Jarvis, left, West Elgin Mayor Graham Warwick and John Spriet of the engineering firm Spriet and Associates tore the toilet paper to symbolize the opening of the new washroom, estimated to have cost around $200,000 at Port Glasgow before the Annual-Fish Fry July 31.

West Lorne girl to break language barrier in Poland

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Kylie Hilliard of West Lorne will have to use a lot of body language at first to communicate with her temporary family in Poland.

She leaves for one-year in Bytom, Poland this Saturday as part of a student exchange program..

The 17-year-old was selected for the trip organized by the Rotary Club in St. Thomas.

Daughter of John and Corey, Kylie has been learning the Polish language and culture since January, preparing for the trip.

"You can't prepare for everything though," she said.

She'll be living with a host family in a town, about the size of London, ON, near the border with the Czech Republic.

In the fall, she'll be going to school, where she'll have to speak Polish all the time.

Only one member of the family she'll be living with speaks English.

"I'll be using a lot of body language," she said. "Luckily I know how to say 'I don't know what you are saying' in Polish."

Cost for the trip includes her nine hour flight and small trips she has planned, as well as souvenirs.

To help break the ice, one of her four bags is packed with Canadian goods like maple syrup, flags and pins.

Kylie decided she wanted to make the exchange now that she's finished high school at St. Joseph's in St. Thomas.

Her mother, Corey, made a similar trip to Australia as a young woman.

Kylie said she has the same desire a to learn a different language and culture

"It's not like being a tourist on a trip. I'll be immersed in their culture for a year. I'll be one of them," she said.

While Poland once was shut off from the world under the Soviet block and was destroyed under German occupation in the Second World War, Kylie has learned it has been built up in the last 10 years.

She'll have access to the Internet and a computer of her own in her own room.

"I'm really excited," said Kylie.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Travelling abroad

Kylie Hilliard points out Poland where she will arrive Sunday for a one-year stay as part of a student exchange program organized by the Rotary Club in St. Thomas. Kylie's excited about the trip but has been hurrying to learn Polish as her host family speaks little English.



MELANIE KNAPP PHOTO

Sharma places third at CNE

Rodney Aldborough Agricultural Society Ambassador Richa Sharma placed third in the Canadian National Exhibitions Ambassador Contest Aug. 19.

West Lorne forest part of big picture

West Lorne Forest has been included in Carolinian Canada's big picture of creating more green space in southern Ontario.

Of 101 different locations, the forest is part of a patchwork of woodland Carolinian Canada hopes to link together.

West Lorne Forest stretches along the Southern Rail Line westward from West Lorne.

Other zones have been identified as part of one big picture including the Eagle wetlands, stretching to Lake Erie, spots along Silver Clay Line and around Port Glasgow.

"West Lorne is really rich with natural history," said Michelle Kanter, executive director of Carolinian Canada.

In 1999, ecologist from various organizations surveyed the Carolinian Zone, which is from Sarnia to Niagara falls and Windsor t Guelph.

From that survey a big picture map was developed highlighting core natural areas Carolinian Canada believes should be protected and preserved as green space.

The surveyors found many endangered species only found in this region of the world.

"If something came along and wiped out the West Lorne woodlots, you could lose endangered species," said Kanter. "It's a significant woodland."

Kanter said scientists and ecologists recommend all geographic areas should include eight per cent of green space for a healthy landscape.

"Right now we have about three per cent. We don't have enough in Southern Ontario. We are one of the most threatened areas in the country," said Kanter. "If we don't act as a community to put more green space on the map we could lose dozens of the species in the region forever."

While the 101 different sites mapped as core natural areas are not bound to remain green spaces, Kanter hopes local governments and land owners will work to maintain the land and expand it as green space.

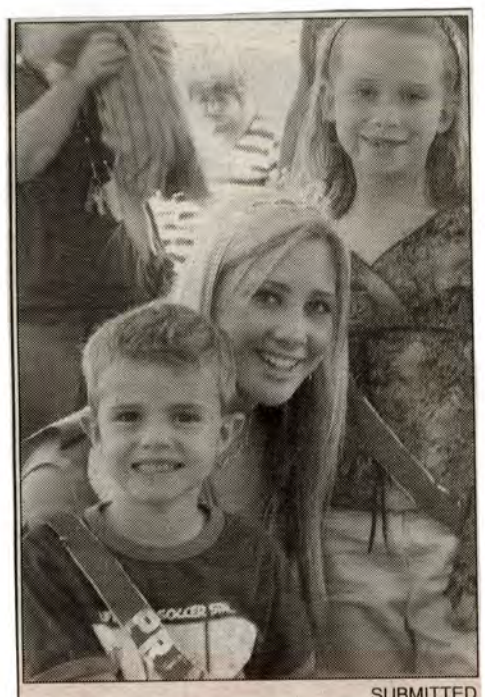
Whether protecting forests along creeks or creating trails from one forest to another the big picture is hoped to create more green space untouched by logging.

One way to expand the green space is to develop corridors to link the forests.

The next nearest core natural area is Clear Creek Forest at the southwest tip of Elgin County and lake front lands south of Duart.

Carolinian Canada's big picture would see lines of potential habitat corridors linking the West Lorne Forest to the Skunk's Misery around Newbury, Clear Creek Forest, woodlands at Plum Point in Dutton/Dunwich and forests around Mt. Brydges.

Currently, Carolinian Canada has begun getting land owners to sign natural heritage stewardship contracts to develop the corridors.



SUBMITTED

Rodney fair prince and princess

New Rodney Aldborough Agricultural Society Ambassador Szanadue Brower congratulates the Fair Prince and Princess Phillip Downie and Katie Schweitzer.



Kittmer raising awareness of spinal chord injuries

Colin Kittmer of West Lorne looks for support for the annual Wheels-in-Motion ride June 12.

Kittmer training for fundraiser ride

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Colin Kittmer has been wheeling around West Lorne in his wheel chair, training for the Rick Hansen Wheels in Motion fundraiser June 12.

Kittmer, the retired West Elgin Secondary School math teacher, has been wheeling for five kilometres a day, practicing for the big event.

"I think of Rick Hansen who wheeled 120 kilometres a day wheeling around the world! All I have to do if five," said Kittmer.

None the less, Kittmer has been pushing himself to improve his time from 53 minutes to around 40 minutes.

In 2000, Kittmer fell from a tree paralyzing him from the chest down.

He is hoping to raise money to make a difference in the lives of people living with spinal cord injuries like himself and fund research in the London area.

Anyone interested in helping Colin Kittmer reach his goal of can contact him at 768-1671 or visit www.rick-hansen.com.

Bach's Christmas comes to St. Mary's church

The West Elgin Choral Society, under Music Director Wayne Carroll, will present its 8th annual Christmas Concert on Dec. 3, at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church in West Lorne.

The featured work this year will be J.S. Bach's Christmas Oratorio.

The musicians are from the London Community Orchestra, augmented by a few specialists to cover the timpani and high Bach trumpet parts.

In terms of international choral repertoire, the Oratorio represents yet another step up for the Choral Society.

The role of Evangelist, or narrator, will be sung by London tenor, Gerry Egan. Many will recognize Egan from his title role in Regina Mundi College's production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolored Dreamcoat, which had sold-out runs at both the Talbot and Grand Theatre.

Bach's Oratorio is the story of the Nativity as recorded in the Gospels of St. Luke and St. Matthew. The work is comprised of recitatives, choruses, arias and chorales. The chorales are beautiful old Lutheran hymn-tunes. The text is all in English.

The evening will also include an opportunity for the audience to sing Christmas Carols with the choir and orchestra.

For tickets and additional information call 762-3865.

The Doctor's Bag depicts bond between a father and son

The Doctor's Bag, a story about a father watching his son become a man hit area shelves this week.

Written by former West Lorne resident John Schlarbaum, the quick, easy read follows a sentimental journey of a son taken to task by his father.

Over the years, the two push each other to understand the perils of aging while trying to maintain the family.

Schlarbaum wrote the book for his own father, Rev. Norman Schlarbaum, a former Baptist minister in West Lorne and Rodney.

Before his father turned 75, Schlarbaum interviewed him and discovered many sentimental belongings that may not have meant a lot to anyone else but marked the most important and special events in his father's life.

Now 85, Norman lives in London with his wife Dorothy.

John lives in Windsor where he has completed two books and started his own publishing company.

While the book is not about his father, it is a fictional look at the bonds between a father and son.

The book starts with a promise made by the father to his son.

As he struggles to keep the promise, which would mean his son has become a man, he recalls his own relationship with his father.

In the end, the book depicts how it is never too late to reconcile with a family member.

Schlarbaum has done a lot of writing through his career after leaving West Elgin Secondary School.

He worked for CHCH in Hamilton, working in lighting for the show Smith and Smith, which later became known as Red Green.

From there he began directing segments on The Best is Yet to Come, which used to be on CFPL in London.

He will be returning to West Lorne Library for a book signing Oct. 18 starting at 2 p.m..

His second book, Aging Gracefully Together will come out next year.

The Doctor's Bag is available at Fairles Foodmarket in Rodney, West Elgin Pharmacy, Crafts Plus in Dutton and at www.thedoctorsbag.com.

Fire department to check alarms

West Lorne Fire Department will not be going door-to-door to check smoke detectors opting instead to respond to resident requests.

In the last five years, the department has knocked on doors across their coverage area to inspect smoke detectors, provide detectors or batteries if needed and inform residents how best to place the detectors in their homes.

The program has seen only a handful of home owners not contacted over the years.

"It's been a very successful program," said Bob Bowery, fire prevention officer for the department.

This year, instead of going door-to-door, residents wanting the fire department to check their detectors are asked to call the station.

In the past, many residents have enjoyed the peace of mind knowing their detectors have been checked by a professional.

Along with it being fire prevention week, the fire department is reminding people to change the batteries in their detectors.

Checking the detector, by pushing the button and listening to the alarm is not enough.

The button only makes sure the battery works.

Lighting a match and blowing it out, then letting the smoke go into the detector is the best way to determine its working condition.

Having a smoke detector is the law and fines up to $200 can be issued to people without a working smoke detector.

The fire department is hesitant to levy fines but would instead provide a detector for free.

Two dates are scheduled to have the fire department come and check smoke detectors.

Fire department volunteers will inspect detectors in the township on Oct. 16 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

In the village of West Lorne, volunteers will go to homes and inspect detectors Oct. 19 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

To have your detector checked, call 768-1700.

Midges emerge in droves

Allergic reaction possible if tiny insects swallowed

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Midges, tiny no-biting bugs swarmed the area last week in their final mating hurrah.

Splattered on car windows, a variety of midges pestered residents last week.

Two area bug specialists noticed the midges out in force for the fall mate.

"There's not more than usual but there are lots of them," said Dr. Ron Griffiths from Dutton, who studies insects around the world.

He'd been watching the little pale green insects fluttering around behind his house and said this time of year, the insects are at their greatest density.

The insects Griffiths has noticed are aquatic, living in lagoons, creeks and small ponds.

They may only live a day or two before reproducing and leaving their larvae near water to hatch next spring.

While the insects don't bite, they can be a nuisance and affect people's allergies.

"If you walk into a high density of the insects and swallow a couple it may cause an allergic reaction," said Griffiths.

Please see Various, *page 2*

CURRENT EVENTS 2005

Writer cracks best sellers list

A West Lorne area writer has cracked the amazon.com's top 10 hot new bestseller's list.

Writing under the pseudonym V.C. King, Seven Sexy Tales of Terror at one point reached number one under the erotic horror category.

Not porn, but horror stories with an erotic twist, the book has been selling around the world.

Richard Harding knew his wife's book deserved better than being stuffed in a drawer.

"But I never thought it would be this popular," said Harding in a release.

The couple has lived quietly north of West Lorne since 1992.

It was shortly after they moved from London to this area V.C. started writing.

A bit reclusive, "shy" as her husband Harding puts it, V.C. doesn't want popularity.

Also, her interest in writing horror and mystery led her to develop an alter-ego of sorts, a pseudonym in which she could explore erotic horror in her writing.

V.C. or Victoria, chose V.C. as an inside joke, for Vicious Circle, a nickname for her writers' group which includes area mystery novelist Terry Carroll.

Carroll also lent praise to her first published book.

"V.C. King manages the seemingly impossible and sometimes the unthinkable. She marries sex and horror with good writing to confound and transcend expectations. In these Seven Sexy Tales of Terror, the style of Dean Koontz meets Henry Miller with surprise endings and sometimes more than one twist. This is recommended reading and genre-bending of the highest order," writes Carroll.

Seven Sexy Tales of Terror includes short stories of a woman energized by shock treatments to a poet speaking from the grave.

It started out of desperation looking for an outlet, an escape from reality.

While studying engineering in university she took a detective fiction writing course to take her mind off her major.

Not until years later did the 43-year-old leave her corporate job and commit herself to writing.

So far she's finding success.

She won the Paul Gillette Memorial Award at the Pine Peaks Writer's Conference in Colorado in 2002.

David Morrell, writer of Rambo presented her the award for her book Darkness Forlorn, yet to be published.

It's a story of a female serial killer.

She plans to publish it soon along with Titanic's Shadow, in 2007.

Titanic's Shadow is a result of a fascination with the sinking of the Titanic and other disasters.

It looks at what would happen today if the Titanic sunk.

In Seven Sexy Tales of Terror, the dark characters in the 88-page book are not based on anyone she knows but are imagined by taking a normal scenario and giving it a twist.

Not fully understanding the niche market of erotic horror herself, V.C. has found readers around the world, strangely and particularly in Japan, said Harding.

It gets to the point of what we're all afraid of, said Harding.

One of the stories includes an oppressive mother.

At the root of the horror, the stories offer readers something to relate to, said V.C.

The book was published by iUniverse, a print-on-demand company.

It's available at Chapter's Indigo, Barnes and Noble at www.amazon.com

What comes next for the newly published author is unknown but, "it's really cool to hold your own book," she said.



Writer JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

V.C. King, a local writer's pseudonym, reached amazon.com's, an Internet book store, hot new best seller's list.



Girl ejected JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Paramedics, Dutton/Dunwich employees and fire crews tend to serious injuries suffered by two teens after a rollover which ejected the female passenger on Pioneer Line May 1.

Girl not wearing seatbelt ejected from vehicle

Investigation continues

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

A single-car rollover sent Dan Armstrong and Sarah Woolsey, Grade 12 students from WESS, to Four Counties Hospital in Newbury with serious injuries May 11.

Woolsey was not wearing a seatbelt when she was ejected from the car. Police had not released details of their investigation at press time.

Woolsey was stabilized at FCHS and taken to London Health and Sciences Centre, Victoria Campus and listed in fair condition Tuesday morning after surgery to fix broken vertebrae.

Armstrong was released from FCHS that day with minor cuts and bruises.

Around 12:30 p.m. Armstrong's 1992 Ford Escort was travelling westbound on Pioneer Line when he lost control for unknown reasons, hit the shoulder, swerved into the eastbound lanes then came back across into the north ditch.

Narrowly missing a sign the vehicle rolled several times ejecting Woolsey from the vehicle and coming to rest on the passenger side.

Armstrong, covered in blood wandered north on Dunborough Road when a passing motorist found him. Another passing motorist had a cell phone and call 911.

Western Elgin could become ecocommunity

Low energy lightbulbs use up to 75 per cent less energy than incandescent lights and can last 10 times longer.

This savings not only reduces hydro bills, but can reduce changes in the Earth's climate.

Small steps like replacing light bulbs to reduce energy consumption can make a big impact on climate change and protecting the Earth's ecology, says Diane Van Dyk, who is working to see western Elgin County become an ecocommunity.

"There are easy things we can do to improve the environment at a community level," said Van Dyk, community health worker with the West Elgin Community Health Centre. "You can do easy things that don't take a lot of time, like changing a light bulb."

Newly reinvigorated, the West Elgin Environmental Group is raising awareness of small changes people can make to sustain climate change and reduce greenhouse gases.

While the environmental group has been around since 1989, it has experienced a decline in membership over the last few years.

By cleaning up ditches, encouraging recycling and providing composters, WEEG has been raising awareness of environmental issues and trying to protect and restore the local environment.

The group is planning many activities to help the community take steps to improve energy efficiency.

Steps like making sure vehicle owners keep their tire pressure up.

A car with a tire under-inflated by six pounds per square inch can use three per cent more fuel, according to the Canadian Office of Energy Efficiency.

Every extra litre of fuel unnecessarily burned pumps more carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, into the atmosphere pushing the temperature up.

With more greenhouse gases in the air, the danger of related health risks is on the rise.

That's why the WEEG and the WECHC is looking for people to help make western Elgin County an ecocommunity.

Ecocommunities engage the whole community in projects dealing with environmental and economical issues related to climate change.

A workshop on ecocommunities is being held May 10 from 9 a.m. to noon at the West Lorne Complex.

CURRENT EVENTS 2005

Red Hatters bringing antics to Elgin

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Women are often the organizers of family, community and society.

However, as Cyndi Lauper says, they just want to have fun.

Hence a group of women seek to start a chapter of the Red Hat Society in western Elgin County.

The society has been growing in popularity with its simple creed of making people smile.

"Women give and give their whole lives and reach an age where they want to have fun in life," said Pam Page, a wife, mother, grandmother, nurse, volunteer and member of Glencoe's Red Hat Society.

She said she has heard from 17 women in the West Lorne and Rodney area, interested in starting a chapter here.

Adorned in purple attire, and capped in a silly red chapeau, the uniform of a Red Hatter, all women over the age of 50, brings a smile at first sight.

For women under 50, a softer mismatch of clothing is the general uniform.

Younger Red Hatters, wear pink hats and lavender attire at all meetings to keep spirits up for the purpose of disorganization.

"We don't just live life to one day die," said Page. "We believe that aging should be something anticipated with excitement, not something we dread."

The Red Hat Society exists throughout the U.S. and Canada and was inspired by its Queen Mother Sue Ellen Cooper of Tucson Arizona who one day bought a red fedora.

She had also recently read a poem depicting an older women wearing purple and a red hat without worry of how people viewed her.

Please see Red, *page 2*



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Colourful women bring smiles to community lunch
Pam Page, left, a member of the Red Hat Society talks with Rosalie Krebsz and Kate Okolisan, right, while Linda Dunn and Helen Kovacs chat before the Red Hatters made a presentation to the Soups On lunch for Seniors and disabled at the West Elgin Community Health Centre April 21.



PHOTO BY REV. DEANE PROCTOR

Week of Prayer
The Rev. Canon Meurig Lloyd (left) chats with Terry Heeney (centre) and Lorne Milton (right) at the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" breakfast held last Saturday at Lakeview Gardens in Eagle. The ecumenical prayer gathering hosted by the West Elgin Pastor's Prayer Group drew members of various local churches and denominations together for a morning of prayer and fellowship.

Exotic animals banned in West Elgin

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

Council may have shared a few jokes about exotic dancers and whiskey but it was no joking matter when West Elgin council passed a bylaw prohibiting exotic animals in the wake of last month's tiger attack in near by Southwold.

"Let me be clear for the record," said Mayor Graham Warwick. "Exotic animals are not welcome in West Elgin."

The bylaw was passed with support from the entire council. It prohibits anyone from keeping animals like tigers on their property.

People can have animals traditionally found on agricultural property including deer, and alpacas.

A child was seriously injured when a tiger mauled him last month at a private zoo in Southwold.

Southwold council promptly passed a bylaw prohibiting the ownership of exotic animals.

Internet arrives in western Elgin

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Streaming through the cool air, new wireless high speed Internet is available to businesses and residences in rural areas of western Elgin County like never before.

Last month the first customers were hooked up and receiving high speed Internet from antennas perched on the watertower in West Lorne.

"We're live and in service," said Ron Mervis director of network operations at Amtelecom, one of the parent partners in a project to bring highspeed Internet access to almost all areas of Elgin County. not just the urban centres where, until now, it could only be accessed.

Amtelecom, from Aylmer, spent much of December installing equipment at the West Lorne watertower and test homes and announced, what it calls, Airspeed is now transmitting 1.5 Megabytes of data on radio waves.

Like radio waves, some areas close to the lake can not access the high speed Internet, but otherwise, the service is available across the county.

Over two years, Amtelecom worked with Elginconnects, a county economic development project with funding from three levels of government.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Internet comes to western Elgin
Steve Krebsz, Amtelecom technician checks the high speed Internet signal strength at a Thompson Line home.

Farmers and rural businesses have a need for transmitting and accessing information over the Internet at high speeds but could never do so in this area.

"There is a growing need to close the digital divide that is working against rural Ontario and Amtelecom will meet that need here in Elgin with our new wireless Internet product," said Michael Andrews, president and CEO.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

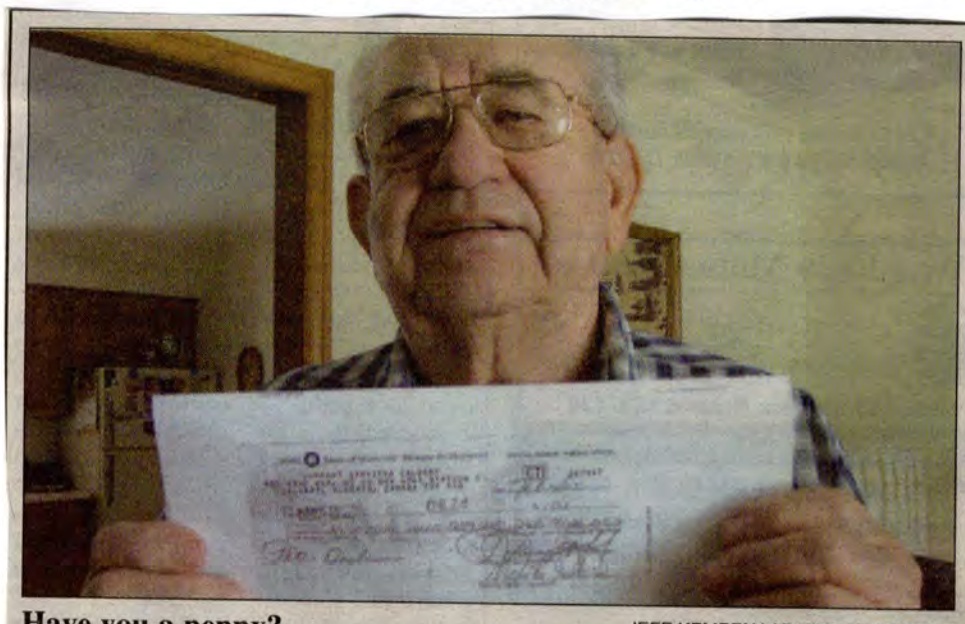
Snow fun at all
Steve Browne plowed his driveway in West Lorne on Monday while temperatures rose above 0°C.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Trilliums in bloom
Trillium flowers were well in bloom at the West Elgin Memorial Nature Reserve for a Mother's Day walk put on by the West Elgin Nature Club and parks and recreation committee Here, little Colin Depuydt, from Frome walks with mother Christine, grandmother Marion, back, father Don, left and sister Kayleigh May 8.

CURRENT EVENTS 2005



Have you a penny? JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Peter Ocolisan, owner of Sandy Ridge Farm, next to West Elgin Secondary School holds a photocopy of a cheque for one penny from the Net Income Stabalization Account, prompting him to ask "why waste the stamp?"

Government keeps busy issuing penny cheques

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Peter Ocolisan is one cent richer.

After closing his Net Income Stabilization Account more than a year ago, he received an envelope from NISA's support service office in Calgary.

Inside was a cheque.

Not to cover his farm losses but a cheque for $.01, one cent, signed by two NISA officers, as a remaining amount in his account before it closed for good.

The next week he received a notice from NISA reporting his account balance at $.01.

"That's just a joke," said Ocolisan. "It must have cost $10 to send it to me."

Bewildered, he took the cheque to the bank.

"I said to the teller, 'I've got a big cheque here. She asked 'how much?' I said, 'A million dollars,' and passed her the cheque," he said, getting a surprise reaction when she saw it was for $.01.

"It's silly how the government works," said Ocolisan. NISA "should have just kept the penny."

Ocolisan owns 14 herford cattle at Sandy Ridge Farms at Graham Road and Marsh Line in West Lorne.

He has 162 shared acres of grains and harvests hay.

While he used the NISA program, a government agriculture subsidy program which matched farmer contributions dollar-for-dollar, the program has since been replaced by the Canadian Agriculture Income Stabilization program in 2003.

He said he had no problem with NISA but the cheque represents how government can waste money to keep busy.

Considering he has experienced a loss each of the last five years, he doesn't think the penny will help him pay taxes this year.

"We're not making money off the farm anymore. In fact I've had to support the farm...with my pension," he said, adding his pasture land is listed for sale as he slowly gets out of farming.

Railway for sale

CN could abandon Southern rail line by next spring

For the Chronicle

Another piece of the area's rich railway heritage is nearing the end of the line.

CN has filed notice it plans to abandon and discontinue service on the former Canada Southern rail line it operates in partnership with the Canadian Pacific Railway from St. Thomas to Fargo, Ont., north of Blenheim.

"We are starting the process for that," confirmed Ian Thompson, CN director of communications. "The serviceable customers aren't there anymore."

The line sees limited service to its sole customer, Thompsons Limited in Rodney.

"We're looking at creating options for people if they want to buy it," Thomson said. "And that's what the abandonment process does. It puts the infrastructure up for sale as an operating corridor."

Thompsons, who found out about CN's plans early this year, is looking at higher costs to transport grains from their elevator in Rodney by truck.

"It's unfortunate. It's a lot cheaper to ship by rail," said Steve Speller, branch manager at Thompsons. "CN said they would continue to provide service until next March."

Speller said it was cheaper to send grains to the U.S. via the southern rail line but now the company will have to look for more local markets.

Also, Speller said it will mean periodically there will be more truck traffic in Rodney.

"Not a lot," he said, adding sometimes 25 rail cars would be filled by Thompsons but occasionally CN would arrive with 25 cars and only have five filled.

Southeast Ag in Ridgetown also has fertilizer delivered via the rail line.

"If we had our choice we'd love to see the rail continue," said Speller.

Under the notice of discontinuance, any party interested in acquiring the line for the purpose of continuing railway operations has until July 15 to contact CN. MAY/05

Miller Park washrooms worth more than money

A washroom and food concession in Miller Park is too important to let money get in the way, says the West Lorne Optimist Club.

Representatives of the club presented their plan for a new pavilion at the edge of the soccer pitches in Miller Park to West Elgin council Feb. 24.

"Money should not be the only thing council is looking at," said Ken Neil, Optimist Club member. "It is important to the community.

He said the club wasn't going to just apply for an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant for their portion of the pavilion but for the entire $250,000.

Council was looking at just building the washroom, which would cost $143,790.

The food concession portion of the building and a covered patio would cost around $80,000.

Neil said the park needs a place where families can come to picnic or where possibly even concerts could be held.

The pavilion would have a storage room for soccer and baseball equipment, a kitchen (which the cost of the stove is included in the estimated cost) and the washrooms.

The Optimist Club hopes to know how much money they will get before the end of the year.

"We're going to be optimistic that we'll get the full amount," said Neil.

The pavilion would be at the edge of the soccer pitches, near the hydro tower.

Council did not decide to move forward with plans to build the facility because Counc. Mike Mooser, who represents West Lorne was not present at the meeting.

Also, Recreation Superintendent Jeff Slater said he could erect a $600 fence that would keep people out of the arena but still allow arena washroom access.



Traditional Irish delights JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Mike Mulhern, plays guitar as Kate Emerson plays flute with Wayne Carroll in the group Calgorm at the West Elgin Dramatics Society Performing Arts Centre in Dutton March 12. A capacity crowd sang along to Irish ditties like Danny Boy.





About 280 came and $18,000 was raised at the event boosting the total fund raising to more than $20,000, with expenses for the evening still to be paid. The Dunn's set a $12,000 goalso some of the money will go to National Service Dogs who provide the dogs to the families. "We're overwhelmed," said Linda Dunn. "Having a child with a disability means you do whatever you can to enrich their lives. The community has really got involved." About 30 students from West Elgin Secondary School volunteered time to serve the dinner.

More large donations were presented to the Dunn family the night of the dinner including a surprise $1,500 cheque from the Shedden Odd Fellows. Also, Grace Lutheran Church in West Lorne presented a $700 cheque for the money raised by the sale of dog treats around Christmas. Rodney Ambulance Equipment Fund gave $500 and Rail Side View Stables of Dutton gave $100. Local businesses contributed prizes for the silent auction and the Elgin International Club donated the use of the building for the event. "It was a huge success," said Dunn. She hopes Jacob will get his dog in May.

CURRENT EVENTS 2005

Summer reading programs to blast off

LIBRARY NEWS

By Mary-lou McMillan and Shelley Fleming

The library is the perfect place for you and your family to visit this summer.

We have something for everyone. Your library card allows you to borrow the latest books, CDs, DVDs, videos, magazines, and books on tape or CD (great for those summer road trips). While at the library you can use one of the seven on-line computers (one-hour booking limit), the photocopier, scanner or fax machine. Membership is *free*.

The staff are information specialists and will be happy to help you find just what you are looking for. If it is not in our branches we will be happy to order it in from another library.

The library's Summer Reading Club encourages children to read all summer long. This year's theme sponsored by TD Financial is Blast Off Each member of the Summer Reading Club will go on a space journey and visit all of the planets as they read books along the way. Prizes are given out for the first eight books read by each child.

Children also receive a Space Dollar for each book read to use as tickets for our weekly draws with lots of great prizes. Children from 5 to 12 years of age are invited to join the Summer Reading Club. All you need is a library card for a ton of summer fun.

Lift Off is on June 30 at 1:30 p.m. Children can sign up, decorate their space ship, and the space journey begins. Books read are recorded in a Captain's Log. The Summer Reading Club ends on Aug. 13. All members will receive a ticket to our final party to be held at the library on Aug.15 at 1p.m.

The Beirdo Brothers, a musical duo, will provide rollicking fun for the whole family at the John Kenneth Galbraith Reference Library in Dutton. All non-members will be asked to pay a loonie to attend this celebration.

A separate celebration will be held for the Rodney and West Lorne libraries.

The Rodney Library is holding a book sale on July 9 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Contact your local library for more details.

EDITORIAL

Rail line a sad loss but potential remains strong for development

CN's plans to abandon a rail line between St. Thomas to the Blenheim area is unfortunate.

It's understandable there is a limited amount of customers using the rail line, making it unfeasible to keep it in operation for now.

However, rail transport remains a potentially less costly method of shipping goods across North American trade routes.

As our closest border crossing to the US continues to back up more and more each year with transport truck traffic, lost time becomes a valuable commodity that could be reclaimed with rail shipping.

Unfortunately, our local stretch of this rail line is not heavily industrialized yet.

The emphasis is on "yet". The West Elgin Chamber of Commerce is slowly working toward a more aggressive approach to attracting industry to the area.

Most recently, an issue raised over out-of-towners being billed for collisions in the City of London opened the door for dialogue between the city and our rural area in how we can fit into a larger economic development picture.

It could lead to partnerships that see, at the least, support industries locating here for larger ones existing in London.

For now, West Elgin is looking at purchasing portions of the rail line to preserve the greenspace and local parks.

It's unfortunate that it's not economically viable to preserve not only the greenspace but the line itself for future industry.

We're still blessed to have the Highway 401 corridor at our doorstep for the easy transport of goods, but the more infrastructure we can maintain and develop, the more appealing we are to industry.

(S.H.)

Events planned across area for Canada Day

Canada Day celebrations at Miller Park in West Lorne should be a non-stop good time, promise the organizing committee.

Months of planning are complete and the various service clubs that have come together to make the weekend full of events a success are ready to go.

It all starts July 1 with the Knights of Columbus Fish Fry and an evening of fireworks at Miller Park.

The organizing committee announced the Snake Lady will be in Miller Park from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday bringing her reptiles to be touched and held.

The Rodney Day Camp group is also organizing many kids activities Saturday at Miller Park.

As well, teams have been registering for the three-on-three basketball tournament being organized by the Centre Ice Youth Centre.

Saturday night features the Viva Las Vegas show at the arena in West Lorne in a weekend full of events.

Meanwhile, Canada Day events are being held in many villages across the area.

For the second year in a row, the Village of Newbury is holding a whole day of events for Canada Day.

Since 1972 the village hadn't had a whole day of events until last year.

Topping its success, Debbie Rankin, organizer hopes families will once again come out and celebrate the birthday of our nation.

It starts at Coltsfoot Road where the parade begins.

Local war heros will be celebrated as this year's celebration ties into the Year of the Veteran.

The parade will wind into the village to the park where activities for people of all ages will be set up.

A DJ will be spinning favourites for the entire afternoon at the park.

A slip n' slide and bubbles will be set up for kids.

Jingles the clown returns in the afternoon to entertain children with zany trickery.

A baseball tournament will be held along with fireworks in the evening.

A special ceremonial is also being planned, says Rankin.

Events have been scaled back to an evening program Friday in Dutton because the holiday falls on a weekend.

The Canada Flag will rise at 5:30 p.m. before the Choral Society performs.

Barb Trudell's dance crew will also perform.

St. Thomas band, the Fiascos will play 80s and 90s music throughout the evening.

Fingal continues with its tradition of Canada Day celebrations.

The Southwold Township is holding fireworks and children's activities June 30 starting around 7 p.m. at the ballpark.

Entertainers for children will be on site face painting, cake and ice cream.

Food donations are requested for Caring Cupboard.

Residents from the Duart area will once again celebrate Canada Day with fireworks and entertainment at the picnic shelter in Clearville July 1.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Royal Bank gives to WEDS

Dianne Downie, RBC Financial Group employee, from Rodney gives a $500 cheque to Lesley Moll from West Elgin Dramatics Society Kids program. Downie contributes time to WEDS Kids and was able to obtain the donation from RBC Financial Group, Employee Volunteer Grants Program.

Library staff looking for temporary location

FOR THE CHRONICLE

Elgin County librarian Cathy Bishop said Feb. 14 there may be temporary staffing effects as a result of the fire at the West Lorne library last week.

Bishop gave a short verbal report on the fire to county council, after she and administrator Mark McDonald visited the scene.

"We do know it was very devastating to staff," she said.

West Lorne library staff have been given temporary work at the Rodney branch or at the main library on Sunset Drive, she said and the search is on for a temporary home in West Lorne.

But Bishop cautioned there is not that much work available for the West Lorne staff and that the situation may have to be revisited.

There were 16,000 items in the 1,251-square-foot West Lorne library, worth $500,000, Bishop said, adding she was relying on accurate computer records. Also damaged was $1,500 in computer equipment.

The most expensive items, shelves and furniture, still need to be costed out, she said.

Original historic newspapers stored at the library are fine and are being dried out, she said. Old municipal records that were part of the Village of West Lorne before amalgamation had been brought back to the county archives for storage and were not affected by the fire, Bishop said.

Insurance adjusters continue to assess damages to determine what will be restored.

Out of print items and local history books that are few in numbers across the system may be restored while most of the collection may be replaced.

Currently, staff are searching for a new temporary location in West Lorne which is hoped to be found in coming months.

Fore more information call the Rodney library at 785-2100.

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CURRENT EVENTS 2005

World Day of Prayer services being held

Christians in more than 170 countries around the world and 2,000 communities across Canada will celebrate World Day of Prayer March 3.

In West Lorne, seven different denominations are taking part: The West Lorne Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Lutheran, Crinan Presbyterian, Eagle Pentecostal, West Lorne Melody Assembly and United who take turns each year to host the event.

This year's host church is the United Church, the service will be at 2 p.m., followed by a time for fellowship and refreshments.

Another similar event is being held at Bobier Villa in Dutton at 7 p.m.

Gas stolen with rise in prices

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Gas prices topped out near $1.00 last week fueling an increase in gas 'n' dashes at the Highway 401 service station.

When prices reached 97 cents last Thursday, there had already been four incidents of people fueling their vehicles and leaving without paying at the Petro Canada on Highway 401.

"I've never seen the prices so high," said Melissa Rowe, attendant at the station for four years. "I was pretty surprised we had cars just drive off. Since the prices went up we've had more."

"We try to keep a close eye out and walk around watching the people," said Rowe adding she had to provide a description of vehicles to the police.

The station has no cameras over the pumps but with two people working at the station, Rowe is usually able to walk around and look at the people pumping gas and their vehicles.

"I think people don't realize the price has gone up. They fill up thinking it's just as cheap but then they realize they can't afford it," she said.

Across Highway 401, Dan Carr, owner of the Shell Canada gas station was hesitant to talk to the Chronicle about gas 'n' dashes.

"Last time I talked to the media, after the story came out, it happened more frequently," said Carr.

He said more than $10,000 worth of gas is stolen between his two stations on the highway and in London each year.

He said there is more than one incident a week where gas is stolen.

"It's a real issue. Unfortunately the retailer has to swallow it and it's a huge cost," said Carr.

While his station does have surveillance, Carr said a certain "element of people" will not pay for gas.

He doesn't believe a rise in gas prices cause more people to steal gas.

"It happens on a regular basis," he said.

Stations within western Elgin County's villages said they have not seen gas 'n' dashes with higher prices.

The four contacted said they never have gas stolen, mostly because they are full service stations making it harder for someone to take off without paying.

Also, most of the customers are local in the villages, so employees at the gas stations know and remember the customers.

West Elgin secrets found

Think you know everything about West Elgin?

Challenge yourself and drive across the municipality seeing the sights, learning local history and keeping up on current happenings.

Better yet, join the Rodney Aldborough Agricultural Society's Car Rally tour June 26.

"There's more to the community than you know," said one of the organizers Bernie Whiele.

Starting at the Rodney Recreation Centre around 1 p.m., the two hour tour promises to take you to places and show you things in the municipality you've never seen or known before.

The society has been working hard to collate facts, stories and locations for the tour which will take travels to all corners of the municipality.

Easy to drive, the tour does lead down gravel roads but these are back roads rarely travelled in our day-to-day routines, said Nancy McGregor, with RAAS.

Small changes have been made to the route for those who may have driven it before, but with a poor turnout last year, many will be surprised by what they learn and discover on the route.

The event is an important fundraiser for the society, with a small fee per car and traveller.

McGregor encourages drivers to bring a navigator to read through the booklet.

Pails will be placed at several markers along the way with cards in them.

The car that ends up with the best poker hand wins a prize.

The car that answers the most questions on the quiz also wins a prize.

Anyone interested in taking the tour and joining the car rally, can start at the Rodney Recreation Centre June 26 at anytime.

West Elgin approves new police contract

West Elgin Council approved the Elgin County OPP preferred budget for four new officers, with little discussion.

"What are we going to do," said Counc. Mike Mooser. "We've got to have police."

The budget is not final, with the 2005 reconciliation outstanding but West Elgin's preliminary cost for policing in 2006 is $695,129.

Staff Sgt. Ryan Cox attended the meeting to present the proposed, costly staff increase.

Mayor Graham Warwick pushed Cox to improve how officers use their time.

"We don't want to pay for armed stenographers," said Warwick.

He wondered if Cox could hire more administration to fill out time consuming police reports.

Cox said it's law for officers to fill out most of the reports.

However he said some OPP detachments have electronic dictaphones which help reduce time spent converting officers notes to report forms.

Cox said he wants to see if other detachments see positive results from the dictaphones.

Dutton-Dunwich has yet to pass a resolution supporting the preferred or status quo contracts.

"It's a tough decision for council," said Administrator Ken Loveland. "It's a lot of money."

Dutton-Dunwich Council was waiting to see how the other municipalities in the county acted.

So far, of the municipalities that share the contract Central Elgin has also supported the five-year contract.



Storm investigation continues JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

West Elgin Road Superintendent Paul Van Vaerenburgh stands before the large trees that were uprooted in windspeed of 120 km/hr May 13. Environment Canada initially said there was no tornado but has begun investigating sightings by local residents to reassess the storm.

Search warrants ready for prom parties

Elgin County OPP together with the Elgin St. Thomas Health Unit are spreading the word about the Party Pact program. The initiative is aimed at assisting OPP in dealing with out of control parties at homes or properties where owners/parents may be absent. This time of year, as we enter prom/graduation party month, parents are reminded that parties can and often will get out of control very quickly. Young people may have good intentions to keep the crowd to just a few close friends but before long ,word of the party spreads and as a last resort police are called to deal with the, largely intoxicated, belligerent masses.

Property owners can now take steps to ensure that the OPP will have easy and unrestricted access to a property or residence where a party is being planned. When the party pact agreement is signed by parents the OPP are formally notified of the date, time, location and estimated size of the planned party. This early notice provides officers with valuable information, including contact names and phone numbers, should calls for service be received. In addition, the Party Pact ensures that parents speak with their teens about the responsibility and liability associated with hosting social functions. Furthermore, teens are made aware that the OPP has been notified and are prepared to respond to any concerns from neighbours, partygoers or passers-by.

The Party Pact is a way to promote safer parties in Elgin County at any time of year. To Pick up your Party Pact contract at the Elgin County OPP Detachment or the Health Unit.

Celebrities frequenting area

Highway 401 service centres a stopping ground for famous people

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Nights at the Highway 401 service centres can be quiet.

Imagine though, seeing a sleepy guitar player from the band Kiss, or coffee craving NHL hockey player enter the doors of the service centre after midnight.

It happens every week, a celebrity of some status stops at the gas stations or restaurants along Highway 401 in between Dutton and West Lorne late at night.

Ryan Sinclair of Rodney boasts about the time he met Emmy Award Winner James Woods.

"It was cool. I knew him for his more scarier roles (such as Vampires), but he didn't seem too proud of those roles. He wanted to be known for his later works," said Sinclair.

Getting his photo taken with Woods, the actor began to get annoyed with the attention and autograph requests.

Recently, Sinclair, who works at the Wendy's on the eastbound station, saw WWE wrestler Christian.

"We made fun of him," said Sinclair, remarking the TV star has an entrance to the wrestling ring that is cheesey.

While Christian ate at the Wendy's, Sinclair and Dave Oliveira, janitor, mocked his entrance dance moves.

"It was hilarious," said Sinclair. "He wasn't impressed."

Employees at the service station are not as star crazed as the screaming fans on TV.

Long-time service station employee David Munn explains why the employees at the service station may not get over excited to see a celebrity.

"They're just like us. Celebrity mean you're famous but you shouldn't be treated any different. If Steve Yzerman (NHL hockey player) comes in here I'm going to treat him for who he is, not what he does," said Munn of the Rodney area who works at the Tim Hortons.

He occasionally has asked for autographs, such as when Karen Kane, Canadian ballet icon came in.

"I didn't know who she was so I asked for her autograph," said Munn.

In the 1980s though, Munn had the thrill of cooking with Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley of the band Kiss.

"They were cool. Really normal," he said, adding most bands stay in their tour buses and send an associate in to the restaurant to pick-up food.

Kiss had just finished a show in Detroit and was headed for Toronto.

Munn figured he would give the international superstars a chance of a lifetime - to make their own hamburgers at a fast food restaurant.

Please see Rural, *page 2*

CURRENT EVENTS 2005

Hundreds flock to Eagle to see rare bird



Scanning the trees JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Linda Cork, left, Karin Auckenthaler and Peter Auckenthaler, right centre, look into the trees for a Pyrrhuloxia on Walter Wojeck's property south of Eagle. The Pyrrhuloxia is a type of cardinal from Mexico that was spotted at a feeder on the property last week. Hundreds of people came to see the displaced bird.

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Hundreds of bird enthusiasts flocked to Walter Wojeck's property near Eagle last week to see a rare cardinal from Mexico make its first documented appearance in Canada.

The rare Pyrrhuloxia was spotted on Wojeck's property by Reinhold Pokraka on Christmas Day.

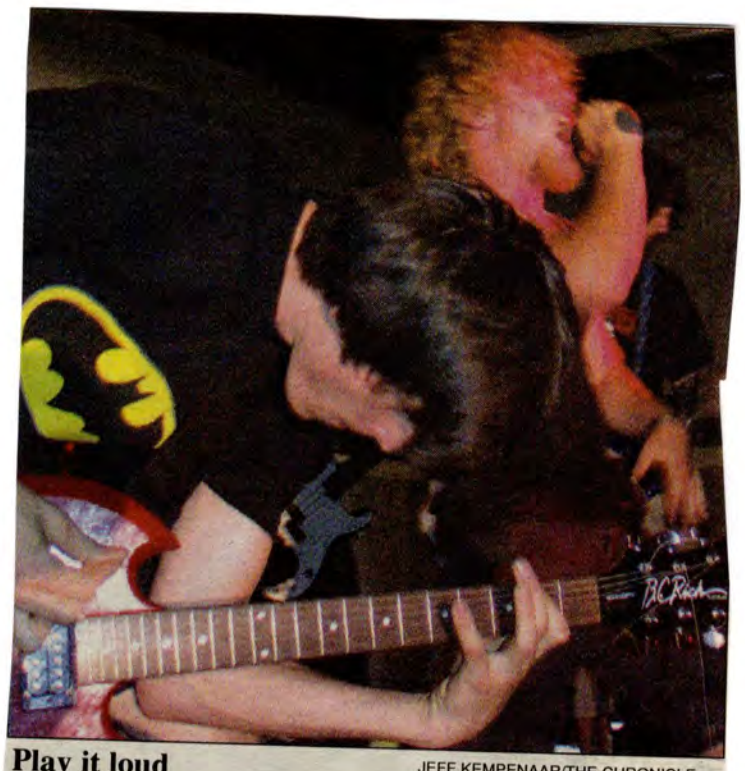
Once word got out across the Internet that for the first time in recorded history the bird reached Canada, birders from British Columbia, Ottawa, Tobemory and Alabama came to see it.

Joanne Reive, president of the West Elgin Nature Club said about 400 people came to try and get a sighting.

The Pyrrhuloxia looks very similar to a cardinal but has a beak like a parrot.

Pokraka was visiting Wojeck when he noticed the bird at a bird feeder at around 3:25 p.m. Dec. 25.

JAN 05 *Please see* Bird, *page 2*



Play it loud JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Dave McWilliam plays guitar while Corey Timmermans sings for the band Septic Tank at Wesstock June 10.

Wesstock featured local talented rockin' youth at the high school June 10.

The annual battle of the bands was bigger and louder this year, being held in the gymnasium at West Elgin Secondary School before more than 100 people.

Seven bands battled for a day in a Chatham recording studio.

Far from Freedom, a heavy punk band from Parkside Collegiate in St. Thomas won the battle with covers of bands like Alexisonfire.

While they didn't win, Septic Tank had dozens of students jumping on the dance floor.

"We wanted to have a good show and get all the frustrations out of our systems," said singer Corey Timmermans.

Exams start next week.

Members of Septic Tank are Dave McWilliam, guitar, Ryan Grant, guitar, Geoff Wayne, bass and Aaron Berry on drums.

Timmermans described Septic Tank's show Friday night as, "15-minutes equivalent to 10 parties at once."

In their debut at Wesstock was Magic, a classic rock cover band with Mark Godfrey, Aaron Berry and James Stone.

Magic played Foxy Lady, Communication Break Down, by Led Zeppelin and Spirit in the Sky, showing off Stone's impressive guitar skills.

Godfrey and Berry played in five bands during the hot night.

Mark's father, Tom Godfrey helped organize the event which raised $500 for an Aids charity, yet to be picked.

"It was a success," said Jan Kool. He and Maryjo McWilliam helped organize the concert with Godfrey.

Tom operates a youth church in Duart called Kent Region Alternative Ministries.

"We put a lot of time into practicing and it all pays off when we get on stage," said Berry.

Their band Effendi played a country song called A View From Here, by Yellowcard.

"You can't get away with holding a concert in West Lorne and not playing a country song," said Mark.

Another Day, with members from Wallacetown and the Melbourne area impressed many with their pop/punk sound.

Garrett Stokes, Josh Grant, Brandon Wolfe, Michael Godfrey and singer Kelly Grant have been together only a few months.

They've played venues around the area including Call The Office in London.

"As soon as we get home from school we grab our guitars," said Stokes. "We've converted the loft in Brandon's barn into a jam space."

For P.J Kellestine, of Fall From Memory, getting on stage is a rush.

"I could never get in front of a classroom to do a presentation but getting up on stage is awesome," said Kellestine, a graduate of WESS. "Everyone here tonight got their chance to shine."

He, Zack Stokes, Mark Godfrey and Cory Ellis have been playing shows in the area.



Bike safety learned at rodeo JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Emily McDonald learns her hand signals at the bike rodeo held at Aldborough Public School June 10 by the Optimist Club of West Lorne. Medallion winners were Skylar McNeill, Calvin Dowling and Sheldon Downie. Other winners were Cathy Bergey, Brianna Downie and Jessica Hejna.

Miller Park washroom to be built by August

A tender was received for the Miller Park washroom building in West Lorne.

Council learned about the estimated costs for the project at its June 23 meeting.

To the tune of $87,847, a four stall washroom will be built this summer near the hydro tower in the park's wooded area for the public.

RLM, a small construction firm from London had the lowest tender and is hoped to have the project completed by the end of this August.

In other business:

Council gave direction for a backflow prevention bylaw to be drafted.

The new bylaw will give the drainage department the go ahead to install a backflow prevention assembly at every water and sewer connection in the municipality.

Currently, the department only installs them at every new line.

Prioritizing the backflow prevention project, industrial properties will be fitted with the assemblies first.

The bylaw could include fees for each property owner to have the backflow preventor installed.

The backflow preventors are mandatory in the province, and save property owners from the liability of cleaning up after something hazardous enters the water system.

The issue was examined after Stratford's water supply was temporarily shut down by a backflow of chemical from a city car wash.



Vacation Bible School held JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Kathy Johnston and her grandson Joe play a game of passing a hoop over held hands July 8 at a Vacation Bible School held at the West Lorne United Church all last week.

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CURRENT EVENTS 2005





Tony Vergeer, Carlos Oliveira, Gord Schnekenburger Bill Vanseader and George Van Dyk operate the fryers at the Knights of Columbus Fish Fry Friday night in West Lorne.



Viva Las Vegas to put big show on CONTRIBUTED

The Ultimate Tribute Show is set for July 2, featuring covers of popular music from the 50s to the 80s by award winning tribute act Viva Las Vegas.



The West Elgin Choral Society sang Oh Canada at the opening ceremonies to the Dutton/Dunwich celebrations July 1.



Harold Timson purchased a record from Angus McLain at the Rodney and West Lorne Kiwanian's Flea Market July 3.



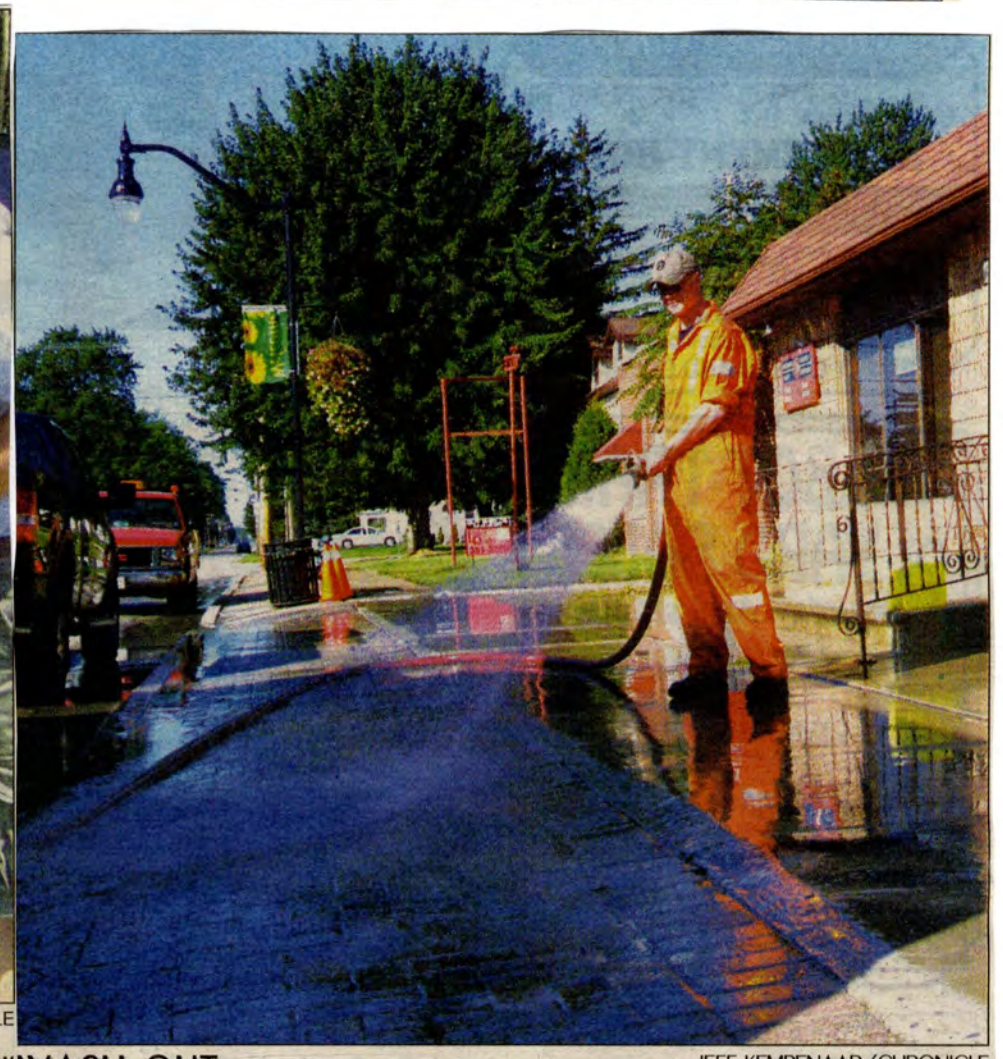
West Elgin honoured its volunteer firefighters from Rodney and West Lorne with volunteers of the year awards given July 1 before the annual firefighter's baseball game by Rosalie Krebsz on behalf of the municipality.





Hundreds spend weekend in the park JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Tim Johnston of Rodney polishes his 1971 Chevy Nova at the Optimist Club's In the Woods Car Show July 3, the third day of Canada Day festivities in Miller Park, West Lorne. Johnston was one of more than 130 that brought their vehicles to the park for the show. More photos from the weekend are on page 16.



WASH OUT JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Jack Fisher from the West Elgin road department washes cement dust from the bricked sidewalk in front of the Canada Post office on Main Street in West Lorne Monday. Residents have been complaining about sidewalk dust, weeds and a poorly maintained streets.

EDUCATION 2004

Early Years funding likely will remain

Spanking comments part of upcoming meeting with Ontario Early Years and WECPCRC board

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

Funding for the West Elgin Community Parent Child Resource Centre is likely to stay in place, said Tom McCallum, executive director of Ontario Early Years, Elgin-Middlesex-London.

"The West Elgin Community Parent Child Resource Centre has had 25 years of quality programming and I think we want to carry on with that tradition," said McCallum Monday in response to concerns Ontario Early Years was going to pull it's funding following comments about spanking WECPCRC program administrator Janet Pinder made in Feb. 12 issue of The Chronicle.

Parents and the Rodney community began reacting late last week to calls from parents seeking letters of support for Pinder because of fears the Ontario Early Years funding was going to be pulled out and possibly moved to the West Elgin Community Health Centre in West Lorne.

"It's a possibility Ontario Early Years wants to partner with the health centre where maybe there could be more funding," said Brad Bandeen, a parent whose children have attended WECPCRC off and on for seven years.



Tom McCallum

"The West Elgin Parent Community Child Resource Centre has had 25 years of quality programming and I think we want to carry on with that tradition."

His wife, Sue is a former board member and Brad is a former West Elgin councillor who has been involved with the resource centre as both a parent and municipal representative.

"But who's the right person to deliver this service? I think in this community, it's Janet," said Bandeen.

Ontario Early Years began funding the existing day care centre in Rodney two years ago after Bandeen said the health centre lobbied for the funding as part of its community programming.

Sue said Pinder had already been offering services such as toy-lending libraries and parenting courses for years before the government launched it's Ontario Early Years program with similar interests in supporting parents.

She said it was a logical match for the funding to come to WECPCRC where Pinder was having to work hard to expand the programming.

McCallum would not say how much money Ontario Early Years provides to WECPCRC but said it is reviewed annually when WECPCRC's contract for funding is renewed.

Pinder had commented on personal views o

Continued on Page 2

The Chronicle



Lindsay Besley, left, catches the ball during a practice exercise at the Don Martin Winter Baseball School that has been running at West Elgin Secondary School Friday nights. She is among five local girls going to Florida on a ball school team.

Chronicle photo

Ball players heading to Florida

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

While droves of young Canadians spend their spring break on a beach in Florida, five area girls will be spending it on Florida baseball diamonds.

Through their participation in the Don Martin Winter Baseball School, the girls have qualified for positions on a team composed of students from Martin's schools across Ontario.

As the youngest team there, Daniyel Bint, a Dutton first baseman, said the high school age players from Ontario compete against college-age players for seven days of baseball.

"That's a lot of ball," said Kendra Goos, a pitcher and third baseman from Rodney.

The team practices every day and plays in what amounts to a large ball tournament against other baseball schools.

"It's a lot of fun," said Jennifer Drummelsmith of Dutton. She plays first base and third and said this is her second time going to the tournament.

Participants in the school, which has taken place Friday nights through much of the winter at West Elgin Secondary School, have to indicate they would like a shot at the school team.

Coaches watch how they perform as they participate and decide who makes the cut to join the team on the trip to CoCoa Beach.

At the school, they work on all their skills from fielding to batting before the heat gets turned up on the Florida diamonds.

They've all grown up playing ball and third, second and shortstop Lindsay Besley of West Lorne is going for her first time this year.

She said they've been practicing every Sunday leading up to the trip and adds it's a great opportunity to improve their skills in a game they've played all their lives.

Drummelsmith said the tournament also gives them a chance to meet a lot of new people.

The five-some, which also includes Caitlin Littlejohn of Highgate, leaves March 12 for seven days.

As the girls head south, Dutton Minor Ball is gearing up for its season with sign ups continuing place March 24 and 27.



Lindsay Besley, Jennifer Drummelsmith, Kendra Goos and Daniyel Bint are on their way to Florida, joined by Caitlin Littlejohn, absent.

Chronicle photo

SPORTS

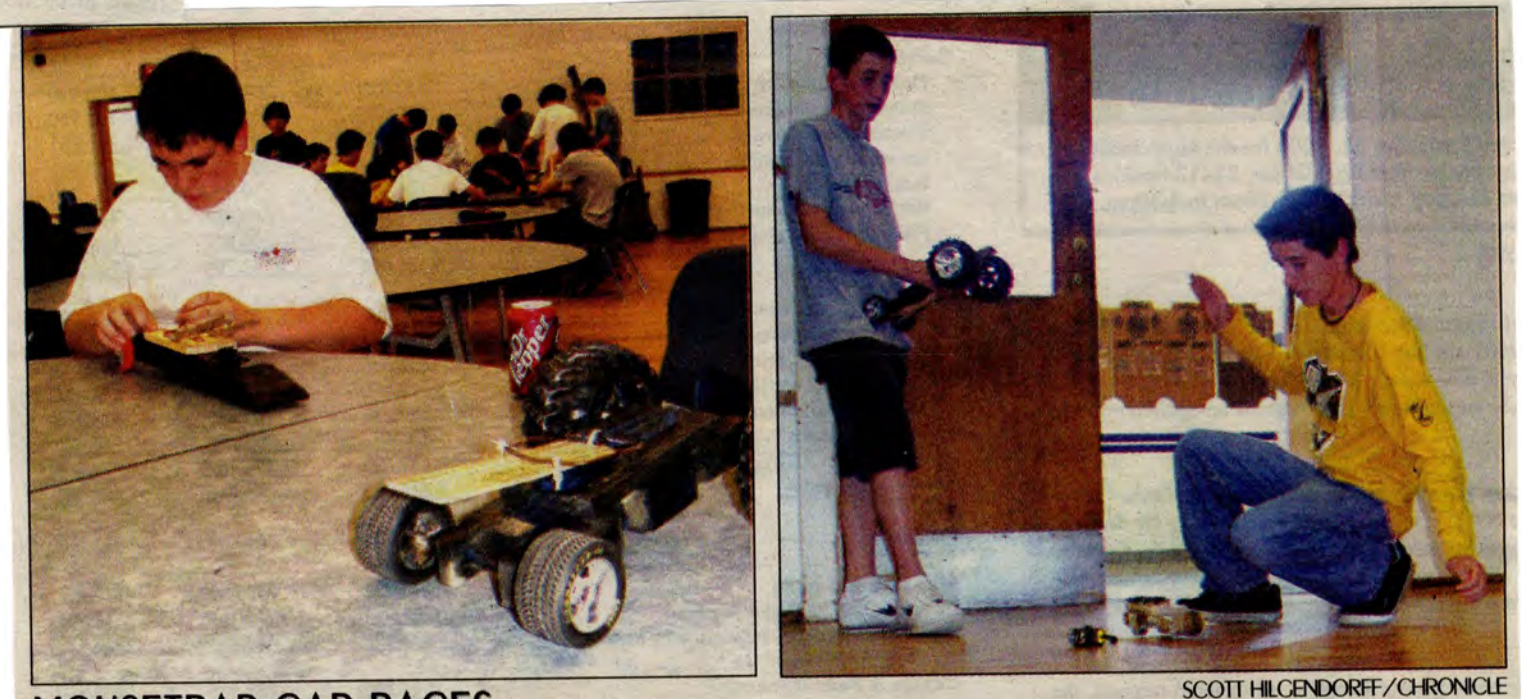
WESES honoured again with award for gym

WESES has won recognition for keeping students physically active from the Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (CAHPERD).

The Diamond School Recognition Award recognizes schools that offer daily physical education to every student.

Only one per cent, 220 of 17,256, Canadian schools even qualified for the award and for the second year in a row WESES has been recognized.

"At the Diamond level, schools offering physical education will positively contribute to the health of children by providing them with knowledge and skills that they need to be physically active throughout their life." says Nick Forsberg, president of CAHPERD in a media release.



SCOTT HILGENDORFF/CHRONICLE

MOUSETRAP CAR RACES

Grade 9 technology student Kyle Carew (top left) makes some final preparations on his mousetrap car while Kyle Carlos (top, right) releases his car. Students in the class had to make cars that would be powered by mouse or rat traps. The cars were tested Monday to see how far they would be propelled in West Elgin Secondary School's cafeteria.

Elgin Wildcats win OFSAA volleyball

For *The Chronicle*

It's mission accomplished after the West Elgin Wildcats won the ultimate prize in high school sports.

The Wildcats captured the OFSAA A girls volleyball championship, reaching their season goal, defeating Sudbury Marymount 3-1 (14-25, 25-12, 25-22, 25-21) in the best-of-five final match last Thursday.

"It feels great," Cheri Hunter said. "Ten times better than silver."

A year ago the Wildcats lost in the provincial final to Penetanguishene Le Caron, leaving them with ambitions to return for the gold.

"The kids are on a definite high," said coach Lori Clinton after the Wildcats went 14-1 at the tournament.

"Collectively the whole team played well. It wasn't just a couple of standouts in the game."

Game one didn't look promising as the Wildcats were handily put away by Marymount for their first loss at OFSAA.

"Mentally they (Marymount) finished us in the first game. We lost it, we melted (after leading the game by six points)," Clinton said.

"They dominated us the first game, psychologically and then we turned around and did the same thing to them."

Led by hitters Justina Campbell and Hunter on offence, the Wildcats rode on the momentum swing to a quick victory.

"Cheri hit really well. I couldn't tell you how many kills she had. She killed the ball," praised Clinton.

"Katie Lyon and Michelle Weber at middle, their blocking was huge for us in terms of defence."

Lindsay Lamb and captain Carolyn Tunks ran the offence as the team's setters.

West Elgin cruised through the round-robin with a 6-0 record, winning their games on average 25-10.

"We won our games quite handily," Clinton said. "The calibre of play was so poor (from opponents) it kind of surprised me. Today was totally different, we had to play harder."

In the quarter-finals the Wildcats still made quick work of Kenora St. Thomas Aquinas 25-21, 25-16. Ditto for Kitchener Rockway in a semifinal, where the Wildcats won 25-10, 25-20, 25-14.

"I was scared that we would be relaxed when we went in (to the final), thinking that we've played good so far and wouldn't have to work," Hunter said. "We pulled it together. We stepped up when we had to. I knew we would come back. It (loss) was just a fluke."

West Elgin becomes the first school to win three "A" girls volleyball titles and joins a short list of eight schools (any class) to win three or more provincial crowns. The Wildcats also won in 1997 and 1998.

Veterans Hunter and Tunks have seen the ascension back to the top, starting in 2002 that ended in the quarterfinals. The Wildcats are 32-9 in games at OFSSA during that span.

"We went three years in a row," Hunter said. "It has been great."



TALKING SCIENCE

Danielle McGill, left, and Tricia Reis at St. Mary's School, mix some compounds together to study chemical reactions as part of a Let's Talk Science program. Senior students studied forensic sciences and covered topics including fingerprinting and handwriting analysis.

Chronicle photo

School fight could be taken to Kennedy

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

The fight to keep rural schools open continues to build as members of the Citizens' Group for Rural Education look to taking their concerns directly to Minister of Education Gerard Kennedy.

"We're trying to mobilize community support," said Grace McGartland. She helped lead two public forums held last Wednesday at the West Lorne Complex to generate public input and support into campaigns the committee is spearheading.

The group is in its second phase of a letter writing campaign.

After months of research, the group has generated an updated package of letters that targets several key components to the issue of rural education from its funding formula to how programming is provided.

They are trying to get as many groups, organizations and individuals as possible to forward letters to the Ministry of Education and other leaders of the fight.

The Citizens' Group has prepared copies of letters targeting the different issues and used them as discussion points during the forum.

> 'WE'RE TRYING TO MOBILIZE COMMUNITY SUPPORT,"
>
> **— Grace McGartland**

Those letters were given to people at the forums and McGartland said they are encouraging people to either send those letters or their own versions.

She said they want to hit the ministry with as much input from as many people as possible to make sure their recommendations get noticed.

In the end, she said even if one recommendation is adopted, it would be worthwhile.

The Citizens' Group is feeling a sense of urgency to act quickly because Kennedy has announced new school closing guidelines are being announced at the end of the month.

Since being appointed education minister in the fall, Kennedy put a moratorium in place on any school closures and has repeatedly acknowledged the current funding formula discriminates against rural schools.

A suggestion came out of the meeting to have Kennedy come to West Elgin and meet with the Citizens' Group and community.

Don Watterworth, who attended the forum, suggested Kennedy ride a school bus at 7:30 a.m. to see first-hand the distances students already travel to school.

McGartland asked if Kennedy isn't able to come, how many people would be willing to go to

Continued on Page 2



OFSAA CHAMPIONS...

The West Elgin Secondary School Wildcats were OFSAA A girls volleyball champions. The team includes: back, left, Coach Becky Creigorshek, Manager Ann Wrobel, Taryn Clements, Michelle Webber, Justina Campbell, coach Lori Clinton, front, left, Lyndsay Lamb, Co-Cpt. Carolyn Tunts, Co-Cpt. Cheri Hunter, Katie Lyons, Rachel Kalita and Amanda Leonordes (absent but represented by the mascot bear.)

43 *Contributed photo*

EDUCATION 2004



ANGELIC CAUSE...

Snow Angels Spreading Hope was the name of the event that took place across the Catholic School board Monday. In West Lorne, 221 students and staff joined schools across the board in making snow angels at 2 p.m. The goal was to set a Guiness World Record while also prayerfully giving support to the board's Supervisor of Recreation Programs and Resources, Hans Janssen. The 26-year employee is battling cancer.

Chronicle photo





Norma Schnekenburger, Tracy Grant and Ebba Schmid are among the community leaders working within and outside the Thames Valley District School Board to help save rural schools. The information they are collecting is building as they prepare arguments to support a case for keeping rural schools open.

Chronicle photo

School battle rages on

Citizens' group, Grant continue advocating for rural schools

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

While the provincial government reviews its school funding issues, the battle to ensure rural schools can be saved is far from over and representatives of the Citizens' Group for Rural Education is continuing its speaking tour of local clubs and municipalities.

Most recently, the group was joined by Tracy Grant, a local representative on the accommodation study committee, at West Elgin Council for council's Feb. 12 meeting to discuss new initiatives and seek more support.

"It's an extremely difficult and time consuming job. I do appreciate the proactive nature of the council in speaking out for rural education and these communities," said Grant.

Her committee is tasked with reviewing accommodation issues at high schools in West Lorne, Glencoe, Strathroy and Parkhill. It is often the first step in a process that leads to the closure of at least one of the schools in the group being studied.

Glencoe District High School was identified as a potential target for closure by the Thames Valley District School Board and has been one of the focuses of the committee's monthly meetings since the middle of last year.

The new provincial government has given a reprieve to schools facing closure while it examines a

Continued on Page 2

EDUCATION 2004

Jazz trio

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

None of West Elgin Secondary School's jazz trio expected to be taking paid gigs and looking at making some recordings when music teacher Spiro Grima pulled them together to play at a luncheon in a pinch last school year.

"We were sort of thrown together," said Mike Bennett, who plays saxophone for the trio.

"It just ended up clicking, just through the jazz nature. Everything clicked," said Bennett.

Bennett said the trio, including Jen Pinder on drums and Mark Godfrey on bass, instinctively knew how to play together and were a surprising match up.

"We can communicate with each other while playing. We know what the other is going to do before they do it," said Bennett.

Godfrey said much of what they play starts out with a written selection but ends up moving into improvisation as their styles of playing and thinking blend together.

"It's evolved into something pretty good," said Pinder.

She was compared to famous drummer Buddy Rich by an adjudicator at a school competition last year.

She said Grima began getting the trio some gigs after he saw what they were capable of when he first asked them to help him out.

She said they originally represented the school, but with Bennett away at university now, they consider themselves more on their own, although proudly support and play for the school.

Now, Bennett said they will play any chance they get and recently performed at a private business conference in Niagara Falls.

Godfrey, who started playing bass when he was in Grade 7 said their growing successes has them thinking about putting a recording together, possibly focussing on improvised work.

"It's what we want, but we weren't expecting this," said Bennett.

Bennett is currently in his first year at the University of Western Ontario, working on a four-year theory and composing degree.

He's back to playing clarinet, an instrument he picked up when he was in Grade 7, at the same time he started saxophone, following up on starting to play piano when he was a five-year-old.

He said he kept playing and taking lessons and eventually wants to go to Humber College to study jazz.

"I personally thought it would be better for me if I got a classical background first," said Bennett who is set on pursuing a career as a professional jazz musician.

Godfrey entered high school planning to get into computer programming.

He had learned to play bass when he was in Grade 7 but never expected to be pursuing a career in music like he plans to now.

"Music was fun but I didn't think I had any potential," said the Grade 11 student.

But Grima saw it differently and let Godfrey, a junior at the time, play in the senior jazz band. "I've decided this is what I want to do with my life," he said.

Pinder is looking at going to Humber College next year to study percussion performance and wants to see the trio stay together.

She said it's been harder with Bennett being away at school this year and, she leaves for school in the fall, added, "Next year will be hard but we're going to try to keep it together."

The Chronicle



CHATEAU LA ROACH...

Members of West Elgin Secondary School's Wildcat Theatre presented the dramatic comedy, "Chateau La Roach". A dinner was offered to the public before the Friday night performance. The production was also run during the week for students to enjoy.

Chronicle photo

County continues to seek distinction between rural and urban school areas

For *The Chronicle*

Unhappy with a previous response from the Ernie Eves administration the County of Elgin has fired off another resolution to the Ontario government which makes a case for asking for a review of school board boundaries to reflect the differences between urban and rural areas.

The resolution on the size and composition of the Thames Valley District School Board is the same one the county submitted last year.

Administrator Mark McDonald said the county was not happy with the way the resolution was treated by the Eves' Progressive Conservative administration and is prepared to submit it again.

The resolution, composed by Malahide Mayor John Wilson, points out the TVDSB is the fourth largest board in Ontario, serves both urban and rural communities, but has not had a boundary review in five years.

The resolution makes the key point that has been argued by Wilson, who has fought hard to defend rural schools, that while they have been targeted for closure, there are significant social and economic concerns that outweigh "containment concerns."

Instead, the resolution suggests, geographic-circumstances grants should be offered to small schools in recognition of their value to rural areas.

The resolution suggests separating out Elgin, Oxford and Middlesex counties from the Thames boundaries and creating a separate boards for those areas.

County council, through the resolution, is asking for a review of the size and composition of the Thames Valley board, to more adequately recognize urban and rural areas.

FACS funding will have huge impact

For *The Chronicle*

Sixty-four million dollars is what's making the difference for many Children's Aid Societies across Ontario after the provincial government recently announced additional funding.

Which means Family and Children's Services (FACS) of St. Thomas and Elgin will be able to handle its budget of $8.6 million quite nicely.

"The budget will be covered for this year," said Rod Potgieter, executive director. "That's very good."

"It's definitely a huge impact. We are very pleased with this."

The province will also spend more than $1 billion in 2003-04 on services for more than 30,000 children in need of protection against abuse or neglect.

"It's very important we get the funds so we can fulfill our mandate," Potgieter said.

Premier Dalton McGuinty created the new Ministry of Children's Services to ensure children's issues are a top priority. The ministry aims to give children a good start in life through quality early-childhood services, making it easier for families to access these services and helping youth become productive adults. Which means all children's services will be covered under one ministry.

"We applaud this new direction in this ministry in focusing on children and we look forward to building partnerships and in developing strategic directions," Potgieter said.

Unfortunately Family and Children's Services does have an outstanding deficit of $255,000 for 2002-03, and Potgieter said it's uncertain whether this amount will be covered as well.

And Potgieter said to get a confirmation of what they had predicted in terms of funding is nothing short of soothing.

"It's a relief."

Outdated science labs receive much-needed facelift



Matt Flanagan of Seaforth prepares one of the science labs for work. He is working for Smith Construction.

Chronicle photo

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

Two labs at West Elgin Secondary School are receiving a major facelift.

"The interior is being replaced and the systems upgraded," said Vice Principal Bill Miskiman.

"It's part of the board's initiative to upgrade the science classrooms across the board," he said.

Miskiman said the upgrades will give the students a better learning environment and includes improved ventilation and new lab spaces and equipment.

The two classrooms were left unscheduled this semester to allow the work, which began two weeks ago.

The work is part of $5 million being spent during the next five years across the Thames Valley District School Board.

Each renovated lab is expected to cost $100,000 and will be gutted and rebuilt with lab stations set up around the permiter of the room and desks in the centre for note taking and instruction.

Two WESS labs were renovated about seven years ago, leaving two more facing the work now.

It's the first time work has been done on these two labs in 30 years.

Work is expected to be finished by the summer with the new classrooms in use this September.

"It's going to enhance the program delivery to the students," said Miskiman.

EDUCATION 2004

The Chronicle



SUBMITTED

Back row, left to right: Miss Ostrom (coach), Dylan Weselowski (co-captain), Michael Godfrey (co-captain), Andrew McWilliam, and Allan Percival (manager). Front row: Adam Sutton, Troy Cook, Josh Dionne, and John Gregory Drummelsmith. (Missing was David McWilliam, assistant coach)

WESES win board championship

The WESES Grade 8 Boys Volleyball team continued their winning ways on Dec. 11 at the TVDSB Championship Finals at Lucas S.S. in London. The boys dominated in the round robin and finished first in their pool. After a hesitant start, the team charged back to easily defeat Homedale in the semi-finals 13-25, 25-14, 15-7. In the finals, the WESES Eagles overpowered and outplayed Westmount P.S. They played phenomenal volleyball and went on to win in two straight games 25-20, 25-21, to claim the Gold Medal. Congratulations to the WESES Grade 8 Boys Volleyball team — Thames Valley District AAA Champions.



HATS OFF - THEY'RE DONE HIGH SCHOOL

JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Ashley Keane, Cheri Hunter, Stacey Oliveira, Carla Oliveira and Carolyn Tunks tossed their graduation hats into the air after West Elgin Secondary School's 2003-2004 commencement in the gym Oct. 30. Many of the graduating students returned to West Lorne from work or post secondary schooling for the ceremony.



JINGLE BELLS ON A TIMPANI

Nicole Miller, left, Ryan Alderton, Ben Gormley and Kelsy Fratscher performed Jingle Bells on Timpanis with the Grade 4s at APS Dec. 16



PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Journey of Love

St. Mary's School held the Journey of Love the night of Dec. 16 in the schoolyard. Open to the community, visitors were greeted by their "family head" guide and together they traveled the journey that Mary and Joseph took to the Birth of Jesus. Students from JK to Grade 8 participated as guides, soldiers, shepherds, inn keepers, tax collectors, angels, beggars, lepers, market vendors, prophets, Wise Men and as Mary and Joseph.

The Chronicle



JUNIOR BOYS WIN WOSSAA

FOR THE CHRONICLE

West Elgin Wildcats, Thames Valley Region Athletic Association junior boys "A" volleyball champions, WOSSA A and TVRAA South Division winners, from left, are; front row (holding plaques) - Shawn Zimmerman, Aaron Cowell; middle row - Joe Peternel, Jon Dietrich, Adam Almeida, back row - assistant coach Dan Kajan, Dave Dryfhout, Harrison Oake, Will Drummelsmith, Zach Dionne, Dan Dutton, head coach Mike Van Dyk, Jeremy Koscik, assistant coach Pete Soos.

ST. MARY'S CELEBRATE JESUS

St. Mary's School discovered the magic Christmas bells in the Polar Express performed by the Grade 5 students at the Christmas Concert Dec. 15 at St. Mary's Parish Hall Many performances were about Jesus.





PAINFUL LESSON SCOTT HILGENDORFF/CHRONICLE

Students look over a collection of material from Eva Olsson, a 79-year-old Holocaust survivor who shared with West Elgin Secondary School a message of tolerance toward others.

Holocaust survivor teaches tolerance

SCOTT HILGENDORFF
staff

Eva Olsson knows what it's like to be a teenager and bullied.

Only the bullies she refers to were Nazis she faced as she fought for survival against the horrors of a German concentration camp during World War II.

Reliving the horrors she experienced for students at West Elgin Secondary School, the 79-year-old Holocaust survivor simply wants students to accept each other for their differences.

"If you want peace, you must have respect and tolerance for your brothers and sisters. Tolerance is an absolute necessity," she said.

As a Hasidic Jew when Germany invaded Hungary where she was growing up at the beginning of the 1940s, Olsson knows what it's like to be hated for her differences.

Because she was Jewish, her entire family was loaded into box cars and sent by train to a concentration camp where Olsson survived more than four years of once unspeakable horrors.

She was silent about her experiences for 50 years but now speaks internationally about her experiences, urging people to obey just one rule: do unto others as you'd have them do unto you.

She's even spoken at the United Nations but was in West Lorne Monday through part of the Thames Valley District School Board's "safe schools initiatives".

Continued on Page 2



WHITE CHRISTMAS AT ALDBOROUGH JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

King Michael Lewinsky and queen Megan Dennahower watch as snowflakes Bryan Johnston, centre, and Mackenzie Dick bring a White Christmas to Aldborough Public School on Dec. 17.



WESES RINGS IN WINTER JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Nicole Carew, left and Alana Maclean perform a flute duet during the West Elgin Senior Elementary School Winter Concert Dec. 9.

Choosing not to hate most important choice, Nazi death camp survivor tells students

From Page 1

Board's "safe schools initiatives".

"I've made it my mission to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves," said Olsson, who lost almost her whole family to hatred.

Her family was forced to live in two rooms with a total of 19 people as Germany occupied Hungary not long after taking over Poland in 1939. They moved Jewish families into her city and crowded them all together.

But Olsson said she was fine because she was with her family.

"But not for long," she said.

Soon after, they were all being shipped to Germany to work as slave labour in brick factories; or that's what they thought.

They were marched 7 km to rail yards where Olsson said, "What we saw were endless rows of box cars. We couldn't see the engine," she said.

With her family, she was packed into a car with about 90 other people forced to make the trip to Germany standing in human waste that piled up in unbearable heat, with no water.

As a child, to encourage good behaviour, she was raised thinking if she did wrong, she would go to hell.

"I was often threatened I would go to hell. I did. I went to hell and back," she said to the gymnasium full of quiet students.

They arrived at the concentration camp where Olsson said, "Anyone asking for water was clubbed by the guards, by he Nazi bullies."

Surrounded by armed guards and electric fences.

It wasn't a brick factory, "It was a killing factory," she said.

She was separated from all but one sister as 90 per cent of the people, most of her family, were led away to await death in the gas chambers of Auschwitz.

Olsson and her sister were detained as prisoners and made to work in the camp, their head shaved, the hair used to make socks for German U-boat crews.

In life at the camp, she gradually accepted the unthinkable; that the smoke from the chimneys in another part of the camp and the horrible smell that filled the air was that of thousands of Jewish people who had been killed in gas chambers and burned.

She can remember the screams and moans of people lead into the gas chambers.

She remembers 20 minutes of screaming and then silence, as people she knew became part of the more than 11 million who died in Auschwitz and some 300 other similar concentration camps.

She said she'll never know what went through her family's minds as they died horrible deaths before being taken to the ovens, their bodies destroyed.

"That's what we smelled day and night; our families' flesh burning," she said.



POWERFUL STORY SCOTT HILGENDORFF/CHRONICLE

Students listen intently to the stories of Eva Olsson. Her story of survival in World War II concentration camps was used to encourage students not to hate.

She watched people starve to death, saw people tortured, even sewn together in medical experiments or given injections of tuberculosis and left to suffer.

She saw bodies and living people stacked together on trucks like firewood and remembers the cries of one man asking over and over again, "Where is God?"

The closer the Russians and Allied forces got to the concentration camp, the higher the flames got in the ovens as the Germans rushed to destroy as many Jewish people as they could.

"Those flames could be seen for miles and miles."

Olsson witnessed all of this and was rescued just days before she would have died herself from starvation and typhoid fever before Allied forces liberated her and her sister.

She encouraged the students to take from her story of survival the importance of learning not to hate or judge someone for differences, whether it be religion or skin colour.

"Children take into the street what they hear in their own environment ...Racism is a learned attitude. The most important choice you will ever make is to choose your attitude. How you treat your brothers and sisters, that will determine your success," she said.

She also said a child who learns to hate can't be blamed.

"He had a good teacher," she said.



WESES DANCE

Shandi Bondi, left, Christy Hentz and Arial Whalen performed a skit from the Lion King musical at West Elgin Senior Elementary School's Winter Concert Dec. 9. The girls choreographed and produced the skit on their own for the show. The WESES Jazz Band played afterwards.

EDUCATION 2004

-The Chronicle

High school collects thousands of food donations

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

Students at West Elgin Secondary School have stepped up and collected more than 6,000 cans of food in this year's holiday food drive.

"It's a lot of cans. The kids have really stepped up this year," said organizer, and physical education coordinator Lori Clinton.

Students went door to door Dec. 2 collecting about 1,000 cans in Dutton, Wallacetown, West Lorne and Rodney.

That night food was brought to the Daffodil Society in Dutton and the next morning students brought food to the West Elgin Community Health Centre in West Lorne and Calvary United Church in Rodney.

All of the food will stay in the area, going to clients or people using local drop-in facilities.

During the collections cans, boxed food and other non-perishables were piled up in the front foyer of the school.

Campaigns within the school raised 3,700 cans and students were given the option to buy their way out of class Dec. 2, which helped raise another 1,400 food articles.

If students spent $5 on food for the needy at the West Lorne IGA, they were allowed to get out of class for the day.

Extra money raised in the "buy out of class" campaign went toward hygiene products like toothpaste, soap and shampoo.

Students tried to collect 100 cans a day at the school and on the last day of the two-week campaign 2,000 cans were brought in.

Clintorr said teachers at the school provided incentives and challenged students to bring in more and more food.



FOOD DRIVE A SUCCESS JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Robin Cowan, left, Chris Knight, Jessica Kalita, Shawn Longe and Jan Kool were among the students who helped Lori Clinton and Dave Burk (crouching teachers) organize West Elgin Secondary School's annual food drive. Over 6,000 items were collected.



Veterans share stories JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Cliff Cooper, of Rodney shares some stories about his experience with the British Royal Air Forces from 1949-54 to Adam Clark and Dustin Cook, students taking part in a Year of the Veteran assignment June 2. History teacher Wayne Dibbits listens while the students take notes. About 22 veterans have been found for a book hoped to be published this summer.

WESES Grade 8 volleyball team undefeated

The WESES Grade 8 Boys Volleyball team has had an amazing season so far. In fact, they have won every tournament that they've entered. They started off the year by easily defeating Homedale in the finals of their home tournament on Oct. 23. The following weekend, they competed in the St. Thomas Aquinas Tournament in London.

The boys went undefeated in this tournament up until the final match when Jack Chambers took a game from them. However, the Eagles bounced back in the third game and ended up winning their second Championship of the year.

On Nov. 6, the boys played in the huge 24-team Forest City Tournament at Fanshawe College. The WESES Eagles once again played exceptional volleyball and once again defeated Homedale PS in the finals to win the gold. Throughout the day, the tournament organizers and other coaches commented on the team's high quality of play, sportsmanlike conduct and teamwork. A huge congratulations goes out to Michael Godfrey who was chosen as the tournament Most Valuable Player and Dylan Weselowski who received an Award of Excellence.

The boys were back in action on Nov. 26 at the White Oaks tournament in London. After losing to Westmount PS (last years TVDSB Champions), the team rallied together in the second round of the playoffs. They played with heart and determination, and they crushed Wilton Grove PS to win the tournament and claim their fourth championship. This time congratulations goes out to Troy Cook who was chosen as team MVP. This, the team's most difficult win, was a total team effort! Andrew McWilliam was unstoppable offensively; Adam Sutton and John-Greg Drummelsmith were consistently strong defensively; and Josh Dionne and Travis Kalita served, passed and blocked for key points.

On Dec. 7, the boys will go for the gold at the Southwest Regional Tournament, which will be held at WESS and WESES. After that, they'll set their sights on dethroning Westmount PS and winning the TVDSB Championship on Dec. 11. Go Eagles.

Literacy testing results improving at West Elgin, most local high schools

FOR THE CHRONICLE

Each of Thames Valley school district's five high schools in St. Thomas and Elgin recorded improved Grade 10 literacy test scores following the October, 2003 provincial exam.

Thames Valley District School Board released school-level results for the exam last Friday.

Local TVDSB test results (with previous year's score in parentheses):

West Elgin 79 (77)
Arthur Voaden 61 (52)
Central Elgin 90 (82)
East Elgin 56 (66)
Parkside 71 (70)

Across the Thames Valley district, 68 per cent of students passed both the reading and writing components of the test, the same number as October, 2002.

London schools recorded the highest and lowest scores — 96 and 11 per cent, respectively. The lowest score was recorded by a school with programs for special students.

The provincial average for the test was 70 per cent, compared to 67 per cent the year before.

Meanwhile, Grade 10 students at St. Joseph's High School in St. Thomas scored 82 per cent last fall, up from 77 per cent a year earlier.

Across the London District Catholic School board, 79 per cent of students passed, compared to 72 per cent in October, 2002.

The Chronicle

Citizens' Group pleased with meeting with Kennedy staff

The West Elgin Citizens' Group for Rural Education met with some of the Minister of Education's key advisors to discuss proposals to keep rural schools like West Elgin Secondary School open.

The purpose of the April 29 meeting was to address significant issues that are impacting rural schools and to come up with a solution that falls under the Excellence for All education plan.

The group is proposing:

- Development and implementation of a more comprehensive set of Provincial Guidelines for School Closings that incorporate a balanced view of the value and significance of rural schools.
- Expansion of the Grant Structure Overview/Student-Focused Funding Formula to include grants that ensure a fair and and an equitable level of funding for all Ontario students, addressing the needs of students from rural areas.

Mario Nigro, and Mary Ng, both policy advisors for the Minister, say they recognize the significant needs of rural schools and the negative effect school closures has on the education of the students, say the citizen's group in a media release following their successful meeting.

Concerned citizen, Norma Schnekenburger says she is encouraged to hear that the minister shares some of the same beliefs. She also says that she is pleased to hear that the policy advisors are open to explore ways to keep the school open.

Tracy Grant, Chair of the School Advisory Council is also pleased with the outcome of the meeting.

"We were encouraged by the policy advisors' invitation to work with them to further develop the ideas we presented during our meeting to turn them into actionable solutions," explains Grant in a press release.

A follow-up meeting has been set for June to further discuss the proposals.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

FAIRY TALES TOLD AT APS

Crack reporters Abbey Fleming, right and Hillary Jones, left, get the Big Bad Wolf's side of the story at Aldborough Dec. 17.



SILVER AND GOLD JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Jen Ford sings Berl Ives' Silver and Gold at West Elgin Secondary School's Coffee House on Dec. 10

EDUCATION 2004

Board waits for province

For the Chronicle

A list of Thames Valley schools slated for closing remains under wraps today after consultant C.N. Watson was able last night to present only an interim report to the school board.

Education director Bill Bryce said C.N. Watson's study of long-term accommodation needs can't be completed until the provincial government comes up with rules it says it is developing for school closings.

And that means that six accommodation reviews currently under way in the school district including Elgin, remain on hold.

"It is hard to wait and wait," Bryce sympathized with communities whose schools are in limbo.

"But experience has taught us it is better to wait a little while and get it right, than to rush and get it wrong."

Faced with a decline in enrollment, Thames Valley commissioned the $65,000 study last fall.

C.N. Watson is reported to have identified 60 schools for closing.

But none was named last week. The interim report discusses closings only in broad terms, saying they present "an opportunity to significantly improve programs and facility environments ... through rationalization of this surplus space ... ."

C.N. Watson says Thames Valley has 5,500 surplus classroom spaces — about four per cent of the district's inventory.

And responding to London trustee Peter Jaffe, report author Cynthia Clarke said the school board cannot avoid closings.

"Can we just go on the way we are?" Jaffe asked. "Is the status quo an option?"

"I don't believe so," Clarke replied.

Nonetheless, her report lacked the numbers for areas outside of London that Elgin trustee Linda Stevenson said she needs to be able to talk to local school communities.

"I'm disappointed it wasn't separated at this point."

The C.N. Watson report lumps St. Thomas and all of Elgin together in its discussion of elementary school enrollment; and St. Thomas and Elgin, and Middlesex and Oxford counties in its projection of secondary school populations.

Clarke said she would provide a break-out.

School closings aside, the C.N. Watson report calls on the school board to consider reorganizing some high schools into Enhanced Learning Centres, with specialty programs geared to local job markets.

For St. Thomas and Elgin, that could include health sciences and entrepreneurship, as well as agriculture.

And C.N. Watson also suggests the creation of school campuses, where senior elementary and high schools co-exist in some way, linking programs and sharing some facilities.

Please see Report, *page 2*

The Chronicle

Student's struggle with disability hits home

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

Mandy Wright doesn't want her son Blake to suffer with a learning disability anymore than he has to.

She wants him to get more one-on-one time with a teacher.

She doesn't want him to fall through the cracks.

She doesn't want him to be embarrassed in class when he can't read.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Scott Dunn, right, a learning support teacher spends an hour a day with Faith Renaud, left, and Blake Wright, centre practising reading and writing. The children are in Grade 3 and struggling with the alphabet, prompting parents to demand more one-on-one time.

Blake Wright is a below average student in Grade 3 at Aldborough Public School.

His test scores and evaluations show he has a reading level below Grade 1.

A learning disability, including problems with his hearing, has made it tough for Blake to learn to read in a classroom setting with 25 other children.

He receives one hour a day of lessons in a group of two to three students with learning support teacher Scott Dunn.

But Wright says it isn't enough and Blake is continuing to struggle when she doesn't believe he has to.

Blake's mother believes there is enough need at the school to have a full-time class for children with learning disabilities. She is pushing for the school board to create one.

Bill Tucker, superintendent of Special Education with the Thames Valley District School Board says he was in Elgin County last year to gather feedback from parents and develop a plan for special education.

He says the board does not perceive a need for intensive support classes and compared to other schools, Blake is receiving exceptional support.

Wright has been offered to send Blake to Mosa Public School where they offer smaller classes for children with behavior disabilities, but Blake doesn't meet the requirements.

Gord Park, principal at Aldborough suggested Mandy send Blake to St. Thomas where there is a greater population of special needs children with a classroom for their own but she doesn't want him to leave his peers and travel 45 minutes a day.

Wright wants her child to receive the schooling he needs where he lives.

She had a special teacher come to the family's home near Clachan once every few weeks, but she left to teach in Kitchener.

Blake is shy, and his mother fears he is becoming shyer and not participating in class because of his disability.

He is in a class of 25 students and Mandy said Blake has come home crying after being asked to read in class that day.

He has trouble hearing the teacher, although he sits at the front of the class, he can not pay attention to what the teacher says.

Mandy applied for a microphone system that the teacher can speak into and a speaker would be behind or on Blake's ear.

There is a backlog of applications to the province for the systems, said Tucker.

Wright said there are four other children at the school who need the hearing devices but the school board said they no longer have funding to purchase them for Aldborough.

Passionate in her fight, Wright has had meetings with many people involved with special education within the school board.

It is possible there is enough need between the local public schools to have a joint program to help children with learning disabilities, said Park.

Tucker said the classroom teacher programs the vast majority of students with learning disabilities.

He understands parents need to advocate for their children but parents should work within the school to help the student.

Wright isn't satisfied with what she is hearing and has tried several steps to find Blake help.

She has written a letter for Ontario Minister of Education Gerard Kennedy and a speech for the next school council meeting, Nov 30.



RYAN MCLANDRESS/CHRONICLE

CREATIVE TOUCH

Rebecca Kalita works on a mural, one of several new projects being completed by senior art students in the West Elgin Secondary School's ongoing wall mural project.

Newest murals take shape

RYAN MCLANDRESS
for The Chronicle

The latest generation of art students is leaving their marks, literally, on the walls of West Elgin Secondary School.

With the help of a group of senior art students, new murals are being painted around the school.

Ruthann McLagan, the Art Department Head at West Elgin says it gives students a chance to leave their own mark on the school.

"There are no guidelines for what they have to paint. It is up to them to decide what they want their mural to be about."

She says that the painting of murals has been going on for more than 20 years when students started painting the department names on the hallway walls. Soon after, the students were given permission to start decorating the halls with various murals.

Since then, the walls have been painted and repainted over with various murals by senior art

Continued on Page 2



SCOTT HILGENDORFF/CHRONICLE

ON THE RUN

Andrew Evans completes the 400 metre 12-year-old boys' race at West Elgin Senior Elementary School on Friday. He placed second in the race.

Students holding coffee house France trip

History and French students are planning a concert with music, stand-up comedy, poems and more at West Elgin Secondary School's cafeteria tomorrow night Dec. 10 at 7 p.m.

The students want to go to France in March and are raising money with the coffee house to offset costs.

Katie King, organizer of the event, said it will be an intimate show with local talent many people haven't heard before.

She can't wait to go to France either.

She plans on pursuing fashion design after high school and says France is the premiere place for new fashion trends.

"It's au couture," she says.

For 19 days students will see historical places such as Versailles, the l'Arch Triomphe and significant war places.

Jessica Dupuis is interested in seeing the museums and places she has read about in history class.

She hopes they can raise more money for more excursions.

"It's going to be amazing," she says.

Carman Lasson from West Elgin Dramatic Society will do stand-up and Eva Martin will sing. There will also be student bands performing poetry readings.

EDUCATION 2004

Wait is on for future of schools

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

It's now a waiting game as the Thames Valley District School Board and the local school accommodation committee await word from the province on just how exactly schools will be funded.

While the committee's work is done, recommending to the school board that no schools close and that a proper distribution of funds to provide adequate programming is needed, Tracy Grant, one of two West Elgin Secondary School representatives on the committee said they have not disbanded.

> 'THERE IS A REAL CONCERN THAT UNLESS THERE IS A REAL CHANGE IN THE RURAL SCHOOLS' FUNDING, WE ARE TARGETED,"
>
> — Tracy Grant

The committee was tasked with looking at school accommodation issues at WESS and high schools in Glencoe, Strathroy and Parkhill with a starting point being the possible closure of Glencoe District Secondary School.

After several attempts to have board administration remove any suggestion Glencoe's high school be closed, the committee was able to present to the board a set of recommendations that supported keeping all four schools open with detailed information gathered to show the board there is no money to be saved by closing any of the schools.

The recommendations were the culmination of months of work looking at how to fit the network of schools into a complicated, flawed funding formula.

The formula gave funding to schools based on the number of students per square footage and since the accommodation study began, the new provincial government placed a moratorium on any school closures.

It's placed the board in a holding pattern waiting for work.

Meanwhile, the report has been given back to administration for further review, despite having been reworked by administration and the committee at least three times now.

How the board will receive the recommendations will depend on what the Ministry of Education decided.

It was originally expected, Education Minister Gerard Kennedy would make an announcement about school funding changes at the end of March.

Grant said there is no word as to when the province will announce how it intends to handle school funding.

While they wait, she said, the committee intends to try to

Continued on Page 3



Tricia Herbert, seated, top right, of the Elgin Association for Community Living works to recruit some West Elgin Secondary School students at a volunteer fair organized by the school.

Chronicle photo

More volunteers needed to relieve local burnout

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

Within the organizations themselves and within the community, it's the same small group of men and women who turn out over and over again to volunteer, say local volunteers.

"Everybody seems to be very busy and wearing several hats," said John McIntyre of the Wallacetown Optimist Club.

At least, that was the hat he was wearing Thursday at West Elgin Secondary School's volunteer fair.

The fair was held to give the community an opportunity to promote their organizations to high school students who are required to volunteer 40 hours before they can graduate high school.

It was also held to help the students find volunteer projects and, combined with classroom discussions before the fair, to help them see the importance and need of volunteers in their community.

McIntyre, a retired WESS secondary school teacher has a long history of volunteering and is currently involved in seven different organizations in western Elgin County.

He said it's a struggle to attract new members to the club and finds that people are too busy with work and families to get involved.

A victim of burnout himself a time or two, McIntyre said it happens because it falls to the same group of people within an organization to help out over and over again.

With many organizations facing declining membership, there becomes fewer and fewer people to do the work.

He said about 50 per cent of the Optimist Club membership are active and that more membership would at least help increase the number of people actively organizing and running their projects.

Robert White says in the West Lorne Legion Branch, it's 15 per cent at best of its active membership that come out to help with events.

AR 1/04

Continued on Page 2

High school fates put in Kennedy's hands as board waits for moratorium results

For The Chronicle

The future of small high schools in the Thames Valley District School Board is in the provincial government's hands.

That's the message trustees want delivered to education minister Gerard Kennedy, after they deferred consideration last Tuesday of an accommodation review committee's report on Norwich District High School, and quickly dispatched findings of another review of four high schools including West Elgin Secondary School, to administration for comment.

"It's their responsibility to provide adequate funding for rural schools," Oxford trustee Graham Hart said.

In both reviews, the community-based committees have recommended rural high schools remain open in spite of small enrolment and the impact that has on the breadth of program offerings.

But the provincial government has said it is reviewing its education funding formula in recognition of the importance of rural schools, and has asked school boards to hold off on closures.

Elgin trustee Linda Stevenson said, "It's very hard to have a discussion with the unknown factor of what's going on with the moratorium."

Aldborough students learn about Flat Stanley

The Grade 2 students at Aldborough Public School have been reading the novel Flat Stanley by Jeff Brown.

In this story a boy gets flattened by a bulletin board and travels by mail to visit a friend.

Dale Hubert, a London teacher, has taken this character and created a Web site where schools and other groups are encouraged to send Flat Stanley to different places in the world.

This has become such a popular project that the publishers of the novel include a paper Flat Stanley at the back of each book. Flat Stanley has travelled all over the world with children and different famous actors and actresses, appeared on the Rosie O'Donnell show, and has even flown on a space shuttle.



Dale Hubert was at Alborough school to talk about the Flat Stanley project.

The project has encouraged communication with other cultures and given many children an insight into how others around the world live.

Each child in the Grade 2 classes sent Flat Stanley to someone they knew.

Flat Stanley has travelled from Rodney to different Canadian provinces such as British Columbia, Alberta, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland, to many towns and cities in Ontario and to such countries as England, India, Makau, Australia, Belgium, and the Netherlands.



ALL THAT JAZZ — CONTRIBUTED

Mike Bennett, Jen Pinder and Mark Godfrey warm up for their performance Saturday night at the West Elgin Choral Society's 1950s-style concert at West Elgin Secondary School.

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EDUCATION 2004

World issues class raises money for Canadian Land Mine Foundation



Phil Fordham and Andrew Okolisan were among the West Elgin Secondary School students who took part in a buy-out that let them leave class to go skating in support of a world issues class fund raising project.

JAN.15/04 *Chronicle photo*

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

Challenged to make a difference in the world, about 100 West Elgin Secondary School students turned out for a fund raising skating event Friday at the West Lorne Arena.

"I think it was a big success. There were a lot more kids here than I thought there'd be," said Adam McKillop, whose Grade 12 world issues class organized the event.

> "WE HAD SOME FUN, MADE SOME MONEY FOR A GOOD CAUSE AND IT WASN'T THAT DIFFICULT,"
>
> **— Jan Kool, Grade 12 world issues student**

Students could pay to leave school an hour-and-a-half early to go skating Friday afternoon with the proceeds going toward the Canadian Land mine Foundation.

The idea stemmed from a unit in the world issues class about quality of life in the world.

"We looked at poverty and how developing nations are affected by it," said Jennifer Nielsen, who teaches the class.

From there, students examined other factors that cause a poor quality of life from war to economic factors.

The issues seemed overwhelming and far away to the students but she said to them, "It's not like we can't do something about it."

She challenged the students earlier in the year to come up with a project that could help make a difference on a world-wide scale.

"The whole purpose was to gain awareness of world issues and have the whole class do something about it, rather than just accept that (bad things) happen," said Nielsen.

Jan Kool, another student in the class suggested the skating idea.

They had heard from a guest speaker from Toronto, representing the Canadian Land mine Foundation that helps find and dispose of land mines littering countrysides after conflicts and wars.

The class decided to donate the money raised to this project.

Kool said it was surprising to realize just how easy it was to do something that could help people in another country.

"We had some fun, made some money for a good cause and it wasn't that difficult," he said, adding it only took about a half-hour to put the project together.

Together, they raised $400 following $100 in expenses.

Half pints bring big message

By Suzanne McGregor
The Chronicle

No matter what obstacles you must overcome, your dreams and goals are all achievable.

This was the message delivered to the students, staff and parents at St. Mary's School in West Lorne on Friday by "The Canadian Half Pints".

Averaging about four-feet tall, the Canadian Half Pints travel across Canada, visiting three schools a day, 200 days of the year, all in fun.

But part of that fun is helping kids gain a new appreciation for the value of not letting appearance or differences stand in the way of friendship, fair play and fulfilling your dreams.

The team is owned by Phil "Whipper" Watson, a champion wrestler, and son of wrestling champion "Whipper" Billy Watson, whose fans of his generation knew him not only for his ability in the ring, but his fund raising and crusading for children with physical disabilities.

The spokesperson for the team visiting St. Mary's on Friday was Stewart "Speedy" Downs who grew up in Ridgetown.

Stewart's father was a midget wrestler, Murray "Little Bruiser" Downs, and this is how "Speedy" met Phil "Whipper" Watson.

When he was 16, Speedy went on the road with the team, finishing his education on tour.

Now he is the team's leading three-

Continued on Page 3

The Chronicle

Enrollment up at WESS, grand reopening soon

By Larry Schneider
West Elgin Secondary School Principal

West Elgin Secondary School is back in session for the 2004-2005 school year, and is indeed a very active place. Our enrollment is up even more, to 552 students, with many new families having moved into the area.

This is the highest enrollment we have had for quite a few years, and the place has a happy, full feeling to it.

The school is busy all day long, from early morning practices and band rehearsals starting at 7:30 a.m. to after-school practices and tryouts for football, volleyball, basketball, field hockey, cross-country and golf.

Students are busy with their studies, seeking extra help at noon from the mathematics teachers and others, and taking part in various extra-curricular activities. We are very proud of the students who recently brought back the United Way truck pull school championship from St. Thomas, the students and staff who entered teams into the Rodney-Aldborough Fair's Farm Olympics, and to the many students whose art work will now be seen by the public, as WESS and the murals in it halls have now been included in the "Wet Paint! Murals in Elgin County" brochure put out by the Tourist Association.



Larry Schneider

Our first early report for Grade 9 students will be sent home with students on September 28, followed by a Grade 9 Parent Interview Night on October 6. The first report for all students will be issued on October 26, with a Parents' Night being held on October 27.

We welcome back to WESS Mr. Mel Moniz, as our new Vice-Principal. Mr. Moniz was previously a tech teacher and the Head of Technology here. We also welcome Mr. David Machado here to teach Mathematics for this year, and Mrs. Mary Ann Charron, who is returning to us from A.B. Lucas SS.

Grade 9 welcoming day will be held on Friday, September 24, as will our first dance of the year. Our Commencement exercises will be held at 1 p.m. on Saturday, October 30.

We are very happy and excited to have two brand new science labs, rooms 19 and 20, which have been totally refurbished by the Thames Valley District School Board, as well as new air cleaning and conditioning systems in all four of our science labs.

Stay tuned for word of the official grand opening of this revitalized area of the school. Several classrooms got new floors, blinds, bulletin boards and paint over the last few months, and we have new appliances in the family studies room, the science office and the gym.

We have new mats for high jump and for the Gym floor, and have had repairs done to the basketball nets, lifts in the auto shop, and electrical services throughout the building.

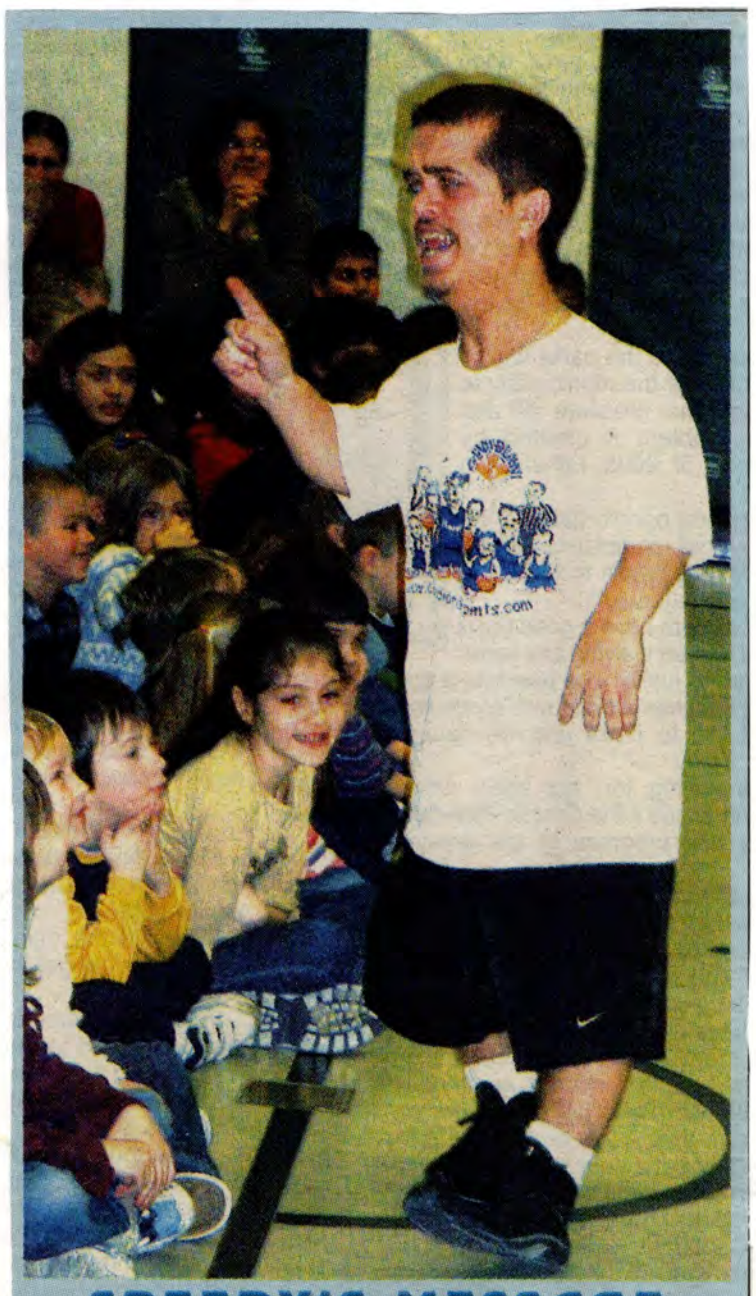
Grade 10 students and those who have been previously unsuccessful in writing it will write the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test on the mornings of October 27 and 28.

Students should be preparing for this test using the booklet given to them in the spring, plus by increasing the amount and varying the types of reading and writing that they do.

Last year 81% of our students passed the test on the first attempt, and we will again this year be having a Literacy Test Preparation Week from October 18 -21.

Your local secondary school needs your support. In my next column I will write about current financial needs of the school, including the need for a new scoreboard for the gym.

Reach me at: 768-1350



SPEEDY'S MESSAGE

Stewart "Speedy" Downs of The Canadian Half Pints shares an inspiring message with students at St. Mary's School in West Lorne Friday.

Chronicle photo

EDUCATION 2004



ANGELIC CAUSE...

Snow Angels Spreading Hope was the name of the event that took place across the Catholic School board Monday. In West Lorne, 221 students and staff joined schools across the board in making snow angels at 2 p.m. The goal was to set a Guiness World Record while also prayerfully giving support to the board's Supervisor of Recreation Programs and Resources, Hans Janssen. The 26-year employee is battling cancer.

Chronicle photo





CHATEAU LA ROACH...

Members of West Elgin Secondary School's Wildcat Theatre presented the dramatic comedy, "Chateau La Roac
A dinner was offered to the public before the Friday night performance. The production was also run during
week for students to enjoy.

Chronicle ph

Public unites keeping rural schools alive

FOR THE CHRONICLE

Wearing a paper yellow heart for her threatened high school pinned to her pullover, Glencoe District High School student Sarah Doub on Monday summed up the rural schools issue for her audience of about 80 people.

"They need to stop looking at calculators and start looking at us."

She wasn't alone in her criticism of a provincial education funding formula which is based on numbers of students and places next to no value on schools which are the cornerstones on their small communities.

"Everything right now is coming down to dollars and cents," said Doub, a Grade 12 graduate who returned this month to Glencoe for extra credits.

But she also was one of a number of people who proposed a variety of solutions at a public meeting Monday at the Dutton Community Centre on the future of rural schools, organized as a provincial moratorium on school closings comes to an end.

To preserve Ontario's rural schools is to promote a viable alternative in rural communities for the province's future, said Pat Smith of Burgessville, the chair of the Ontario Rural Council, an advocate for rural communities.

"We are part of the solution - not part of a problem," she said.

The 2-1/2 hour session featured prominent public education supporter Annie Kidder, a

Continued on Page 2

The Chronicle JAN 29/04

SPORTS





Rishi Sharma, above, and Stefan Agaba, right, both of Aldborough Public School were at St. Mary's School in West Lorne Friday for the Knights of Columbus Free Throw Competition. Students move on to district, regional and national competitions.

Chronicle photo

Free throw competition unfolds

The 6495 West Elgin chapter of the Knights of Columbus hosted a free throw competition Friday at St. Mary's School.

Local winners include:

Emily Varga - 10 yr girl - Aldborough School
Kyle Oliveira - 10 yr boy - St. Mary's School
Rebekah Brayton - 11 yr girl - St. Mary's School
Rishi Sharma - 11 yr boy - Aldborough School
Brodi Jewell - 12 yr girl - WESES
Allan Percival - 12 yr boy - WESES
Alanah Sutton - 13 yr girl - WESES -
Nadia Kelman (runner up) St. Mary's.
Justin Hwang - 13 yr boy - St. Mary's School
Kim Kriter - 14 yr girl - WESES
Robert Nute - 14 yr boy - WESES

Kelman will move on to St. Anne's in Blenheim Blenheim District Jan. 31 in Sutton's place who cannot attend. The rest of the winners also advance to the district round.

EDUCATION 2004

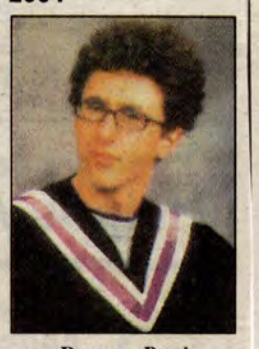
The Chronicle The Chronicle

Congratulations West Elgin Secondary School

Ontario Scholars



Daniyel Bint
From: Dutton
Parents: Eugene & Sandra
Attending:Mohawk College in Hamilton, Ont.
Enrolled in: Tourism and Travel



Donavon Boyd
From: Dutton
Parents: Tab & Cindy
Attending: Royal Military College
Enrolled in: Civil Engineering, Officer Cadet



JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Cameron McWilliam speaks to fellow graduates as 2003-2004 Valedictorian at the WESS commencement Oct. 30 in the gymnasium.



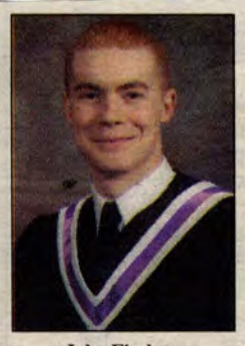
Kelly Charron
From: West Lorne
Parents: Ray & Barb
Attending: Brock University
Enrolled in: Child and Youth Studies



Chhavi Dhankar
From: West Lorne
Parents: Bir & Kuntal
Attending: University of Waterloo
Enrolled in: Mechatronic Engineering



Jenn Dupuis
From: Rodney
Parents: David & Wendie
Attending: Brescia College at UWO
Enrolled in: Visual Arts



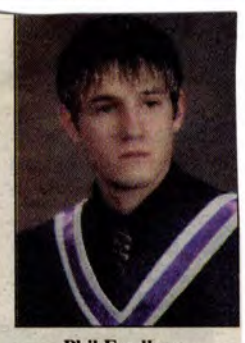
Jake Fischer
From: Rodney
Parents: Dennis & Sandra
Attending: University of Guelph
Enrolled in: Political Sciences



Ashlee Fleming
From: Rodney
Parents: Ian & Kim
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Mathamatics (Science)



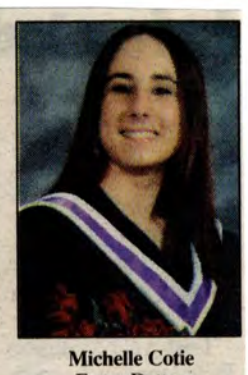
Jonathan Fleming
From: Rodney
Parents: Frank & Shelley
Attending: University of Guelph
Enrolled in: Turf Management



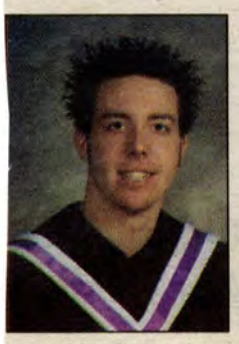
Phil Fordham
From: Rodney
Parents: Ron & Andrea
Working at: E.L. Fordham Motors in parts department
Plans to go to: Georgian College



Andrew Coates
From: Rodney
Parents: Nick & Jane
Attending: University of Waterloo
Enrolled in: Computer Sciences



Michelle Cotie
From: Dutton
Parents: Paul & Elaine
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Health Sciences.



Sean Grant
From: Dutton
Parents: Steve & Tracy
Attending: University of Guelph
Enrolled in: Honours BSC Psychology



Becky Gray
From: West Lorne
Parents: Bob & Elaine
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Visual Arts



Vanessa Gray
From: West Lorne
Parents: Bob & Elaine
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Music



Meaghan Hay
From: West Lorne
Parents: Curtis & Chris
Attending: King's College at UWO
Enrolled in: Social Sciences



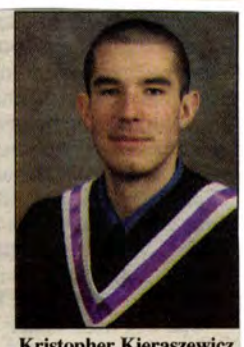
Melanie Howard
From: West Lorne
Parents: Elaine & Larry
Attending: Brescia College at UWO
Enrolled in: Social Sciences.



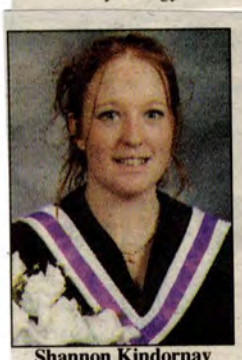
Cheri Hunter
From: Iona Station
Parents: Hugh & Nancy
Attending: Sir Sanford Fleming College
Enrolled in: Physiotherapy Assistant



Jessie Jones
From: Dutton
Parents: Marion & Stephen
Attending: University of Guelph
Enrolled in: General Arts and Sciences



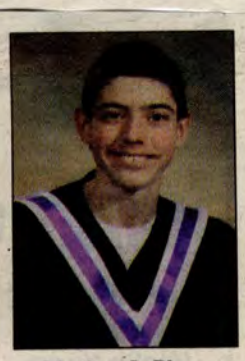
Kristopher Kieraszewicz
From: Rodney
Parents: Andrew and Laura
Attending: University of Waterloo
Enrolled in: Life Sciences



Shannon Kindornay
From: Dutton
Parents: Linda & Lambert Dekort and Louis & Carolyn Kindornay
Attending: Sir Wilfrid Laurier
Enrolled in: English and Political Sciences



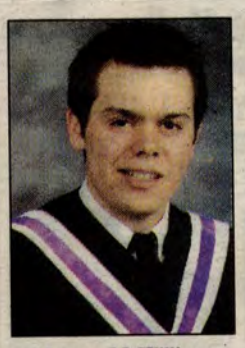
Rebecca Koscik
From: West Lorne
Parents: Riche Koscik and Heather St. Jacques
Attending: University of Toronto
Enrolled in: Arts and Sciences



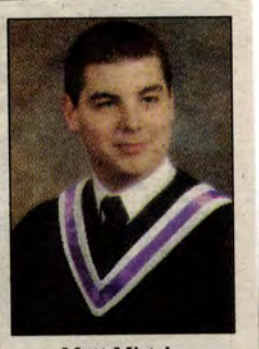
Matthew LeBlanc
From: West Lorne
Parents: Darlene Stacey & Phil LeBlanc
Working



Jane McGill
From: West Lorne
Parents: Brian & Nancy McGill
Attending: WESS



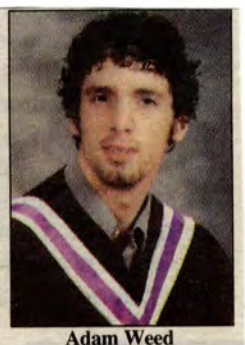
Morgan McWilliam
From: Dutton
Parents: Cameron & Anne Marie
Attending: UWO
Enrolled in: Biological & Medical Sciences



Matt Mistele
From: Rodney
Parents: Paul & Carol
Attending: University of Waterloo
Enrolled in: Software Engineering COOP



Carolyn Tunks
From: Rodney
Parents: John & Wendy
Attending: Queens University
Enrolled in: Arts and Sciences



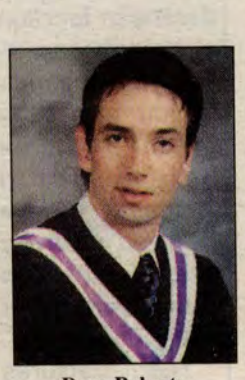
Adam Weed
From: West Lorne
Parents: Don & Marg
Attending: University of Guelph
Enrolled in: Wildlife Management



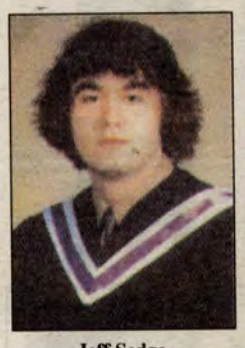
Carla Oliviera
From: West Lorne
Parents: Carlos & Ilda
Attending: Seneca College
Enrolled in: Law Clerk



Jennifer Pinder
From: Rodney
Parents: Janet & Bryan
Attending: Humber College
Enrolled in: Music



Drew Roberts
From: Wallacetown
Parents: Gary & Edie
Attending: University of Waterloo
Enrolled in: Computer Sciences COOP



Jeff Sedge
From: Iona Station
Parents: Jack & Debby
Attending: Fanshawe College
Enrolled in: Industrial Maintenance Millwright



Richa Sharma
From: Rodney
Parents: Anji & Shelly
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Medical Sciences



Erin Smith
From: Rodney
Parents: William & Deborah
Attending: University of Wetern Ontario
Enrolled in: Kinesiology

Jen Browne
From: West Lorne
Parents: Steve & Brenda
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Arts

Photo Not Available

EDUCATION 2004

Other graduates of class of 2004

Robert Bedford
Nathan Beke
Anthony Berkelmans
Bryan Blanchard
Carlos Brasil
Jenna Campbell
Angela Clark
Taryn Clements
Andrew Conway
Trevor Crawford
Clayton Deyle
Whitney Deyle
Cody Dinga
Donald Drummelsmith
Jonathan Dryfhout
Deniza Fagundes
Jayme Ford
Jennifer Ford
Kirk Geiser
Kendra Goos
Sean Grant
Brianne Hein
Scott Houston
Gregory Howse
Rebecca Kalita
Tiffany Kalita
Ashley Keane
Ashton Keith
Derek Kersten K
Mark Kovacs
Erin Lundy
Bob Mark
Johnathon Mclntyre
Kyle McLellan
Bruce McMillan
Beth McMurchy
John McWilliam
Katie Nute
Stacey Oliveira
Natasha Parish
Stacey Penney
Anita Pessoa
Ryan Petz
Aaron Reed
Megan Regnier
Jeremy Ritchie
David Rivard
Nicole Ross
Kelly Ryan
Eric Sanderson
Angela Sanford
Karl Schramowsky
Ryan Sinclair
Megan Slaats
Robert Thomson
Alexandra Trudell
Jeremy Vandyk
Matthew VanDyk
Robyn Vanoirschot
Karon Waite
Ashley Welch
Johnathan Woolse

Learning continues on with life after high school comes to an end

Exert from Valedictorian speech by Morgan McWilliam

From our teachers at West Elgin we have learned a lot of things on a variety of topics. In my opinion there are two important concepts we should take from high school. First of all, we learned to think for ourselves, rather than being told what to think. This idea is best stated by Aristotle, "It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it". Rote memorization is a great talent, but accepting things we are taught without question or thought isn't learning at all. The second most important idea we learned, more from experience than formal schooling, was that there are many untested morals and values along with our academic knowledge that we learn not for school, but for life after school. This idea is enshrined in our school's motto, "Non scholae sed vitae discimus". Along with this idea goes the idea that education doesn't end with school. Most of us have always known education doesn't end with school. We know this because it never began at school, but at home with our families. By the time most of us started school in JK or Grade 1, we had learned enough from our parents and families to qualify for a PhD in being a child and human. We had learned how to tie our shoes, eat by ourselves, and, most importantly, we couldn't defy gravity at significant heights by flapping our arms. So, we were educated at school and continued to be educated at home. Up through high school this continued, all the while we received the love, encouragement, and support we had always received from our parents. Anyone who played sports as a child or young adolescent is certainly familiar with the pre- and post- game chat Dad, or sometimes Mom, administered on the way to and from the games. There was always the usual give 110 per cent, teamwork, have fun, or you need to improve this. We may not have always appreciated this advice and encouragement; but, looking back at sorts and other extracurricular activities in high school, this was the stuff we needed to hear to keep us motivated and desiring improvement, especially after tough losses or setbacks.

Ontario Scolars Returning to West Elgin Secondary School

Jayme Ford, Joshua Giles, Craig Hoglund, Jan Kool, Hilary Kriter, Katie Lyon, Adam McKillop and Joleen Peternal

EDUCATION 2005



Back to school JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Students board the bus at B&J Variety in West Lorne Tuesday morning on their way to Aldborough Public School for their first day back.

WEST given reprieve

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

West Elgin Secondary School scored a partial victory last week shoring up bridge funding for a temporary educational assistant.

At stake, the Wildcats Employment Skills Training program for high risk students that would have otherwise dropped out of school or struggled meeting academic requirements.

Starting on the first day of school, this week one EA will be in the classroom with students.

"This is not the full step where we want to be but it's better than not having an EA at all," said Principal Larry Schneider.

In the spring, the high school was allocated zero EAs, which would have reduced significantly the amount of support students in the WEST program would have received.

Members of the school's council and trustee Linda Stevenson went to bat for the school requesting at least two EAs to support the program.

At the board meeting Aug. 30, a motion was passed to table the special education budget for six weeks and find a stable source to fund EAs at WESS.

Meanwhile, Schneider received bridge funding for that six weeks from his superintendent Don Blair.

During budget deliberations last month the special education department with the Thames Valley District School Board received an extra $600,000 to offset a budget deficit.

Still that did not solidify funding for the WEST program.

"We hope that when things come off the table, we'll have long-term funding for EAs," said Schneider.

He added this year, WESS has the highest enrollment he's seen in his 22 years with the school.

"If it's not 600 students it's 599," he said.

Students trying to get to co-op jobs having to find their own transportation

from page 1

"The board policy is for safety reasons. They want to know and be aware of where the students are going," said St. Mary's Principal John Lavereau.

One St. Mary's student was in walking distance to school but went to Dutton Day Care after school.

The child was not allowed to take a bus to Dutton because of the policy.

Pam Parezanovic said the policies have made it tough for St. Mary's parents from Dutton to use the day care's after school programs.

However, students are being dropped off from St. Mary's at Dunwich-Dutton Public School and then walk with a counsellor to the day care.

Twice this year, parents have appealed to change the policy for their students attending West Elgin Secondary School.

Both incidents were resolved, says Principal Larry Schneider.

High school students often go to a part-time job after school, but not every day.

Luckily, students at the school have found transportation on their own from peers with vehicles, said Schneider.

Schneider said about 24 students have to rely on other modes of transportation to get to part-time jobs. Some of those students drive themselves into school anyway.

Schneider said the bus system in western Elgin County is one of the most effective in the world and has received attention from around the world.

With 22 routes, 1,200 students are going to four different schools and each bus is full with nearly 55 students said Okolisan.

Any flexibility is hard to accommodate with buses being so full, and it changing stops for students adds pressure to the drivers.

"We can't cheat the system anymore," said Okolisan. "We used to drop kids off anywhere they wanted. It's not so much a liability issue. If a five year old gets off at the wrong stop, their parent is going to be really mad."

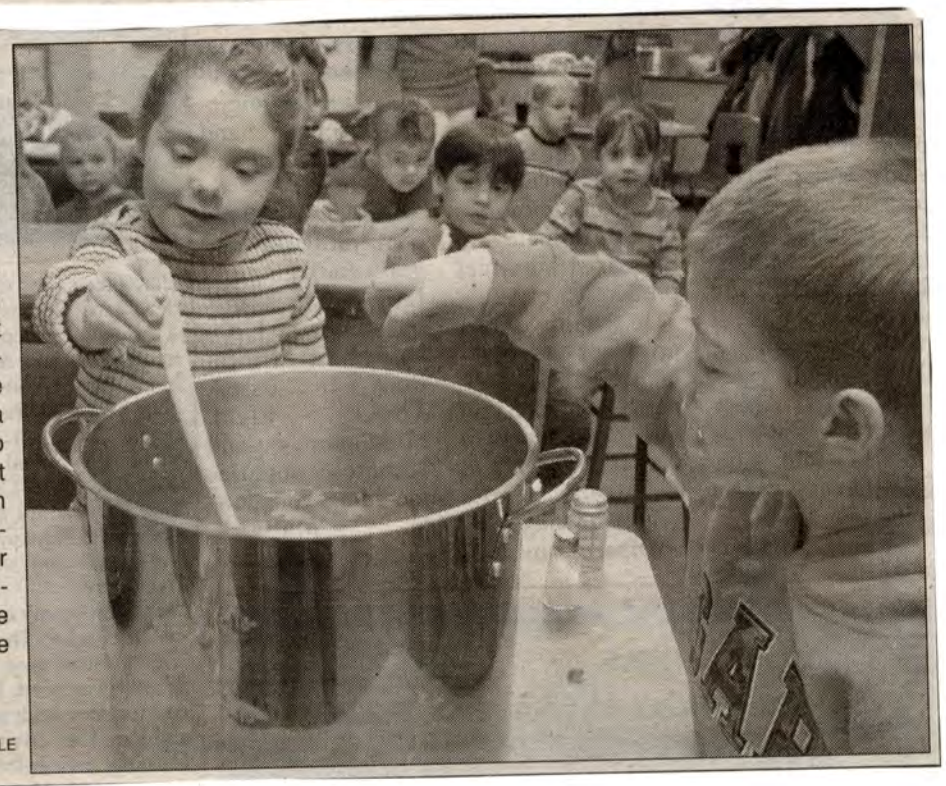
He said a stop could easily be created at the library if a little pressure was put on the board.

"There's some red tape you have to go through," said Okolisan.

Stone soup

Junior kindergarten students, Gracie Carr and Mason Lopes help prepare stone soup at St. Mary's Catholic School last week. The students had read the story Stone Soup by Marcia Brown in class. The story is about a poor man who wondered into town. All he had in the world was a stone. He wanted to make a soup and said it would taste better with other ingredients. So villagers all come together and added more ingredients to complete the soup. The students ate the soup at lunchtime.

JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE



West Lorne girls go undefeated



West Lorne Girls out run the league

Khloe Beer makes her move on Jordan Higgs for Shedden during a Girl's U-9 soccer match Aug. 3 in West Lorne. The home team won 7-1. JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

The West Lorne girl's under nine soccer team out ran and out kicked Shedden Aug. 3 to complete an undefeated season.

Thirteen games played, twelve games won and one draw remains on a stunning season.

"These girls are amazing," said head coach Michael Agbaba.

Practicing hard once a week and the fact they never stop running during the game, lifted the team above all the rest in the South Western Elgin Middlesex Soccer Association, said the coach.

"It's easier to coach girls who really want to play," said Agbaba.

In a 7-1 whopping over Shedden, goals came from all over.

Natasha Agbaba popped in two goals in the first half, following her mark as one of the team's top scorers.

Another top scorer, Khloe Beer also scored in the first half.

Shannon Pyka, Anastasia Machado and another top scorer Taylor Faircloth also scored.

The team let in few goals this year, thanks to excellent goaltending from Tina Lettner, who also scored in the final game.

Lettner played midfield after her team got a large enough lead and Carley Oliviera took over in goal.

Carley's dad Paulo helped as assistant coach this year.

Other players who helped the team accomplish an undefeated record were, Emma DeWit, Alyssa Paiva, Allison Rose and Sierra Poels.

Adding speed to the team were Meghan Azevedo and Meagan Grant.

Now, the team looks forward to a tournament in West Lorne Aug. 13.



WESS play a knockout knee-slapper JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

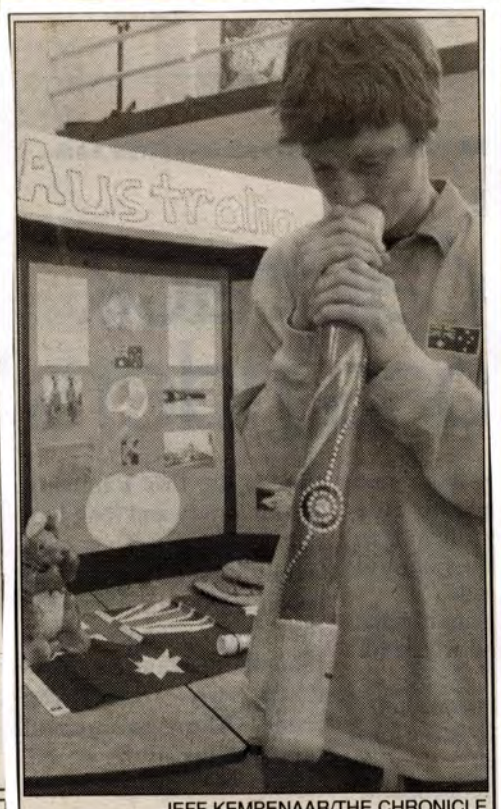
Mr.Maxwell (Mike Gilbert) fights boxer Herman Ninety-Volt (Tyson Smith) when he arrives home to find his house has been turned into a boarding house in the senior drama class of West Elgin Secondary Schools' production of the Boarding House Reach running for three shows this weekend in the cafetorium. See more about the light-hearted comedy on page 10.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

St. Mary's students raise money

The student body of St.Mary's school held a penny drive during WildLife Week and raised $400 to adopt nine endangered animals through the World Wildlife Federation. Here is Jackie Lawley and Matt Westelaken, leaders of the environmental committee at the school with teacher Jean Dupuis on the last day of school.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Tourism students show the world

Travel and Tourism students at West Elgin Secondary School presented their research projects in the cafetorium Jan. 25. Chad Cross plays the didgeridoo as part of his presentation on Australia.



APS reach volleyball finals SUBMITTED

The Aldborough P.S. Junior Girls volleyball team were finalists in the AA division at the TVDSB volleyball tournament on Dec. 14 in St. Thomas. Team members are (front row- left to right): Alexandria Shaw, Mary Jane Miller, Anna Kelly, Madison Redman, Amanda Bobier, Jennica Slaats (back row - left to right): Gina Toth, Brandee Blanchard, Abbey Fleming, Rebie West, Natasha Cameron, Taylor Gibson, Alex Goos.



Don't drink and drive poster competition SUBMITTED

Jessalyn Betsch, 11 years old won third in MADD Elgin County 's annual Don't Drink Poster Competition at Aldborough Public School. She received a certificate from Brenda Webber, a representative from the Elgin-St.Thomas Mothers Against Drunk



THE CHRONICLE

Wildcats win silver at WOSSAA

West Elgin Wildcats, TVRAA A senior boys volleyball champions and WOSSAA silver medalists, from left, are: laying in front with plaque, Brian Azevedo, Mike Gilbert; first row — Brian Lilley, Kris Oliveira, Aaron Cowell, Dave McWilliam, Mark Godfrey, Shawn Zimmerman; back — coach Kelly Welch, Kyle Mylrea, Jeremy Koscik, Mike Lyons, manager B.J. Schleihauf, Matt Soos, Wes McLandress, Dan Sutton.

West Elgin Gymnastic Club ready to roll this month

As fall approaches, parents are beginning to consider activities and opportunities that their children can participate in, without making the drive into London. West Elgin proudly hosts a Gymnastics Program that is parent driven, community sponsored and led by topnotch coaches. It runs for 12 week sessions, beginning Sept. 24, on Saturday mornings at the Rodney Recreation Centre. Last year, members came from Bothwell, Newbury, Glencoe, Dutton, Wallacetown and West Elgin.

This is a recreational gymnastics program which helps children between the ages of 4-12 focus on safety and fun. Both boys and girls develop skills and fitness, using a wide range of activities and equipment. A parent/tot program is also offered for children between the ages of 18 month – 3 years. Kindergym is for four-year-olds. 5-12 year olds are taught in a small group, with advanced skill classes being 1-1/2 hrs long. Equipment ranges from small balls, bean bags, hula hoops, skipping ropes, to large and small mats, mini-trampolines, uneven bars, high and low balance beams and the vault. Parents are able to watch the lessons while enjoying a coffee and social visit with one another.

Our coaches travel from the Forest City Gym Club in London. Their excellent leadership and patience with our children is what makes the program so enjoyable for all of us.

Along with a Trillium grant, several local businesses and service clubs have assisted in purchasing the equipment over the years.

Parents pay a registration fee, which covers the coaching time.

Each family is expected to assist with either set up or take down of the equipment three times over the session, but otherwise no extra fund-raising is required of the parents. If parents are unable to do the set up/take down, they can send a neighbour, friend or other family member in their place.

The support from the Municipality of West Elgin and the community at large is the key to our success.

This program does fill up, so if parents are interested, it is important to take advantage of the registration times on Aug. 25 and Aug. 26 from 6 to 8 p.m.; and Aug. 27 from 10 to 12.

We will not be able to accept late or phone registrations this year. If you have questions, please contact Michelle Milburn at 785-3007, but you must register for our fall session at one of the dates listed above. We encourage you to take advantage of this excellent community recreational program.

Fitness, fun, and friendship awaits your child.

EDUCATION 2005



Dynamos dynamite JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Chelsey Roberts, Hannah Hewitt and Shelby Neilson of the Dynamo Singers sing Christmas carols for fellow Dunwich-Dutton Public School students Dec. 15, in a special assembly. The choir, with director John Robertson delighted family the night before, performing with a brass quartet in the gymnasium.

Shelby Neilson is the granddaughter of W.I member Mary Liepmann.

Students to help with Web surfing

Two computer whizs are eager to teach the basics of using a computer at local libraries.

Computer education programs will be offered at the West Lorne and Dutton branch libraries starting this November.

Timothy Waite and Daniel Martyn, two students from West Elgin Secondary School have been hired to teach about 400 hours of classes over the next few months.

Free lessons will cover the basics of using a computer, word processing, slideshows, spreadsheets and web page design.

"Show me what you know and I'll show you more," said Waite, 15. "Show up and I'll take you from there."

Computers have become essential for research, business and communications, said Waite.

"The Internet has an infinite amount of information," said Waite. "It's just finding what you want and what is real."

More rural people have access to the online world with wireless Internet offered as of early this year.

"The idea is to teach the community. There are still seniors and other age groups that want to learn more. Businesses can get help building a web page," said Shelley Flemming at the West Lorne Library.

The Community Access Program has been offered in the area for about five years now, funded by Industry Canada.

Waite will teach youth on Tuesdays and adults on Thursdays from 4 to 5 p.m.

He is also available after school on most days and Saturday's 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Martyn will be available from 4 to 8:30 p.m. Mon., Tues. and Thursday as well as Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Snowmen JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Cassandra Gionet, Amanda Hood and Tyler Deyle cozy up with a snowman their class made at West Elgin Secondary School Dec. 14 during a snowman making contest. Using some water, the class managed to get the light snow packed.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Moms and daughters play for good cause

Kathy Gionet gives Tracy Donaldson a hard time as she attempts to toss in the ball during a friendly mother/daughter basketball game Nov. 10. About $60 was raised for Operation Christmas Child. The girls won.



WESES holds tournament JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Jonathan Godfrey volleys to Andrew Ford, centre and Zach Welch during for the West Elgin Senior Elementary School's senior boys team during the WESES tournament Nov. 12. John Dearness Public School won in the Grade D division.



WESS gets new van JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Tech department head George Cipu sits behind the wheel of a 2005 Dodge Caravan donated to West Elgin Secondary School's transportation program Dec. 16. Students in the technology program joined in the donation ceremony with representatives from the Thames Valley School Board and McNaughton Dodge who presented the van on behalf of Daimler Chrysler. The van can't be driven off school campus and will be used for learning about new vehicle technology.



St. Mary's holds fundraiser LISE VANDYK/CONTRIBUTED

St. Mary's Catholic School parents held the annual fundraising silent auction and dance at the Dutton-Dunwich Community Centre Nov. 19. Left: more than 250 came, bidding on hundreds of donated items. Right: Hogwild, from St. Thomas played music.





Do you hear what I hear? JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Mikayla Pelcz, left and Nathan Payne listen to Santa Claus, Caleb Hood, during the Aldborough Public School's presentation of December in Our Town. The musical followed a group of Christians collecting donations from different multicultural groups having various celebrations. Right: Billy Girling and Matthew Vanderloo play the maracas in the back while Jessie Hejna and Austin Perry also play musical instruments in a Spanish Fiesta.









WESES holds Winterlude of Music

With decorated saxophones, Molly Schleihauf, Nicole Collard and Michelle Parezanovic play Jingle Bell Rock with the West Elgin Senior Elementary School's concert band for parents Dec. 20. Right: Teresa Nesic plays the accordian during the winterlude.

St. Mary's takes friends and family on Journey of Love

Above: Emma McDonagh, Alicia McCready, Lina Bettencourt and Kailey McMillan sang Silent Night as shepherds along the long road to Bethlehem on the Journey of Love presented by St. Mary's Catholic School Dec. 22. Below: Merchants, Nick Johnston, Kyle Oliveira, Jessica Small, Sara Oliveira, Kelsey Gosnell and Kelsey Vandenburg sought sheckles at the market place.



Pipers piping JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

West Elgin Secondary School Junior band members, Nicole Carew, Bailey Lamon, Rashel Moriarty, Brooke Wilson and Sara Vandaele played Dance of the Reed Flutes by Tchaikovsky at the 2005 Sounds of the Season Dec. 7 in the school cafetorium.

Students learn lots about life while at West Elgin Secondary School

Exerpt from Adam McKillop's Valedictorian speech

So here we are. For most of us, we are no longer high school students. For all of us, we are still following our school motto. Many of us are unfamiliar with this phrase, and do not pay much attention to it; however, I believe it can help explain a lot about our high school experience and future endeavors. "Non scholae sed vitae discimus" which means, "We learn" not only for learning alone, but for life.

West Elgin is a part of life for every single one of us in here.

Past, present and current students do not have a choice even the smallest cut will bleed a little purple.

There is a certain level of pride in everyone who attends West Elgin.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Grads return for convocation

Jason Enns, Jayme and Jennifer Ford and Greg Gangle make their way into the West Elgin Secondary School gymnasium for commencement Oct. 6.

Graduating Class of 2005

Melanie Baptista
Daniel Barry
Ursula Beauchamp
Lindsay Besley
John Boughner
Christine Bray
Michelle Campbell
Sandy Campbell
Scott Campbell
Shaun Carroll
Stuart Clelland
Brandyn Cook
Robin Cowan
Joleen Crawford
Philip daCosta
Donald Deleary
Tracy Deyle
Katie Dietrich
Kathleen Drent
Jennifer Drummelsmith
Joshua Duplessis
Sarah Dyck
Christopher Emery
Jason Enns
Meghan Ford
Greg Gangle
Clayton Gillick
Brett Gosnell
Frank Hatch
Michael Hatch
Sabrina Howarth
BJ Huguenin
Gregory Hull
Stacey Johnston
Leslie Johnstone
Kimberly Joyce
Racheal Kalita
Clint Kennedy
Robert Kennedy
Lisa King
Craig Knight
Jamie Knowles
Jan Kool
Hillary Kriter
Kate Kuranyi
Dana Kuska
Amanda Leonardes
Sarah Lilley
Jennifer Loos
Katie Lyons
Julie Marcus
Katherine Mark
Daniel Martyn
Keith McCallum
Michael McCallum
Jonathan McDowell
Kyler McGaffey
Adam McKillop
Maryjo McWilliam
Whitney McWilliam
Emilie Moreau
Wade Munn
Michael Murray
Sarah Nagy
Ashlynn Newport
Elana Oake
Jeffery Okolisan
Lindsay Oliveira
Laura Park
Lance Peskar
JoLeen Peternel
Matthew Pfeifer
Kory Preston
Lucas Rastapkevicius
Colette Rastin
Lacey Reeves
Colin Reid
Tennille Robinson
Martin Sacher
Chantelle Sadecky
Troy Schliehauf
Melanie Schramowsky
Erica Silva
Trevor Sinclair
Carolyn Smith
Daniel Soos
Nichole Stallon
Scott Swan
Ruben van der Zon
Michael Vandenbrink
Savannah Vanraes
Bernardt van Zyl
Nick Vojin
Melanie Voll
Jeffery Walker
Chelsey Wilson
Dana Woolley
Sarah Woolsey
Shane Young



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

WESS students paint the town

Taylor Gosnell, Grade 10 West Elgin Secondary School, joined other art students to paint shop windows in West Lorne Nov. 25



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Student work sites visited

Janet Pinder, administrator at the Ontario Early Years Centre in Rodney explains her involvement with the WEST program to Jim Donnelly and Judith Aspinwall, two principals from Liverpool England. Left, Sabrina Howarth, told the principals about her experience in the WEST program, working at the OEYC

Former WESS vice principal elected warden

FOR THE CHRONICLE

To address challenges that threaten rural ways of life, Elgin county's 137th warden plans to re-establish a rural initiatives committee to demand reforms from senior levels of government.

Acclaimed as warden in a ceremony held Dec. 13 at the county administration building, Aylmer Mayor Paul Baldwin stressed the need to "constantly remind all of Ontario of their rural roots, their rural provisions and our rural needs."

In his inaugural address, Baldwin said he will urge council to reconstitute a rural initiatives committee to consist of past wardens John Wilson and Jim McIntyre, and West Elgin mayor Graham Warwick.

Their task will be to "examine and suggest rural initiatives council should take to advance the rural cause," explained Baldwin, the first Aylmer warden since Roger Vandierendonck in 1993.

To prepare for the next decade, Baldwin also promised to undertake a "visioning exercise" that will identify key demographic, social and economic trends that will effect Elgin.

The process will "encourage us to develop the strategic goals and tactical plans that will allow us to prepare for and to capitalize on those trends."

"I think that timely, strategic planning is vital for all Elgin and, in such cases as this, my Elgin includes St. Thomas."

Raised in St. Thomas, he and wife Jacquie have lived in Yarmouth, Aylmer, West Lorne and Rodney.

For 33 years Baldwin was on staff of the Elgin County Board of Education with stints as a high school history teacher in St. Thomas and Aylmer, a vice-principal at West Elgin Secondary School and Parkside Collegiate Institute before returning to East Elgin Secondary School as principal.



Congratulations
West Elgin Secondary School
Ontario Scholars



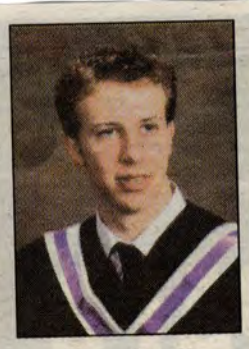




Christine Bray
From: West Lorne
Parents: Randy and Anne
Attending:University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Arts & Humanities-English



Jenna Campbell
From: Iona Station
Parents: Grant
Attending: University of Guelph
Enrolled in: Applied Human Nutrition



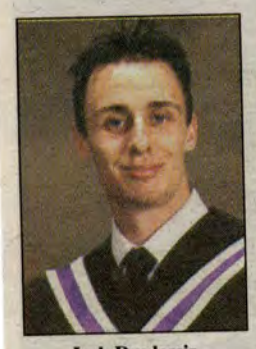
Shaun Carroll
From: West Lorne
Parents: Alan and Karen
Attending: University of Waterloo
Enrolled in: Honours Software Engineering, Co-op



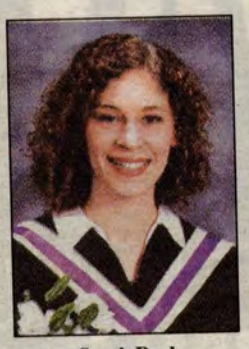
Taryn Clements
From: Rodney
Parents: Jeff & Sheraine
Attending: Fanshawe College
Enrolled in: Biological Technology



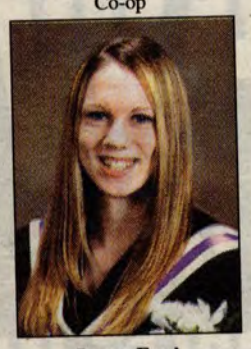
Jennifer Drummelsmith
From: Dutton
Parents: John & Lynda
Attending: Dalhousie University
Enrolled in: Kinesiology



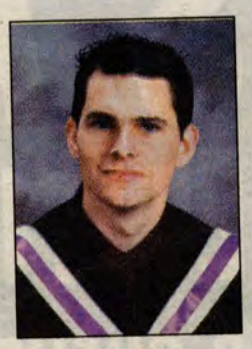
Josh Duplessis
From: West Lorne
Parents: Stephen & Kathy
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Kinesiology



Sarah Dyck
From: Dutton
Parents: Margaret
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Faculty of Arts: Humanities



Jayme Ford
From: Dutton
Parents: Wayne & Chris Horst, Jamey & Kim Ford
Attending: Wilfrid Laurier University
Enrolled in: Business Administration



Joshua Giles
From: West Lorne
Parents: Carole & Allan
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Engineering



Kendra Goos
From: Rodney
Parents: Dave & Beth
Attending: Wilfrid Laurier University
Enrolled in: Archeology



Michael Hatch
From: West Lorne
Parents: Marianne & Bob
Attending: University of Toronto
Enrolled in: Civil Engineering



Brianne Hein
From: West Lorne
Parents: Hal & Yvonne
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Honours Arts (Social Science)



Leslie Johnstone
From: Dutton
Parents: Linda & Bob
Attending: University of Guelph
Enrolled in: French



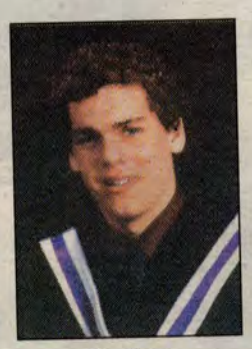
Craig Hogland
From: West Lorne
Parents: Wayne & Mary
Attending: University of Guelph
Enrolled in: Bio Medical Science



Ashton Keith
From: Wallacetown
Parents: Karen & Robert
Attending: Wilfrid Laurier University
Enrolled in: Concurrent Education



Lisa King
From: Dutton
Parents: Andrea & Dave
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Health Sciences.



Jan Kool
From: West Lorne
Parents: Connie & Marty
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Political Science



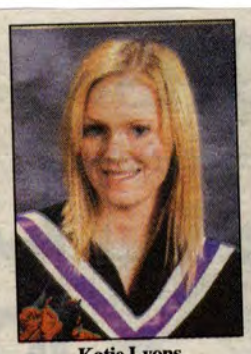
Hillary Kriter
From: Rodney
Parents: Kevin & Irene
Attending: UWO Huron University College
Enrolled in: Bachelor of Arts



Dana Kuska
From: Dutton
Parents: Darryl & Teresa
Attending: Kings University College
Enrolled in: Child and Family Relations



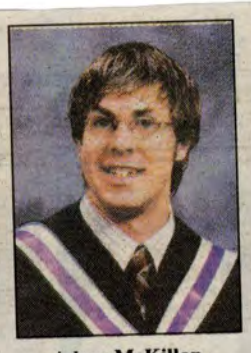
Amanda Leonardes
From: Dutton
Parents: Luis & Deb
Attending: Trent University
Enrolled in: Forensic Science



Katie Lyons
From: Dutton
Parents: Bob & Luci
Attending: Huron University College
Enrolled in: Social Sciences



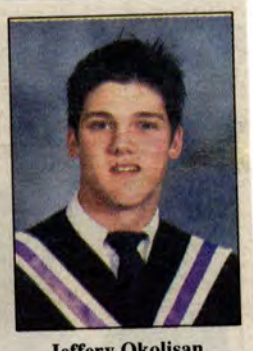
Jane McGill
From: West Lorne
Parents: Brian & Nancy
Attending: University of Guelph
Enrolled in: Bachelor of Arts-Sociology



Adam McKillop
From: Dutton
Parents: Dan & Janet
Attending: University of Guelph
Enrolled in: Bio Medical Science



Emilie Moreau
From: Dutton
Parents: Rosemary & Guy
Attending: Wilfrid Laurier University
Enrolled in: Bachelor of Arts-Technology



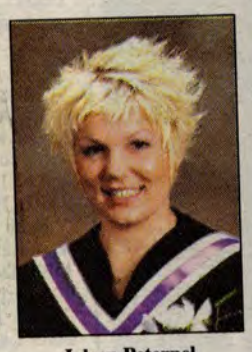
Jeffery Okolisan
From: Rodney
Parents: Bill & Cathy
Attending: Fanshawe College
Enrolled in: Tool & Die



Stacey Penney
From: West Lorne
Parents: Kim & Perry
Attending: University of Guelph
Enrolled in: Political Science



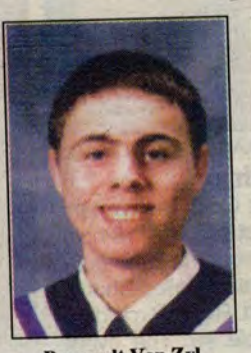
Anita Pessoa
From: West Lorne
Parents: Mona
Attending: McMaster University
Enrolled in: Social Science



Joleen Peternel
From: Iona Station
Parents: Joe & Beth
Attending: McMaster University
Enrolled in: Business 1



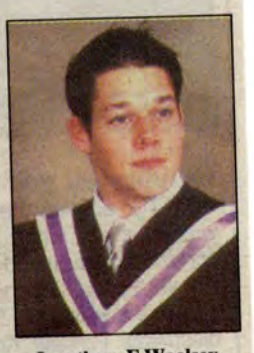
Megan Régnier
From: Glencoe
Parents: Steph & Judy
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Honours Bachelor of Arts



Bernardt Van Zyl
From: Dutton
Parents: Ferdinand & Dalene
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Civil Engineering



Chelsey Wilson
From: Rodney
Parents: Maria & Stan
Attending: Fanshawe College
Enrolled in: Pharmacy Technician



Jonathan F Woolsey
From: Rodney
Parents: Robert & Wendy
Attending: University of Western Ontario
Enrolled in: Engineering



Trees go home JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

June Ford's, left, Grade 4 class took home these trees last week. Gina Toth, Meghan Dennahower, Elizabeth Beer, Joshua Buchanan, Sabrina Fletcher, Brian Johnston (back), and the rest of the class planted seeds for the Trees For Tomorrow program earlier this year.



Flea market held at Aldborough PS JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Kyle Brown works out a deal with Samantha McCullough at the annual flea market held at Aldborough Public School Tuesday morning raising money for a trip to Backus-Page House.



The light of the New Year rises JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Kasey Kosikar guided her flock to Bethlehem on the Journey to Love, presented by St. Mary's Catholic School students in the cold Dec. 22. night.





Track and field at WESES JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Above: Paula Hejna jumps 1.15 metres during the girls high jump competition at WESES on May 20 during the school's track and field day. Below: Katie Feere puts everything she's got into the ball throw competition.

WESES TRACK AND FIELD RESULTS

High Jump

Girls 12: 1st Samantha Gallant, 2nd Madison Gosnell, 3rd Sarah King

Boys 12: 1st Ryan Ireland, 2nd Andrew Ford, 3rd Jason Carrol

Girls 13+: 1st Meghan Schneider, 2nd Jessica Varga, 3rd Ariel Taylor

Boys 13+: 1st Michael Godfrey, 2nd Josh Dionne, 3rd Kelsey McConnell

Long Jump

Girls 12: 1st Paula Hejna, 2nd Laura Szusz, 3rd Michelle Parezanovic

Boys 12: 1st Andrew Ford, 2nd Jason Carroll, 3rd Johan Nagy

Girls 13+: 1st Jessica Varga, 2nd Mary Jane Peternel, 3rd Jacqueline Lamb

Boys 13+: 1st Drew Lebedz, 2nd Michael Godfrey, 3rd Jordan Drouillard

Triple Jump

Girls 12: 1st Laura Szusz, 2nd Debbie Levesley, 3rd Michelle Parezanovic

Boys 12: 1st Brandon Caughell, 2nd Jason Carroll, 3rd Andrew Feere

Girls 13+: 1st Alana Maclean, 2nd Jessica Varga, 3rd Mary Jane Peternel

Boys 13+: 1st Michael Godfrey, 2nd Jordan Drouillard, 3rd Kelsey McConnell

Ball Throw

Girls 12: 1st Madison Gosnell, 2nd Samantha Gallant, 3rd Carol McMillan

Boys 12: 1st Brad Bint, 2nd Jason Carroll, 3rd Brandon Caughell

Girls 13+: 1st Brodi Jewell, 2nd Elysia Peskar, 3rd Chelsea Drent

Boys 13+: 1st Allan Percival, 2nd William Feere, 3rd Kyle Petric

400-metre

Girls 12: 1st Debbie Levesley, 2nd Nicole Campbell, 3rd Laura Pinder

Boys 12: 1st Andrew Ford, 2nd Jonathan Godfrey, 3rd Ryan Ireland

Girls 13+: 1st Jordan Emmett, 2nd Jessica Varga, 3rd Morgan McCulloch

Boys 13+: 1st Dylan Weselowski, 2nd Kelsey McConnell, 3rd Jason Eichenberger

800-metre

Girls 12: 1st Debbie Levesley, 2nd Nicole Campbell, 3rd Laura Szusz

Boys 12: 1st Andrew Feere, 2nd Brandon Caughell, 3rd Jarrod Baughman

Girls 13+: 1st Brodi Jewell, 2nd Teresa Nesic, 3rd Lauren McWilliam

Boys 13+: 1st Dylan Weselowski, 2nd Kelsey McConnell, 3rd Drew Lebedz

100--metre

Girls 12: Debbie Levesley, 2nd Madison Gosnell, 3rd Laura Pinder

Boys 12: 1st Jason Carroll, 2nd Andrew Feere, 3rd Brandon Caughell

Girls 13+: 1st Jacqueline Lamb, 2nd Meghan Schneider, 3rd Jordan Emmett

Boys 13+: 1st Jordan Dionne, 2nd Mike Parezanovic, 3rd Dylan Weselowski

1,500-metre

Girls 12: 1st Debbie Levesley, 2nd Nicole Campbell, 3rd Laura Szusz

Boys 12: 1st Andrew Feere, 2nd Jarrod Baughman, 3rd Jason Carroll

Girls 13+: 1st Brodi Jewell, 2nd Ashlee Aldred, 3rd Teresa Nesic

Boys 13+: 1st Kelsey McConnell, 2nd Jeremy Delouw, 3rd Darren Downie

What does it mean to be a Wildcat?

1. Are we not one of the only schools that have cattle beside our football field?
2. I am almost positive that we are the only school that has been contacted by NASA for strange craters in the student parking lot.
3. A classroom without windows? Only in West Elgin!
4. Classrooms that carry a different odor every day depending on the season.
5. Constant wet-paint signs around the halls but only around the dry paint.
6. Checking your family tree before you ask someone out on a date. *(From Adam McKillop's speech)*

EDUCATION 2005

School packed like sardines with new students

Life at WESS is back in full swing after another busy summer of upgrades and renovations. The school is literally humming with activity. We welcome all of the new Wildcats, those who have entered the school in Grade 9 (a very large incoming class), as well as a substantial number of students who have moved to the area or transferred here from other schools.

It is absolutely wonderful having so many students in the school, although between classes the hallways do feel a bit like a sardine can. Our current enrollment is about 590 students, up from 490 just two years ago. This allows us to offer an even broader range of courses and programming for our students, and several new extra-curricular activities.

I would like to congratulate our recent graduates on their many achievements over their time here at WESS and wish them well as they begin their post-secondary education, enter the world of work, or in several cases, return to WESS to take some additional courses. We look forward to seeing them again at our commencement ceremonies on Oct. 6 at 7 p.m. The students voted to try a new day and date, as many have been unable to attend commencement in recent years as so many post-secondary institutions have mid-term exams over the weekends in late October and early November. While the grads are home for the Thanksgiving weekend, we will also be hosting the launch of "The Scars That Never Fade", a new anthology of student writing and artwork which resulted from an initiative by WESPAC, which had our Grade 10 History students interview local veterans in the spring. Grade 12 Writers Craft students helped as well with editing and writing. This project commemorates the Year of the Veteran, and will be celebrated in the cafetorium at WESS at 6 p.m. on Oct. 7. All are welcome to attend, and copies of the book will be given to the veterans and the students. Copies will also be available for sale at a cost of $5.

At times during the summer the hallways of the school looked like a moon station, sealed off with orange tarps as the roof above was replaced.

Approximately one-third of the school's roof was replaced in July and August. Other renovations included the installation of a beautiful new display cabinet for our athletic plaques and trophies, constructed and installed by Calmbrook Construction; the installation of two new boilers to keep us warm during the winter; a new drain under the kitchen which will eliminate some chronic drainage problems, and new urinals in the boys washroom. New textbooks have been purchased for several courses, and we will shortly be receiving 25 new computers for our classrooms.

Earlier this year, a new head custodian. Ken Hiltgartner, started at WESS, and we have four new teachers on staff: Ms. Green, who is teaching science and coaching field hockey, Mrs. Langelaan, our new head of history, Mr. Lynds, who is teaching drama and English, and WESS graduate Mr. Peter Soos, who has joined the staff of the ever-growing technology department and is again helping to coach our junior boys volleyball team.

While one of our teachers is on sick leave, Mr. Rob Tait, another WESS grad, has joined our teaching staff. Mr. Corey Harmon joins us as our new computer technician, who we share with Glencoe District High School on an alternating day schedule.

This year's School Advisory Council (SAC) has already held their first meeting of the year, and will meet again on Oct. 11, at 6:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public, and will be held at 6:30 on the first Tuesday of each month in the staff dining room. We have several new members this year, and more are welcome.We look forward to a great year of collaboratively working together for the benefit of all here at the school.

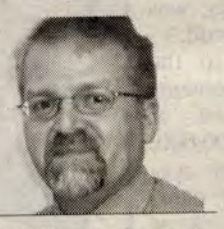
Fog, ice, or snow may cause bus delays or cancellations over the coming months, and students and parents are urged to listen to the local radio stations (630 AM, 97.5 or 95.9 FM) for news with regard to such occurrences. The special phrase which would indicate that our schools are involved would be: "West Elgin family of schools, or as part of a larger whole,"Elgin". Please listen carefully for such announcements, as they come directly to the radio stations from the bus companies. Please do not phone the school for such information. Families with Internet access may log on to the New PL's detailed site at www.thenewpl.com for up to date information about delays and cancellations, or the school board's web site at www.tvdsb.on.ca. Decisions to delay or cancel student transportation services due to inclement weather are made in the best interests of student safety. In all cases of student absence, parents should call our attendance line at 768-3888.

This year's Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test will not be written in October, as it has been in the past, but on one day, March 29, 2006.

Grade 9 students will have received their first Markbook achievement reports by the time you are reading this article, and our Grade 9 Parent-Teacher interview night will be from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. (with a 15-minute break at 5:45 p.m.) on Oct. 4, in the Cafetorium. Our first Parent Teacher night for all grades will be held on Oct. 26, at the same times.

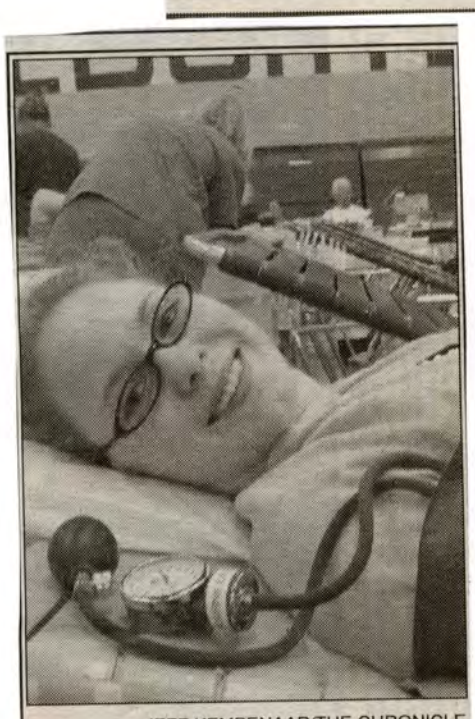
We have a full slate of teams and clubs underway, including field hockey (the team is off to a great start), football (who won their season opener at home against Arthur Voaden!), junior and senior boys volleyball, senior girls basketball, and golf. New or renewed clubs include the school newspaper and the environmental club. Students Council, the Music Council and the Student Athletic Association held a successful Grade 9 day on Sept. 23, and we had a great dance that evening. We hosted a blood donor clinic on Sept. 23 as well, with lots of student helpers.

COLUMN



Principal's Corner

Larry Schneider, 768-1350



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Blood donor clinic held

Dawn-Marie Bennett a Grade 12 student at WESS gives blood at a Canadian Blood Services blood donor clinic held at WESS Sept. 23.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Lakewood Trailer Park helps Aldborough food drive get going

Kyle Brown, Justin Wheeler and Marcel Wright, Grade 4 students at Aldborough Public School pile cans in the front lobby last week. About 900 lbs of food was donated by summer residents of Lakewood Trailer Park in Port Glasgow to the school for its annual food driving kicking off next month.



Veterans honoured at book launch JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Madeline Farthing, a veteran of the Canadian Women's Army Corp in the Second World War signs a copy of "The Scars That Never Fade" for Amanda Hood and Dawn Marie Bennett, two West Elgin Secondary School students that contributed to the Veteran Project 2005. Organized by the West Elgin Seniors Project Action Committee and staff at WESS, the book was launched at a special ceremony in the cafetorium Oct. 7. Each veteran interviewed for the book last spring, that was able to attend the ceremony was honoured. Afterwards, students, veterans and dignitaries socialized. The book sold out at the and orders are already being taken for the second print.

Principals from England visit WEST program

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Two principals from Liverpool, England toured local businesses training students in the Wildcats Employment Skills Training program Oct. 5.

A contingent of 11 principals and staff from the Sefton Local Authority came to visit the Thames Valley District School Board.

The trip's intention was to make links between the two education authorities as well as give the visitors a glimpse of best practices at the board.

As well, the principals got to see communities, parents and schools working together to help students reach their potential.

Please see Funding, *page 5*

WESS students learn about job safety and employee rights

Tiffany Terpstra, community program youth worker from Employment Services Elgin, facilitated a well-attended job safety workshop for students from the Wildcats Employment Skills Training program at West Elgin Support Services on April 1. Tiffany related horror stories in the workplace. The Young Worker Awareness Program focuses on "Seven things you'd better know." There are hazards in every workplace and you - the young and inexperienced worker - are especially at risk. You need to be able to identify the hazards in your workplace. You have the legal right to protect your health and safety. Your employer, your supervisor(s), and you all have legal responsibilities to make sure the workplace is healthy and safe. Your employer and your supervisor must ensure you have the information or required training and equipment you need to protect yourself. If you are injured or become sick at the workplace, you must report it to your supervisor or employer. It's not a game. You need to protect yourself. Tiffany made everyone aware of three basic rights. The right to participate in keeping your workplace healthy and safe. The right to know the hazards in your job. The right to refuse unsafe work. Other topics covered included, the law requires your employer, your supervisor, and you all have legal responsibilities to make sure the workplace is healthy and safe. An awareness video was shown to the students on the right to know and what happens when you refuse a task. Workerplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), symbols were reviewed. The WHMIS symbols tells you the kind of hazard in a container. Employees should be able to recognize each of these symbols and know what they mean.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

WESS holds plant sale

Chris Smith, left and Craig Bowery, Grade 12 Horticulture students at West Elgin Secondary School helped out at the plant sale Friday at the school greenhouse. The sale held May 13 and 14 raised money for the class and beautification projects around the school.

Track and field team returns to WESS

▶ *10 going to WOSSA*

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

For the first time in five years West Elgin Secondary School has a track and field team.

And the Wildcats have roared back into the fray, sending 10 athletes to the Western Ontario Secondary School Association track meet at TD Waterhouse Stadium in London May 17-18.

First time coach and teacher Danny Kajan was proud to see the 16 player team compete at the Thames Valley Regional event last week.

"We have some great athletes at WESS. They've been really committed," said Kajan.

The last five years coaches at the school have been busy with mainstay club teams, young teachers like Kajan and Teresa Dacoste, the other track coach stepped up to help the athletes train for local meets.

"I never had any expectations but I've been impressed to see the numbers of kids come out and put in an effort," said Kajan. "They've put in the time now they're seeing the rewards."

Going to WOSSA are Tyson Smith, Jon and Matt Dietrich and Robert Jones on the Junior Boys 4x100 relay team who posted a 51:31 time at the TVRAA competition in St. Thomas last Tuesday.

"I don't think we have a chance to medal but to be there will be good," said Robert Jones.

"I've never been to WOSSA, it's kind of intimidating," said Tyson Smith.

The girls are more relaxed, with many of them having gone to WOSSA in other sports.

Kaitlyn Duplessis, Jessica Kalita, Stephanie Dos Santos and Tracy Donaldson, the Junior Girls 4x100 relay team is going after posting a 1:01.10.

Kalita finished fourth in the junior girls high jump, moving on to WOSSA.

Tyson Smith moves on in the junior boys 100 metre sprint after posting a 13:13 sec run at TVRAA.

Matt Dietrich moves on for the midget boys long-jump after finishing third at TVRAA.

His brother Jon moves on for junior boys javelin.

Kaitlyn Duplessis moves on for junior girls long jump and javelin.

Her sister Jessica advances for midget girls javelin.

Jordan Gallant advanced in the midget boys javelin event after placing fourth throwing 29.36 metres.

Kajan said the athletes continue to work hard and some may have a good chance at advancing to the Ontario finals.

"We have some raw talent here and a lot of these kids are really competitive," he said. "The bar has been set higher now. We can go out and meet the bar and maybe even get over it."

Kajan has already been finding interest to continue the team next year.

"Some of these kids are real fireballs," said Kajan.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Health fair held at WESS

Jessie Lowes, right asks Elgin Community Nutritionist Charlotte McDonald a question about the Canadian Food Guide while Matt Nash, second right, Jeff Else, Matt Parezanovic and William Drummelsmith listen at the third annual health fair at WESS May 4.



Track team ready for WOSSA

WESS track and field athletes are at the line, during practice Monday night. This week 10 students were to compete at WOSSA for the first time in five years at TD Waterhouse Stadium in London.

Youth get answers to questions at annual health fair at WESS

West Elgin Secondary School students got answers on pressing health issues at the annual health fair in the gymnasium May 4.

About 22 social and health workers and advocates provided information on issues facing students from alcohol to the environment.

It was a chance for students to ask specific questions.

"There's a lot of things you wouldn't go looking for information about but it's all right here," said student Brittany Jewell.

Students received a health fair passport at the door which could be signed at each display and used to enter a draw.

Along with information pamphlets students received health and safety items such as free condoms and tooth brushes.

Addiction Services of Thames Valley quizzed the students on drugs alcohol and gambling.

Students got to try on beer goggles, which when worn distorted the students vision.

Students were challenged to walk a straight line with the goggles on.

Katy Miller found many of the displays boosted what she already knew.

However she learned a few new things.

"I learned what to do when someone passes out from being drunk," said Miller. "Roll them over on their side so they don't choke."

Many students hadn't heard this. Someone who has passed out may have alcohol poisoning said Cathy Irwin, an addiction counsellor.

"With prom and May 2-4 coming students may go overboard," she said. "If someone passes out, laying on their stomach or back, they could choke to death."

Students also learned about transmittable diseases from sex or unclean needles from piercing or tattoos.

"Some of the pictures were really gross," said Kirsten Landry. "They work."

Images on displays illustrated how bacteria can spread to an infection with out properly cleaning around piercings.

Kennedy calls for new era for small, rural schools

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

A new funding formula for small schools can be expected next week said Minister of Education, Gerard Kennedy at Ridgetown District High School May 9.

Kennedy was asked to come to Ridgetown by the Coalition of Small Schools, an advocacy group organized locally to help support the quality of rural education.

While Kennedy didn't drop any hints about the fate of the formula he said small schools will get adequate funding regardless of size.

"There is no longer a magic number. If it's a good school it will stay open," said Kennedy in a press conference held in the Ridgetown school library after the public meeting.

Listening was Sarah Doub, student at Glencoe District High School.

Her school is targeted for closure yet she said the rural atmosphere at her school has helped students achieve literacy rates higher than the board and provincial averages.

"After hearing Minister Kennedy, I am feeling more optimistic," she said. "Our school embodies what the entire board stands for."

"The most important thing we heard today was the formula will no longer be one size fits all." said Doub.

Students, Kory Preston and Craig Watterworth from West Elgin Secondary School presented the minister with post cards supporting rural, small schools filled out over the last few months.

A bus load of WESS students made the trip to Ridgetown to hear the minister and make sure he heard them.

"I don't know if it will make a difference but it is important that he hears a unified voice from students," said Michael Vandenbrink, WESS student. "In the long run the politicians make the decisions but if they see students care it will help them understand."

Kenny McMurchy, WESS student was impressed so many students came from other rural schools.

The minister "is getting to hear from the other side of the coin," said McMurchy.

Please see more about Minister Kennedy's visit, *page 3*

EDUCATION 2005

Small schools rally together

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

The province is changing the way school closure decisions are made, the Minister of Education Gerard Kennedy said at Ridgetown District High School May 9.

While Thames Valley District School Board is waiting for a report on how space in schools is being used, and specifically whether Glencoe District High School should remain open, Minister Gerard Kennedy said the province will support the board's decision as long as it follows new school closure policies.

School boards deciding to close schools are being urged by the minister to look at the impact on the community and educational strength of students.

"We want to support the school boards but they need to look closer at these studies," said Kennedy.

CN Watson is presenting the report on board facilities May 31 to trustees.

"Every recommendation from their report will be subject to our new policies," said Kennedy.

While he said the province will not be enforcing their policies, he said the province could look at legislation to protect schools from closing.

A moratorium on school closures was lifted by the province earlier this year but the province asked school boards to slow the process of closures.

"There is no benefit in closing schools," said Kennedy.

He said past governments have given money from two pockets, rewarding boards that build new schools with capital funding but not looking at the cost of transporting students from closed schools to the new schools.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

WESS represents
WESS student Craig Watterworth presents a box of postcards from people concerned about the future of small schools to Education Minister Gerard Kennedy as Kory Preston prepares to ask a question during a conference at Ridgetown District High School May 9.

Linda Stevenson, TVDSB trustee was at the conference and said the board won't be making any decisions based on the CN Watson report until next fall.

She was against the board moving forward with the consultant at first because the province said they were working on new funding formulas.

"When we get the new funding formula we're going to have to go right back and change the consultants report," she said. "It won't be in front of the board until next September."

Robbie McNaughton, chair of the GDHS council, said when the report is finished, he will need as many people as possible to go through it and jump into action based on its results.

He was trying to get answers on how the province will enforce its new policies on the school boards, who make the final decision on closures.

"Ideally I would like to see the province make the decision. Whatever this report finds, we're going to need people ready to do what it takes to protect our school," said McNaughton.

Kennedy said the province will not interfere with board decisions but hopes there will be more community involvement in decision making.

An appeal process has been developed by the province to give people a chance to ask the province to review any decisions made by school boards to close schools.

Stevenson said the province will definitely get a say in decisions to close schools made by TVDSB.

"It will be open to the ministry and the public for anyone to question," she said.



WESS clobbers Arthur Voaden
Wade Munn kicks the soccer ball towards the Arthur Voaden net in a league game May 6 at West Elgin Secondary School.



Aldborough students speak about their heros JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE
Students at Aldborough Public School held a speaking competition qualifing round on Feb. 3 . Taylor Cundy, Alex Kirshner and Ben Gormley, front row centre, received certificates. Back row left to right: Brandee Blanchard, Daniel Wittek, Abbey Fleming, Jessica DeGraw, Taylor Moorby-Blain. Front row left to right: Haley West, Madison Redmond, and far right, Bryan Johnston. Some of the students competed in the West Lorne Optimist Club's Oratorical on Tuesday, Feb. 22



Hoops for hearts JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE
Students at St. Mary's Catholic School raised money for the Heart and Stroke Foundation by collecting pledges and playing basketball May 6. Here, Vanessa Paiva protects the ball from Candace Conway.



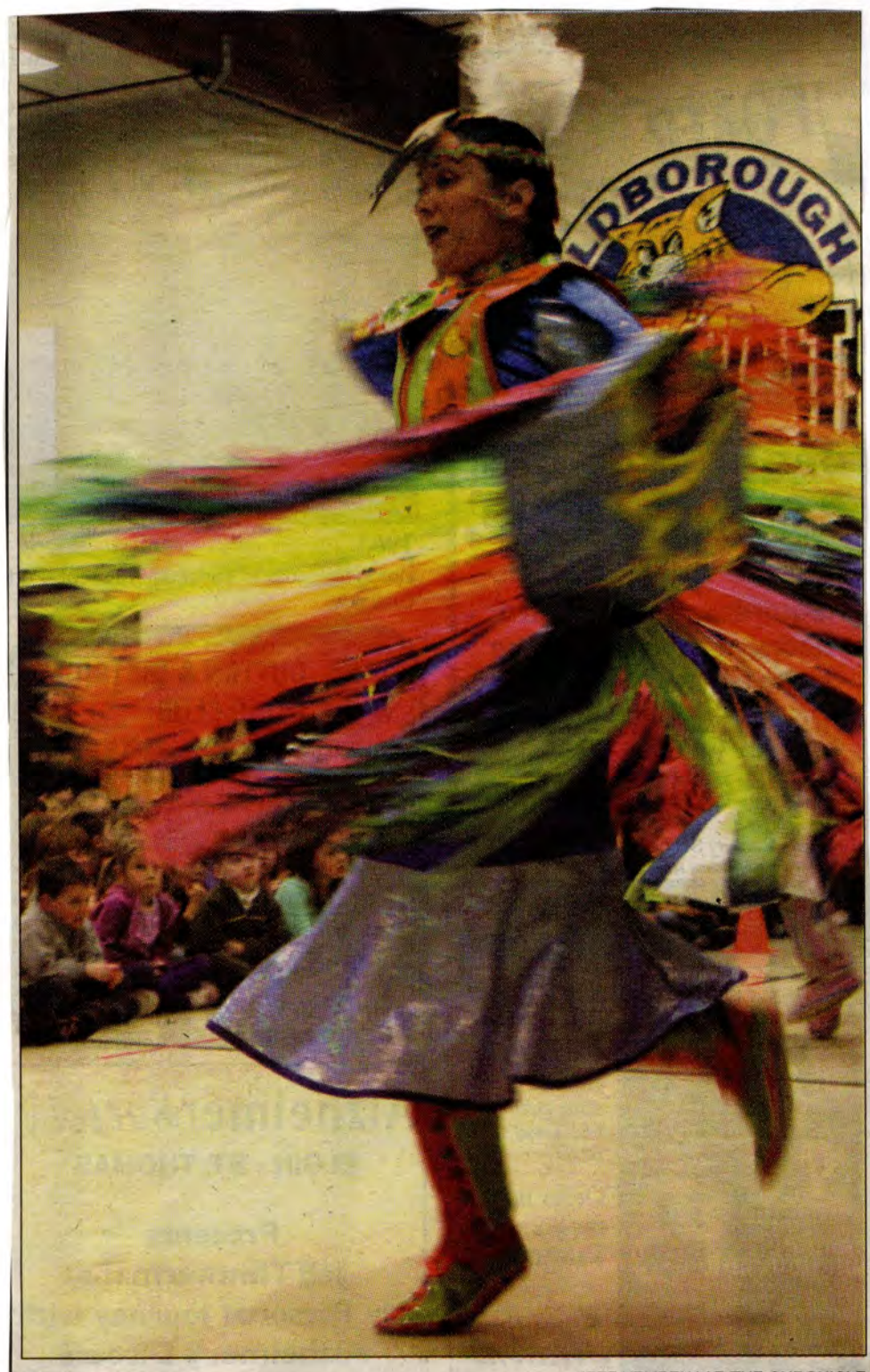
Tree planted for tomorrow JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE
Michael Lewinsky, Gina Toth, Tara Smith, Alex Goos, Breyanne Serleand Taylor Gibson are joined by Grade 4 teacher June Ford at Aldborough Public School for the Trees for Tomorrow program, initiated by the Stewardship Councils in Elgin, Middlesex and Oxford Counties. The program was held at APS and Dunwich-Dutton Public School Jan. 26. The red and burr oak will be kept in greenhouses at the high school for the winter and planted around the school yards and community by students later this year.



Chili cooked JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE
A chili cooking class was held at the West Elgin Community Health Centre last month. Here Shannon McDonald and Tracy Reaume cook a vegetarian chili with raisins.



Cold rain cancels school buses on Monday JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE
Kids found something to do at the West Lorne Library on Monday after a day of sitting around because buses were cancelled across much of the school board due to freezing rain in the early morning. Forecasts call for snow to return before the weekend. The after school program runs in West Lorne Mondays and Rodney on Tuesdays from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.



Native dance JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Students at Aldborough Public School were treated to native culture with music and dance by the Kanata Native Dance Group based out of the Six Nations Jan. 24. Here, Naomi Powless shows some of the colourful dress worn at pow wows.

Warriors bring home silver



SUBMITTED

Warriors win silver metal

The West Elgin Warriors girl's Under-14 volleyball team from West Elgin Secondary School won a silver metal at the Ontario Volleyball Association volleyball tournament in Stratford. The coaches Dave Burke, right and Kasi Kleihauer, left are joined by players the Warriors after winning being awarded their metals.

The West Elgin Warriors girl's Under-14 volleyball team recently placed second in the Stratford OVA volleyball tournament. The girls opened the tournament by beating the Huron Tsunami two games to zero and then dropped a very close set, two games to one, to the host Stratford Stingers. The Warriors then faced the South County Bandits in the first round of the playoffs. The girls won two very closely contested games to move onto the semi-finals. In their semi-final, the girls faced a very strong Forest City team. The Warriors had little difficulty with the Forest City squad in the best of three semi-final and beat them convincingly two games to zero. In the final, the Warriors faced another Forest City team. The opening game was highly entertaining with both teams playing their best volleyball of the tournament. Neither team seemed to be able to build up a substantial lead as both teams fought hard for each and every point. Finally the game ended with Forest City edging the Warriors 29 – 27. The second game was just as exciting, but once again Forest City was able to win 25 – 20.

This is the third tournament the girls have played in this season. They placed fifth in tournaments in Chatham and Windsor. The girls' hard work in practice is definitely starting to pay off and Coaches Dave Burke and Kasi Kleihauer were very pleased with the team's performance. The Warriors players are Meghan Schneider, Jacqueline Lamb, Andrea Goos, Jessica Varga, Kayla Shine, Emma Wilkins, Lauren Sheedy, Melanie Ganhadeiro, Stephanie Leys, Debbie Levesley, and Elisha Peskar.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Senior girls volleyball team plays in Thames Valley final

Taryn Clements spikes the volleyball for the West Elgin Secondary School senior girl's Wildcats during the third set at the Thames Valley Regional Athletic Association 1A semi-final game Feb. 18. The Wildcats won the game 23-25, 25-23, 25-19, 25-19. The girls played at Fanshawe College Feb. 23 in the A group final.



St. Mary's students celebrate winter carnivale JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Alicia Krebs, left, Alyssa Paiva, centre and Sara Ross, right try to coordinate their feet in a team skiing event with the help of Candace Conway and Ashely Silva during the St. Mary's Catholic School Winter Carnivale, organized by the French teachers last Friday while Carnivale happens in Quebec City.

Gym club encourages volunteerism

The West Elgin Gym Club is back in full operation on Saturday mornings at the Rodney Recreation Center.

It opened Jan. 15 for the 10-week winter session, with 90 children registered.

The club is run by volunteers, with professional coaches who are trained in all levels.

The club encourages visitors to come watch the action any Saturday between 9 a.m.- noon.

While the club does not ask parents to fundraise themselves, each family is expected to assist with the set up or take down of equipment three times for each session.

This work crew approach is the fundamental success proving many hands make light work and helps to keep the cost of the sessions to a very reasonable fee.

Local service groups and businesses are also supportive.

The Gym Club received several donations including $400 from the Rodney Lions, $200 from the Rodney Legion, $100 from the West Lorne Masons $100, $50 from Full-Line Equipment and Kelloggs Foods as donated snacks.

The club will be using these donations to purchase new mats.

Members come from Bothwell to Dutton.

The program is for children aged two to 12.



Kindergym classes keep kids active SUBMITTED

Kaitlyn Bradshaw on the balance beam, centre, takes part in a Kindergym class at the Rodney Community Centre. The class is held every Saturday morning with the help of parent volunteers.

EDUCATION 2005

Two Aldborough students explain bullies, victims and bystanders

While bullying happens at all ages, learning how to deal with it at a young age is important.

Sheldon Downie and Jamee Ellis, two Grade 6 students at Aldborough Public School answered questions about bullying to shed light on the issue.

According to the two students, bullying is discussed a lot at APS as students deal with bullies on the school yard.

At APS, younger students are split up from older students to prevent conflicts.

What is bullying?

Sheldon: Being teased, beaten up or having things stolen over and over.

Jamee: One or two people ganging up on one person and picking on them everyday.

What is a victim?

Sheldon: Smaller kids, bullied by older kids. They should be split up.

Jamee: Victims can be depressed by bullying because they feel they can't do anything right.

What is a bystander?



Sheldon Downie



Jamee Ellis

Sheldon: Someone who hangs out with a bully because they are afraid to stand up to them.

Jamee: Someone who watches bullying and doesn't do anything to help.

Why don't people tell someone when they've been bullied?

Sheldon: They could be beat up.

Jamee: Bystanders don't tell because they could get it next.

What could happen if no one tells?

Sheldon: Bullies could go on to cause more problems like stealing.

Jamee: Victims could commit suicide. They could beat themselves up.

What can be done to stop bullying?

Sheldon: Tell on bullies but don't rat on them for little things. They might get more trouble.

A fight isn't bullying, fights happen but friends need to stick up for each other.

Jamee: Tell your parents, a teacher or another child.

Once someone is told about it, they should talk to the victim to find out why they are being bullied and talk to the bully to try and help them.

Teachers need to keep an eye on kids who have been told on for bullying.

Students learning about bullying

In Grade 6, students have to make presentations on bullying and go to Web sites around the world for research.

Many resources can be found online at www.gecdsb.on.ca/d&g/nobullying/resources.html.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

St. Mary's students learn about community policing

Students from St. Mary's Catholic School were awarded by the West Elgin Community Policing Committee for their safety posters in December. The winners were, front row left: Cal Horva Sierra Poels, Nicolas Mendonc. Second row left to right: Ryan Leys, Tiffany Kriter, William Weeks with organizer Sylvia Logan.

Book on veterans in the works

A local book is being planned to celebrate the Year of the Veteran.

West Elgin Senior Project Action Committee is partnering with West Elgin Secondary School to have students interview veterans and hopefully publish a book to preserve their stories.

"We were trying to think of what we can do for the year of the veteran," said Jill Soos, WESPAC chairperson. "One of our goals is to be involved in intergenerational projects like this one."

As part of their Grade 10 history program, students will learn writing, interviewing skills, and be part of a valuable experience to learn and capture wartime stories.

"It's a wonderful opportunity for veterans to pass their stories on to younger generations to be captured forever," said WESS Principal Larry Schnieder.

Following the success of Tapestry of Timeless Tales, a book written by Grade 8 students about local seniors, Soos hopes this new book will recognize the contributions of many men and women who gave themselves to be involved in the World Wars, other conflicts and peace-keeping missions.

Students will be seeking story ideas and veteran or family members to conduct interviews during the month of May in hopes the book could be published during the summer.

The high school will have creative direction over the book with senior English students editing it and art programs able to provide images.

"We are committed to making this a reality and trust it will be a valuable experience for our community and all those involved," said Soos.

Anyone with wartime stories to share or anyone who would like to be involved in this project can call WESS at 768-1350 or Jill Soos at 785-0460.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

St. Mary's enhanced readers awarded

Alex Sara and Shannon Pyka front centre, read The New Boy during the reading enhancement program at St. Mary's Catholic School. Grade 2 and 3 students enrolled in the program were awarded certificates for completing the program. The program is taught by Joanne Anderson with parent volunteers, Karen Weeks and Darlene Stacey. Other students who are in the program are Kaitlyn Oliveira, Luke Stacey, Rachell Frizzell, Daniel Sekaris, Will Weeks, Kent Vandenberg, Joseph Solomon and Brad DaSilva.

Historic images online

Over 50,000 local scenes and images of Elgin County's past are now available on the Internet.

Elgin County Archives has put searchable catalogues on www.elgin.ca.

These include the Scott-Sifton Photograph Collection and several new galleries that have been added to the Web site.

The archives are the official repository of records of Elgin County and its municipalities.

It houses private collections and official documents of the County's history and citizens.

Elementary teachers approve strike

BY SUN MEDIA

Elementary teachers in the Thames Valley District School Board approved strike action Monday night to back demands for increased preparation time.

In voting at the London Convention Centre, 96 per cent of teachers who cast ballots gave a strike the green light.

The board and union have met four times since the contract expired Aug. 31, most recently this month.

The union is seeking 200 minutes a week of preparation time by 2007 — an amount comparable to that allotted to Ontario high school teachers. Thames Valley elementary teachers get 150 minutes for preparation a week. A news release issued by the union's head office in Toronto said teachers would start working to rule in March if there's no deal.

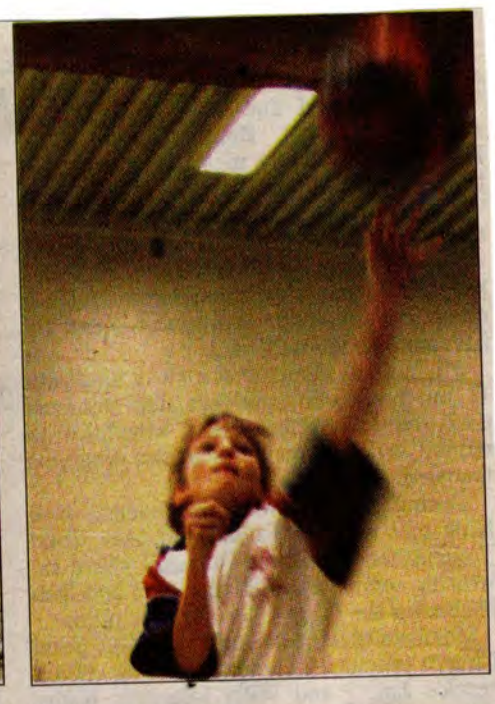


JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Free throw championship

Knights of Columbus hosted a free throw championship at St. Mary's Catholic School Jan. 26, with youths 10-13 years-old from area schools competing. Left, Jasmin Brewer, middle Kent Vandenberg, right, Tina Lettner shoots.





Free throw champs moving on

Local Knights of Columbus brought back its annual free throw championship to St. Mary's Catholic School last Friday.

With 10 students qualifying from each area school, youth aged 10-13 competed with a chance to advance in the championship that leads to a North America-wide final round and the next round, district, in Thamesville Feb. 10.

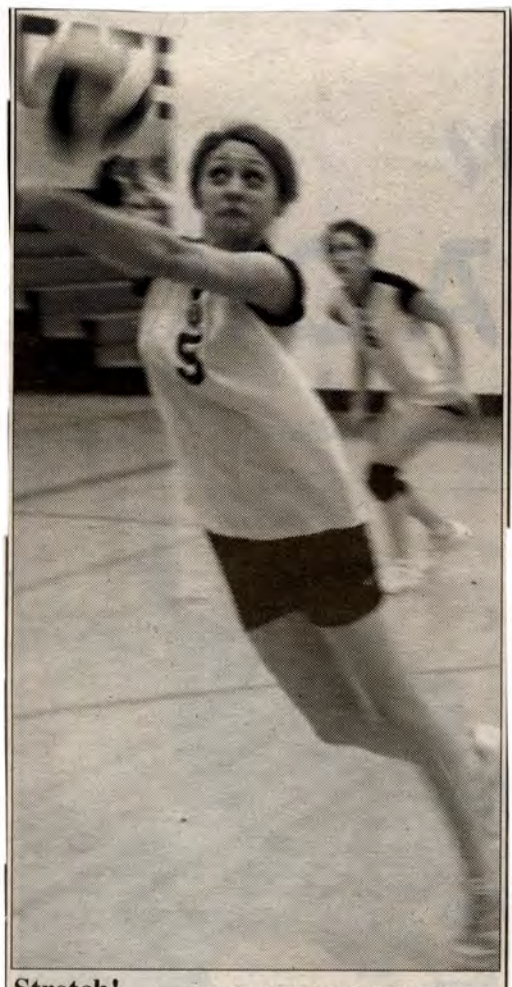
Winners at the St. Mary's event were:

10-years-old: Rachel Frizzell. Scott Barfett, from St. Mary's.

11-years-old: Bo Horvat, St. Mary's, Alex Goos, APS.

12-years-old: Tabatha Wemp, Malcolm McWilliam, St. Mary's.

13-year-old: Jessica Small, St. Mary's, Robert Johnston, WESES.



Stretch! JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Andrea Goos stretches out to keep the volleyball as her junior girls team beat East Elgin Secondary School Monday to remain undefeated, beating the Eagles in three sets.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Warriors host OVA tournament

Brian Azevedo sprawled to the ground and tipped up the volleyball for his under 18 Warrior teammates at an Ontario Volleyball Association Tier 3 tournament held at West Elgin Secondary School. West Elgin finished fourth.

Warriors battle to fourth

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

West Elgin Warriors battled to a fourth place finish in an under-18 Ontario Volleyball Association Ken Davies Open held in West Lorne March 5.

Hosting top tier 3 teams from across the province, the Warriors played three quick matches in the afternoon and ran out of gas against Ottawa in the semi-final.

"We could have won. We hoped for gold but Ottawa had a strong team," said head coach Tim Lilley.

Despite a big rally with heavy smashes from Wes McLandress and Brian Azevedo, Ottawa took the match 23-19, 25-22 to take the bronze medal.

The OVA is an amateur league, outside of the school system, where boys and girls who love volleyball can pay to be on the team.

The Warriors features players from Dutton/Dunwich, West Elgin and Southwest Middlesex.

Carrie Ostrom, teacher at West Elgin Senior Elementary helped organize the boys tournament at West Elgin Secondary School this past weekend.

"We have such a strong volleyball tradition in the community," she said. "All of the parents have been so supportive to help put this together."

The boys have finished fourth in three tournaments this year but coaches Lilley and Joe Mylrea believe the boys can do better at the provincial finals April 9, possibly in Sudbury.

The under-14 and under-17 girls won silver at their last tournaments and look for further successes at the provincials in Kingston in April.

Large crowds filled the WESS gymnasium and cheered on the Warriors.

Earlier in the day, Steve Wells, from Glencoe turned his ankle and was taken in an ambulance.

However the Warriors battled on.

The boys showed great comradery.

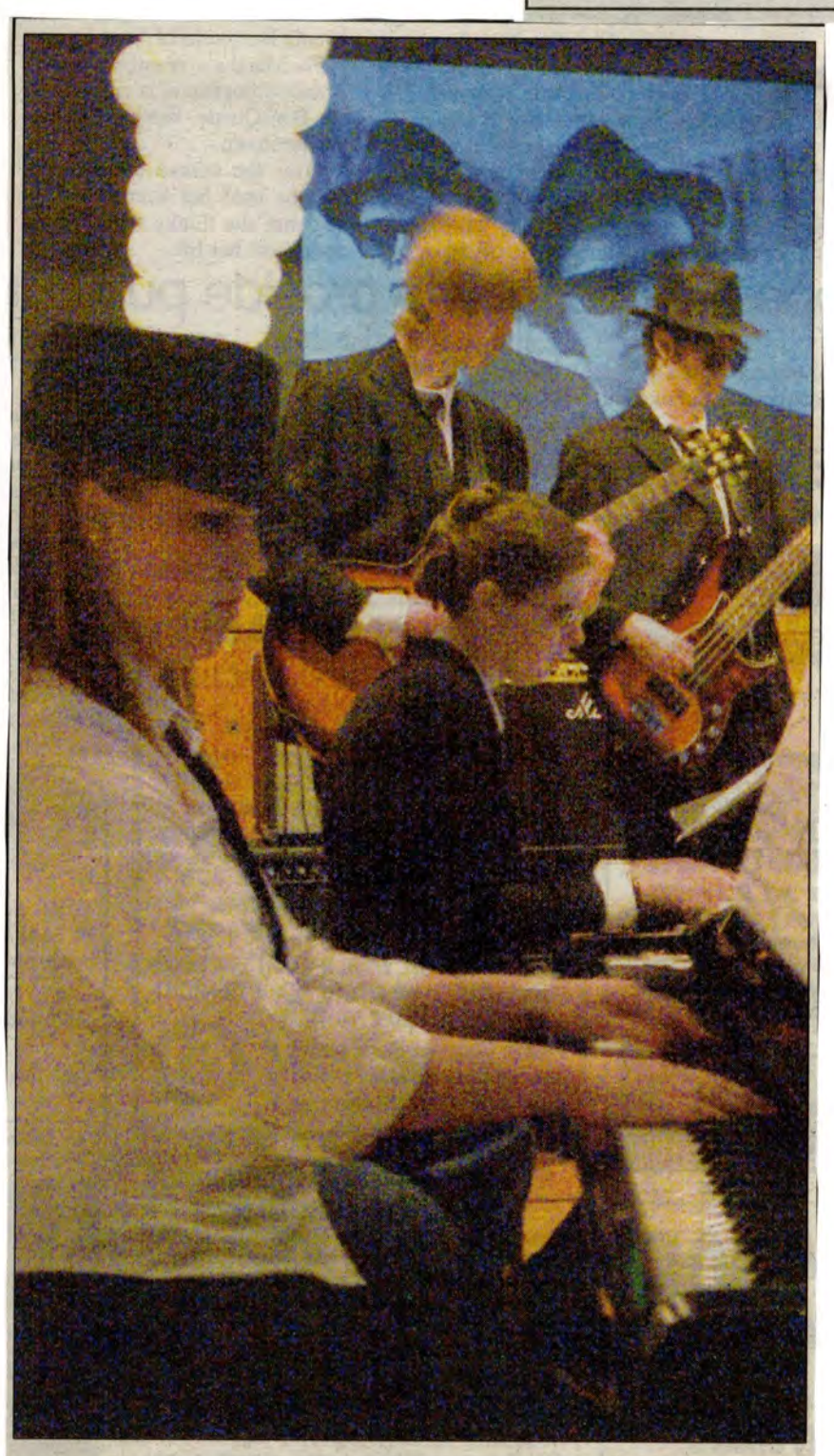
William Drummelsmith, Brian Lilley and Mike Lyons kept the team pumped throughout the long day.

Grant Little, Harrison Oake, Kyle Mylrea and David McWilliam pushed the team to beat the number one ranked Midland, Barrie and Waterloo.



Remembering Terry Fox JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Students at all local schools took part in a fundraiser for the Terry Fox Foundation, 25 years after his historic walk for cancer research. Above: students at West Elgin Senior Elementary School braved overcast skies to walk around Miller Park. From left to right Robert Johnson, Sarah King, Laura Pinder, Karli Snobelen, Shelby Woolley, Samantha Hamelin, Ashley Willy and Tasha Ferby, were a few of the students out. Below: Robert McLeod, Justin Moll and Hunter VanRaay walked with their Grade 1 class at Dunwich-Dutton P.S.



WESS band gets the blues JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Jen Ford, front, and Rebecca Stone play piano as James Stone plays guitar and Mark Godfrey plays bass during the West Elgin Secondary School band's performance of music from the Blues Brothers movies. A full house enjoyed dinner and music April 8.



Wildcats hit the high seas JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

West Elgin Secondary School students were busy this week preparing costumes and rehearsing for three performances of Peril on the High Seas.

Wildcats theatre starts Friday night

Merry Ann Sweet, wealth young heiress is being stalked by a kidnapper on the HMS Majestic.

Sweet, played by Dana Kuska, is travelling on a luxury cruise ship to London England from New York in the West Elgin Secondary School Wildcats Theatre performance of Peril on the High Seas.

The play, written by Billy St. John, is based in the 1920s and is full of exotic romance, mystery and mayhem all to a jazz soundtrack.

Directed by students Nicki Stallon and Rachael Kalitas the play is the first student production of the school year.

The dinner theatre performance starts Jan. 21 at 6:30 p.m.

A matinee tea performance is Jan. 22 and a Saturday evening performance is Jan. 22 at 7:30 p.m.

For ticket information call 768-1350.

EDUCATION 2005

Athletic awards handed out at West Elgin S.S.

MEAGAN DAVIS
for The Chronicle

Awards were given out at the West Elgin Secondary School student athletic banquet May 27.

In a cafetorium packed, family and friends watched Wildcats receive the 2005 awards.

Graduating student Josh Duplessis took home six awards, competing on five sports teams while balancing his academics.

He received the senior male athlete of the year award, the football team's MVP award, the 75 point award, for most points in game action for a team and multiple awards for participating on sports teams throughout high school.

"I've played soccer since I was little but once I got into high school I pretty much played everything all the way through," said Duplessis, who is going to UWO next fall.

"He is a leader and an excellent athlete," said football coach and teacher Dave Burke.

Senior student Katie Lyons picked up the senior female athlete of the year award, one of two awards for five years of participating in sports, the volleyball team's MVP award and a special award from the St. Thomas soccer club.

"She is never content just playing the game...she plays for the true love of the game," said teacher and coach Lori Clinton.

Heart and hustle awards were given to graduating students Amanda Leonardes and Adam McKillop for being team leaders and for their continuous participation in sports.

"The standards you need to have for this award makes you really proud of all your accomplishments," said Leonardes.

Other awards given out during the night included:

Laura Park, the Optimist Club award and MVP awards for sportsmanship and dedication on the track and field and badminton teams.

Jeff Else, the Coaches Basketball Award for managing the senior boys basketball team.

Brian Azevedo, male St. Thomas soccer club award.

Junior athlete of the year awards were given to Aaron Cowell and Rhonda Knight, who also won outstanding achievement in girl's basketball.

The 110 per cent award went to Catie Welch, Allison Gumpert, Trena Lebedz, Rachel Humphrey and Stacey Penney.

Penney also received the exceptional senior athlete award and graduating SAA award.







MEAGAN DAVIS/FOR THE CHRONICLE

Athletes honoured

Top: Amanda Leonardes and Adam McKillop won the heart and hustle awards for their efforts on Wildcat teams.

Left: Josh Duplessis and Katie Lyons won top male and female senior athlete awards.

Right: Laura Park won the Optimist Club award for sportsmanship and dedication at the WESS Athletics banquet held May 27.

Midget girls unbeaten

Dutton's Midget Girls Fastball team remain unbeaten with recent wins against Byron 22-12 and Otterville 8-7.

The offence has scored 42 runs in only three games.

Home games are Wednesdays in Dutton at 8:30 p.m.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Triple-jump at WESES

Chris Clark leaps into the sand during the triple-jump event at the West Elgin Senior Elementary School track and field day Friday. Students participated in many running events, high jump, long jump and throwing competition. For more see page 9.



Junior Girls Volleyball team, undefeated going into semi's JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Britany Correia and Caroline Levesley dive for the ball in the third set of the quarter final Feb. 17. West Elgin Wildcats Girls Junior Volleyball team knocked Arthur Voaden Secondary School out of the playoffs with a 25-13, 25-15, 25-21 win at West Elgin Secondary School. The team went undefeated in the regular season and have yet to lose going into the semi-finals Feb. 22. The Senior Girl's team had also made it to the TVDSB



Career Fair JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Katelyn Duplessis shows the hair straightening skills she learned at Judy's Hair Loft in West Lorne on Rhonda Knight. Students at West Elgin Secondary School displayed their experiences from their co-op placements at area businesses. Knight had her placement at Amlin Quarterhorses.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

St. Mary's student honour death of Pope John Paul II

Students at St. Mary's Catholic School in West Lorne held a candle lighting ceremony for the death of Pope John Paul II April 8. Left to right, Hailey Szabo, Emily Ross and Laura Weeks led the school through a prayer.

EDUCATION 2005



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Car wash raises money for cancer

Zoey Van Dyk, Kaylee DeRooy and Karlie Willcocks organized their class from St.Mary's Catholic School to raise money for the Cancer Society at a car wash held July 2. The 16 volunteers washed more than a 100 vehicles and raised $1,200.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Athletes of the year

Katie Lyons and Josh Duplessis were named Senior Athletes of the Year at the West Elgin Secondary School Athletic Banquet held May 27.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Teachers taped to wall for charity

Cindy McDowell gets taped by Amber Reid while teachers Dave Burke (wearing a Santa beard) and Dan Kajan hang, taped to the wall in the cafeteria at West Elgin Secondary School during a lunch-hour tsunami relief fundraiser Monday. See page 8 to learn about other fundraising efforts from around the area.



WESS band holds spring show

Rhonda Knight and Jennifer Drummelsmith play Trish-Trash Polka on baritone saxophones with the WESS concert band at the spring concert June 8.



SUBMITTED

WESS helps Kittmer

On June 12 the students from West Elgin Secondary School took part in the Rick Hansen Event at Parkwood Hospital in London with Colin Kittmer of West Lorne who raced. Student names: Jeff Reno, Derik Reno, Chris Wemp, Matt Pfeifer, Sarah Hamelin, Craig Hoglund, Ann Pfeifer, Shawn Carroll, Chantelle Sadecky, Adam Timmermans, Caitlin VanRaes, Phil Ouellette.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

St. Mary's students get bike helmets

Grade 4 students at St. Mary's Catholic School all received bike helmets for taking part in a railway crossing safety poster contest held by the St.Thomas Elgin Community Safety Committee June 27.



Junior Girls win WOSSA

West Elgin Junior Girls Volleyball won gold at Thames Valley and WOSSA. Back row: Coach Meegan Campbell, Sherri Ford, Courtney Besley, Erica McDowell, Danielle Wilson, Karen Godfrey, Kaitlyn Duplessis, Coach Christina Cunningham. Middle, Caroline Levesley, Tara Kretchmer, Kaylie Wood, Brittany Carreia. Front: Emily Kalmbach, Rhonda Knight.

SUBMITTED

EDUCATION 2005



APS learns Winter Safety JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

West Elgin Community Policing held a colouring contest at Aldborough Public School to teach winter safety. From left to right: Emily Miller and Blake Wright won in the Grade 2 and 3 category, Jaimee Parcels and Daniel Alderton won in the Grade 4, 5, 6 category. Silvia Logan presented the cash awards. Eric Larson and Evan Van Dyk, won for the kindergarten and Grade 1 catagories.



TAG! JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Justin Delgado is tagged by Sabrina Oliveira during a tag-a-thon held at St. Mary's Catholic School in West Lorne and across Ontario Thursday to encourage physical activity. Students played many types of tag, this one is octopus tag.

Steps toward deal made with WEDS

WEDS is willing to give 50 cents for every ticket sold to its shows to the municipality to rent the theatre on the second floor of the Town Hall in Dutton.

The offer comes as the community theatre group and the municipality continued negotiating a new lease agreement at the June 15 council meeting.

Jerry Galbraith is negotiating on behalf of the West Elgin Dramatics Society.

In response to a February letter from the municipality, he brought the group's counter offer to the table.

Mayor Bonnie Vowel said the counteroffer showed WEDS was meeting the municipality halfway.

The municipality was looking for $350 for each seasonal performance the group did in the new lease agreement.

WEDS pays no rent in the current lease agreement which expires in 2007.

"Fifty-cents can be backed up. It's not something you can't afford," Vowel said to Galbraith.

He said the group has compromised with the new offer and it gives the volunteer group the ability to stay financially viable.

He said, at the groups spring concert, the new 50 cent policy would have generated about $250 for the municipality.

At WEDS' fall concert, it would have generated $300.

"That seems like a solution to me," said Galbraith.

Neither Vowel and Administrator Ken Loveland nor other councillors commented on other parts of WEDS' counteroffer at the meeting.

In past discussions, the municipality has expressed it wants WEDS to help get more people and groups renting the facility.

WEDS is looking at hiring someone to help with marketing the theatre outside of the community.

Vowel said council would consider the rest of the counteroffers and get back to WEDS.

Both sides hoped the rift in the the relationship's past was behind them.



WESES Jazz Band holds concert JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Brooke Willson, left, Kristyn Fishleigh and Sara Vandaele play Jamaican Holiday on flutes during Spring Notes, the West Elgin Senior Elementary School's music department's spring show directed by music teacher Lynn Gracey.



WESES readers going to Toronto JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

About 21 students from WESES took part in the Red Maple reading program. The students read five books and then voted by ballet for the best new Canadian writer. Nine of the students were drawn to travel to Toronto to the Red Maple Awards and may get to present an award to the winning authors.



WESS helps Jesse's Journey JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Students from West Elgin Secondary School held a fundraiser for Jesse's Journey April 1 at the school and raised $850. John Davidson, Jesse's father, centre, came to accept a check from: Paul Gallant, left, shop teacher who helped with a car wash, Maryjo McWilliam, student president, Justin McCallum, Colin Reid, Nicole Stallon, front, Brandyn Cook and Carolyn Smith.

WESS winds down this week

COLUMN



Principal's Corner

Larry Schneider

It has been a fabulous year at West Elgin Secondary school. It is a very exciting time now , as graduates have received their acceptances to colleges and universities, job offers for summer or full-time work, and all students write their final exams and hand in their final course assignments.

I am constantly amazed and so very proud of the academic accomplishments of our students. Many are finishing the year with averages in the high eighties and nineties. Our second year of the WEST program, which sees students from Grades 9 - 12 having work placements which complement their in-class studies, has been extremely successful. The entire WESS community is so grateful for the support of the many employers in the community who have taken in and helped to train and educate our students. These wonderful employers, the students and teachers were all honoured at a banquet held on June 15.

We have had a great year in sports, with many successful teams, including a renewed track and field team. Congratulations to our athletes and coaches, and thanks to the community coaches who have once again stepped forward to assist our staff in running these teams. In the arts, our bands, drama classes and visual arts classes have all had a stellar year, with new awards being won, successful concerts and plays being performed, and some wonderful new murals adorning the walls of the school.

There are again a number of construction projects happening at the school this summer, as the Board and the Ministry continue to invest in our community school. We will be getting new boilers for our heating system, a new roof on about one-third of the school, some drains which have been problematic will be replaced. We will also be installing a new trophy and awards display case on the wall outside of the gymnasium, constructed by Calmbrook Construction, so that we can proudly display our many sports trophies. In addition, there will be some painting and computer upgrades. In our Library and Technology Departments, special Ministry funding will allow for several tens of thousands of dollars worth of new books, programs and equipment to be purchased to further enhance opportunities and resources for our students.

Sadly, we are losing four valued staff members this year, who are moving on to new challenges in their careers: Jamie Fraser, our Head of Guidance is going to Parkhill, Jennifer Nielsen, our Head of Geography, is going to London Central SS, Becky Doyle, our Head of History is going to East Elgin, and Cynthia McDowell, our Head of English will be moving to Sir George Ross SS in London as Vice-Principal. We will miss these wonderful educators, but wish them well in their new pursuits. We have hired a number of new teachers for the school, and will continue to do so over the coming days.

In January students completed a survey about Safe Schools, focussing on the topic of bullying. We are now studying those results, and a team made up of students, parents, teachers, and community members is developing an action plan for our school in response to the survey.

Our enrollment next year will reach a new high, in recent memory, with approximately 585 students being registered here for September. This will allow us to have additional teachers and course offerings. Incoming Grade 8 students have visited the school recently for a tour and welcome barbecue, and we look forward to seeing them here in the fall.

Report cards will be available for pickup at the school office starting on July 5, and student timetables for next year will be mailed out in the middle of August.

I wish everyone in the WESS community a safe and happy summer, once again thank the community for its wholehearted support of this small rural school, and look forward to another great school year in 2005 -2006.

EDUCATION 2005





Schools hold Fun Days
Left: Jessie Linton gets pushed by Kassie Burgy in a wheelbarrow race at the Aldborough Public School Fun Day June 21. Jayden Myers runs from Paul Dieker who spryed him with a water gun at the St. Mary's Catholic School Fun Day June 23.
JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

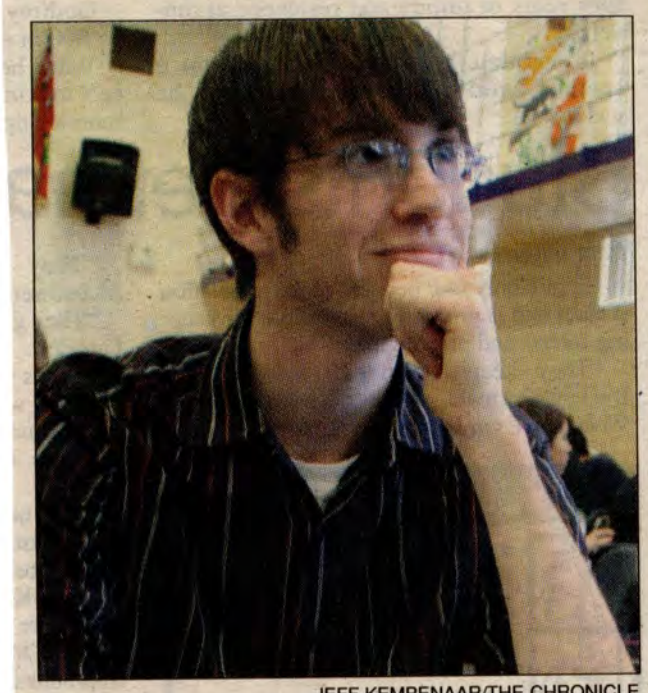






JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE
Aldborough holds funfair
Aldborough Public School's parent council held its annual fundraising funfair Feb. 24. Left: Ryan Alderton walked the plank to drop a coin in a bag while Lucas Given supervises. Centre: Andrew and Marcel Wright spin the wheel for a prize. Right: Samantha Clark tosses a bean bag.

Student gets huge scholarship



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE
Imagine the opportunities
Wallacetown's Mark Godfrey imagines all the opportunities that opened up when he learned he was one of 30 in Canada to receive a special scholarship for $75,000.

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

A Wallacetown teen is one of a handful of people to receive a $75,000 scholarship across Canada.

Mark Godfrey received the scholarship from the Canada Merit Scholarship Foundation.

"It's big," he said, in the noisy cafetorium at the high school.

Excited at first to learn his university education will be paid for, Godfrey is just starting to understand all the opportunities the scholarship has created.

CMSF hands out 30 scholarships across Canada out of 3,500 applications.

One great thing is the scholarship can be used at 25 universities in Canada which gives Godfrey the flexibility to shop himself around.

A musician, he starts auditions in the coming weeks and is narrowing down which university he wants to get into.

"I have to decide if I want to be a performing artist or have a stable job one day," he said.

Nicknamed Spider, for his amazing long, fast fingers, Godfrey advanced to the senior band in his first year of high school.

He's played at many community events with friends, always pleasing the crowd with his endless energy and huge playlist.

"He has been on our radar since the day he walked in the door back in Grade 9," said Principal Larry Schneider. "This is a big deal."

His 92 per cent academic average, being captain of the senior basketball team and co-captain of the volleyball team, along with performing in the school band helped get the scholarship.

His community service and leadership nailed it down.

The scholarship recipients have to demonstrate outstanding service to their community, character, leadership potential, entrepreneurial energy and academic excellence, a CMSF press release said.

Among his activities, he has helped his father establish the Kent Regional Alternative Ministry, a youth group at the Duart Presbyterian Church.

Godfrey said teachers, friends and the community have supported so much throughout high school but his father, Rev. Tom Godfrey has had the biggest influence on his life.

Please see Godfrey, *page 2*



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE
Career fair held at WESS
Josh Giles explains his work placement at the University of Western Ontario's software engineering department to teacher Marsha Hughes at the West Elgin Secondary School Career Fair June 20. Students in the coperative education program participated.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE
New computer lab at St. Mary's
Principal John Lavereau, with teacher Joanne Anderson, parent councillor Don Ciparis and Tammy Kovacs on the fundraising committee unvailed St. Mary's Catholic School's new computer lab June 20. The parent council and school raised $10,000 and the school board and province gave $12,000 each to redo the room and buy 31 new computers and software for the school.

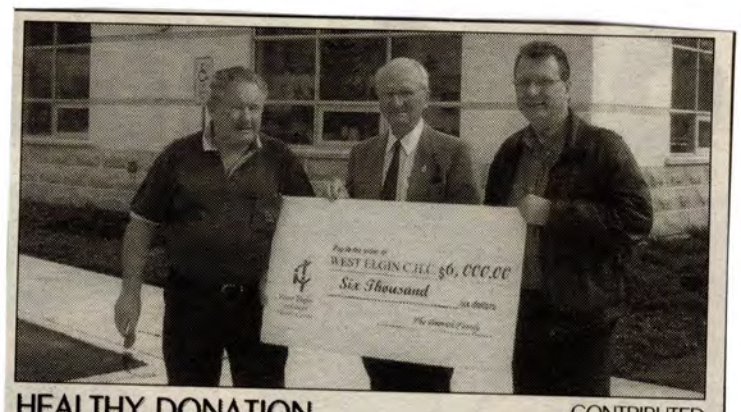




Gord Fansher shows his parmesan pepper fillets at the men's cooking night. Fansher leads the Dad to Dad group and is a member of Dad's Can in London. Participating dads practiced cooking a variety of fish-based meals as an alternative to meat and potatoes.

DADS CAN COOK... JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Blair Ferguson fries up some rainbow trout in the kitchen at the West Elgin Community Health Centre in West Lorne, June 24. Ferguson and four other fathers took part in a cooking seminar with dietician Allison Little. The seminar was part of the Dad to Dad group whre fatherly advice is shared.



HEALTHY DONATION CONTRIBUTED

Jerry Prince, vice chair of the West Elgin Community Health Centre receives $6,000 for the centre from the Perovich family, represented by Dan Perovich Sr. and Mike Perovich Jr.



Vera McCrady of Dutton tosses a sticky ball at a glass target to win prizes at the Seniors Day in the Park.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

The MJM Jazz Trio and Shirley Walker and Francis Sobieralski performed at the WECHC Seniors Day in the Park.



Bob-Bob-A-Lou had Jean and Elmer Hunter doing a polka at the West Elgin Community Health Centre's Seniors Day in the Park held June 30 at Old Boys Park in Port Glasgow.

Health centre interviewing new doctors

Province gives $225,593

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

Increased chiropody (foot care) and a part-time clinical staff manager will be hired at West Elgin Community Health Clinic with an additional $225,593 coming from the province.

A staff manager is required by the province to oversee the nursing staff.

The money will go to the centre's base budget from the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care that is about $2.081 million.

"This is extremely helpful," said Doug Graham, executive administrator at WECHC.

"This new funding will enable the WECHC to reach even more people who need access to basic health care in their community," said Elgin-Middlesex-London MPP Steve Peters in a media release.

The centre is currently recruiting physicians in hopes of hiring two full-time doctors to fill vacancies.

"We're hopeful our patient roster will go way up and waiting lists will be eliminated," said Graham.

He said recruiting new physicians is a challenge and it may be a few months before the centre will have three full-time doctors on call.

A part-time physician has been trialling at the centre, helping with the current patient load.

Graham said Community Health Centre doctors were the lowest paid in the province and he hopes if these doctors are included in wage increases, recruitment and retention challenges will be eased.

Recently, the Ontario Medical Association, the union representing physicians, has been negotiating with the provincial government for a new contract.

The province is proposing incentives to encourage physicians to join "harmonized models" but Graham hasn't seen yet if that will mean physicians working at CHCs will reap the incentives.

Graham believes memberships will double to around 6,000 patients served by a family doctor at the centre when the new physicians are hired.

He said the centre will not become a walk-in clinic but hopefully be able to provide access to a family doctor for the entire catchment area.

While the funding is good news, Graham said it balances inequities between urban health programming and rural health programming.

"Rural programs were very poorly funded," said Graham.

Also, the community health worker who makes house calls to the area's senior community will become full-time from part-time.

He said the money will also go to salary increases and facility operating costs, areas that have not seen an increase in funding in 12 years.

The money will arrive next month and be immediately used to help pay rent, hydro and telephone costs freeing up money for staff salary increases and new staff.





CELEBRATING DADS...

Organizers were happy with the turnout of parents, especially fathers, who came to the West Elgin Community Health Centre's Let's Connect's program called "A Celebration of Dads." The event featured a recreation fair and a guest speaker from Dad's Can, an organization that encourages fathers to take an active role in the upbringing of their children. At left, Andy and Marie Welch speak to Gordon Fisher of Dad's Can. At right, Katelyn Bailey (left) and Shelby Pyka learn about good posture from Chrisoula VanOirschot of Country Care Massage Therapy.

Chronicle photo

Bed closures not acceptable

■ *Mayor hopes community will fight with school-closure enthusiasm*

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

A plan to close 20 beds at Four Counties Health Services in Newbury has drawn comparison by adminstrators and public officials to the threat of closing schools.

"If beds are closed, it is important people stand up and say under the Canadian Health Act we won't have access to healthcare and we'll be treated as second class citizens," said West Elgin Mayor Graham Warwick. "Once they close those beds, we'll never get them back."

He hopes the community can rally with the same momentum to save beds at the hospitals as they did to save schools from being closed.

But the future of the hospital is safe according to Sarah Padfield, coordinator with the Alliance.

The Alliance is recruiting six to seven people for a community advisory committee for FCHS in hopes to get more input on decisions from people in the catchment area.

The committee will have the foundation chair and either Padfield or the CEO Mike Mazza on it and a representative from West Elgin Community Health Centre, making the committee 10 to 12 people.

The Alliance is still looking for people to be on the committee.

The committee will file reports to the board, providing valuable information on local needs and concerns.



"If beds are closed, it is important people stand up and say ...we'll be treated as second class citizens."

Graham Warwick

Padfield hopes the group could get together before the board's next meeting where the balanced budget will be tabled.

She said the executive committee has been pulling numbers and may have other solutions for cost savings to balance the $1.7 million budget deficit for FCHS.

The reason the rally for schools was effective, said Warwick was people like Tracy Grant, an accommodation review committee member, had access to budgetary information from Thames Valley District School Board.

With a new advisory committee at the hospital, Warwick hopes the public will have a better idea how money is spent at the hospital and can help the Alliance lobby the provincial government for equal money.

The urban-oriented provincial government is using misguided formulas to fund hospitals in big cities and rural centre, said Warwick.

He said the Alliance has got to be open to effectively lobby the government with the community.

Brad Bandeen, executive committee member with the Alliance said the public should provide more input on their need for the hospital and services.

He said he represents the West Elgin area and wants to hear from people here about the hospital.

Padfield said the corporation has tried to reach the community with a community newsletter and feedback link on the FCHS web site.

"We haven't received any mail," she said.

She said the Alliance is accountable to the provincial government to provide high quality service with a balanced budget because the government is the main source of revenue for the hospital.

Continued on Page 2

The Chronicle

Volunteer drivers shared with FACS in partnership

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

It takes some creative thinking to overcome some of the limitations of living in a rural community and a partnership of local organizations has done that to address one agency's shortage of volunteers.

"It's a creative solution to a rural challenge," said Loralyn Smith, volunteer coordinator at Family and Children's Services of St. Thomas and Elgin.

The agency has numerous children in foster homes in western Elgin County who require regular trips to St. Thomas or London.

Smith was having a hard time finding volunteer drivers to help transport the children back and forth.

"When it comes to recruiting, in a rural setting it can be a difficult and daunting task," said Smith.

Meanwhile, the West Elgin Community Health Centre has a list of more than 120 volunteer drivers who help take people back and forth, particularly seniors, for medical, dental or personal appointments.

Without volunteer drivers and no bus transportation back and forth to London or St. Thomas, many seniors have a difficult time getting to appointments or services that can't be accommodated in the area.

Shelley Vergeer of the West Elgin Community Health Centre said people need help just getting from one village to the other.

Through the health centre, they developed a strong network of drivers.

"It would seem West Elgin is abundant with volunteers who aren't always busy," said Smith.

She approached Vergeer last year and asked if there was a way they could work together.

With a strong list of active volunteers Vergeer said many drivers were not being kept busy and were glad to have a chance to do more.

It became a simple matter to set things up with Nancy Mott of West Elgin Community Support Services who dispatched the drivers for the health centre.

Now, she dispatches them for both agencies and said the support of the volunteers in West Elgin is incredible.



Laralyn Smith, Nancy Mott and Shelley Vergeer have found a rural solution to a volunteer "shortage".

Chronicle photo

"They are very loyal to these communities," she said, having no difficulty finding drivers available for either agency.

"I knew they'd be very willing to help," said Vergeer. "The volunteers know transportation is a problem in these rural communities."

While some volunteers strictly wished just to transport seniors, she said most are willing to take children and youth as well.

All three said they've had positive feedback from people relying on the drivers and Mott said some clients have favourite drivers that they call and ask for.

Everything is kept confidential and volunteers receive training before taking to the roads.

Volunteers are paid for mileage and expenses such as hospital parking.

Anyone interested in enhancing the volunteer pool can contact Vergeer at the health centre.

The Chronicle

Dad focus of special event for families of young kids

Dad's role in the family is being celebrated March 3 through a special program by the West Elgin Community Health Centre's Let's Connect program.

The evening combines a number of family-focussed events, but with a special focus on fathers.

Representing Dad's Can, Gordon Fisher will be the special guest speaker, talking about the active role a father can take in raising children.

"A Celebration for Dads" is the theme of the event that is focussed on families with children up to six years old.

It will also feature a number of displays from recreation and sporting organizations across western Elgin County providing an opportunity to explore the various opportunities the community has for children and families.

In addition to the special speaker, there will also be demonstrations and children are being asked to bring in a drawing or photo of their dad or another male adult who is an important part of their lives.

The evening is also being supported by Healthy At Heart Elgin, the Rodney and West Elgin Early Years Centres, the Dutton and West Elgin parks and recreation departments and the YWCA.

The event takes place at the West Elgin Community Health Centre from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

HEALTH AND WELFARE 2004

Health centre gets $95,000 to plan teen centre

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

A three-year planning process will begin at the West Elgin Community Health Centre to start a youth drop-in centre.

The Centre received $95,000 from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to fund the development of a community owned, youth organized, drop-in centre.

Claudia Mior-Eckel, program manager at the health centre helped make the application for Trillium funding and said the centre is lucky to get it.

The grant money will be used to develop a youth board of directors, develop a drop-in centre and create a community involvement plan that will see the sustainability of the centre after the funding runs out.

Mior-Eckel said the drop-in centre will be housed in the health centre building for the first year but the directors will look to move the centre somewhere more permanent.

The teen board of directors will take on leadership of fundraising and serve community needs.

The money cannot be used to lease or purchase a permanent location, nor for the operation of the centre when it starts.

The Trillium foundation interviewed youths from the area and found a lot of demand for a drop-in centre, said Mior-Eckel.

She said the youths were articulate, passionate and made an impression on the foundation to fund the project.

"Over the past several years our youth have been persistent in requesting a local community place to use that is safe," she said in a press release.

The Chronicle

Local artists sought to decorate WECHC

Throughout the fall and winter of 2003 our community watched as workers with hard-hats lugged concrete and created walls around what is now our new West Elgin Community Health Centre.

With the centre now built, the next task at hand is to decorate our community rooms with representations of our community's diversity.

Members of the WECHC board of directors and staff are looking for community members to gather and share ideas to help the centre come alive.

The goal is to decorate areas of the center with art that reflects the talent and culture of our great community, including children, youth and seniors.

We invite all local artists, gallery operators and anyone with an interest in being involved with the West Elgin Community Health Centre to an Art and Cultural Community Gathering on Wednesday, Oct. 13 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. This gathering will include refreshments and a tour of the center.

Possible opportunities include rotating and permanent displays of paintings, quilts, photography, children's drawings, tapestry, as well as the creation of painted murals.

We look forward to seeing you there. Please RSVP at 768-1715.

The Chronicle — MAY 2004



OFFICIALLY OPEN — SCOTT HILGENDORFF/CHRONICLE

Local dignitaries including representatives from the Ministry of Health, MP Gar Knutson, MPP Steve Peters and West Elgin Community Health Centre board chairman Paul Mistele took part in the official ribbon cutting ceremony held at the new centre on Friday.

Community health centre officially opens

SCOTT HILGENDORFF
staff

It was a celebration of success in what all levels of government said was setting an example in health care for the rest of the province.

While open since January in its new Pioneer Line location in West Lorne, Friday marked the official opening of the new West Elgin Community Health Centre.

And while representatives of both provincial and federal levels of government pointed to how the centre is a great model for health care, West Elgin Mayor Graham Warwick took the opportunity to put a little pressure on the government to keep its funding coming and growing.

Both MP Gar Knutson and MPP and Minister of Agriculture Steve Peters praised the facility.

"We need to be sure people in rural areas have access to proper health care," said Peters, adding there should be no difference in the level of care people receive in a rural area.

He said the WECHC is a way in which rural areas can receive first-rate access to services.

On a national level, Knutson assured the more than 125 people in attendance that the government is committed to providing strong health care, improving the level of service and decreasing the waiting lists to receive care.

In his remarks, Warwick pointed out physicians are still being paid the same as they were 10 years ago when he was more closely involved as a board member and said it's "unacceptable" that they are not better compensated.

With all the salaries coming from provincial funding, Warwick said, "Let's hope the province continues to support this facility."

Earlier, he said some people wonder why the municipality would partner in supporting the facility with the federal and provincial governments too.

He said it was a great opportunity to work with the different levels of government to help make things happen.

"This is a wonderful example of what can be done when people work together," he said, stressing the WECHC has become a model of a cost-effective form of health care that helps prevent illness and disease.

Preventative medicine has been a focus in health care of a number of years now as a way to spend money earlier to reduce greater health costs that are generated when someone does become sick.

"I am just overwhelmed by the sea of faces here and all the people who worked hard to make this happen," said Warwick.

The ceremonies were filled with praise for the success of the centre and the hard work of the staff and all the volunteers that helped see the more than $3.5 million facility built.

"This has been truly a community effort," said Peters.

"I feel this building is a reflection of a truly wonderful community health care centre," said Joe Devlin of the Toronto Community Health Branch of he Ministry of Health.

"We at the ministry are very proud of this community health centre," he said.

WECHC Board Chairperson, Paul Mistele said the completion of the project is a huge success for the community and that it was all about people.

Without the support of the staff and community, he said ideas that created the health centre would never come to fruition.

"We're really fortunate in this community to have a health centre of this calibre," he said.

While he said there were a lot of people who helped make the project possible, he asked for a round of applause for Harry Mezenberg, a member of the original steering committee that established the WECHC and a past board member.

Words of support were also given by representatives from Elgin County Council, the Municipality of Dutton-Dunwich and Rev. Duncan Colquhoun.

MC Al McGregor reflected on days when health care was provided by a doctor travelling by horse and buggy to treat patients.

Now, he said health care has an emphasis on wellness and prevention.

"It's a marvel how far we've come," he said.

Capital Campaign Chairperson Hilde Morden said through generous donations from the community, thousands of dollars were raised locally in addition to the millions provided through federal and provincial funding.

"That gives us a vested interest in our health care," she said.

"Success is a journey, not a destination. Let's journey together in good health," said Morden.

HEALTH & WELFARE 2004



SUPPORT DONATION...

Elgin-Middlesex-London MP Gar Knutson presents a $96,407 cheque to Nancy Mott, left, and Sandra Fennell. They are among the staff and partners of the new West Elgin Community Support Services project which recently opened an employment training centre at the West Lorne Complex at 160 Main Street in West Lorne. The centre offers workshops and special programs to help the unemployed find work.

Chronicle photo

Farm market being hosted by health centre

The West Elgin Community Health Centre is organizing its first local farmer's market.

The market will be held July 31 at the centre's parking lot with no cost to vendors wishing to sell local produce.

The market will have something for everyone with a family focus that will see face painting, a ventriloquist and a barbecue being run from 11 a.m. until noon.

Proceeds from the barbecue will go toward programs at the centre.

There are still vendor spaces available for the market which will run from 9 a.m. to noon.



FARM FRESH SCOTT HILGENDORFF/CHRONICLE

Cynthia Roodzant, Diane VanDyk and Janneke Fleuren, hold some samples of fresh fruits of the like that will be available at the West Elgin Community Health Centre's new farmer's market being held July 31.

Four Counties Hospital here to stay, says Minister of Health Smitherman

By Paul Mayne
The Spirit

After being questioned late last month by Lambton-Kent-Middlesex MPP Maria Van Bommel, Minister of Health and Long Term Care George Smitherman assured local residents that Four Counties Health Services is definitely not closing.

Van Bommel explained to the Minister that the recent change in governance and types of services available at FCHS, along with the appointment of a provincial supervisor, have become a contentious issue.

In addition to that, the hospital has experienced a deficit of over one half million dollars this year and some community speculation was that the province would shut down the Newbury hospital.

"I want to alleviate any concerns that exist in the local community in Newbury with respect to the Four Counties hospital," said Smitherman. "The government of Ontario and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care remain committed to the delivery of health services at that hospital, and further committed to working with the member (Van Bommel) and the local hospital to make sure the alliance (with SMGH), which is an important part of improved health care delivery in southwestern Ontario, remains and is strengthened.

"We believe that care needs to be provided when people need it and as close to home as possible, recognizing at the same time that some more sophisticated procedures are better provided in large volumes in big academic teaching centres, like the extraordinarily good work that goes on at London Health Sciences."

This was welcome news to hospital CEO Mike Mazza, who hopes this will now silence the "closing" rumours regarding FCHS.

"We were just thrilled with what he said," says Mazza. "It's what the community needs to hear."

JAN 2004

Staff settling in at new health centre



Jason Bailey from Dutton-Dunwich, working for Campbell Brothers Movers, was part of the crew that helped staff move into the new WECHC.

Chronicle photo

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

Clients didn't notice too much disruption as the West Elgin Community Health Centre made its move down the street to its brand new $4 million facilities.

"It was a smooth transition. Business as usual," said Doug Graham, executive director of the health centre.

"We've been doing treatment all week," he said on Friday.

The facility made its move late the week before and Graham said everyone is excited to be in the new, larger facility.

This week and last, partner agencies like the Arthritis Society have been moving into the larger facilities that offer more space and rooms to accommodate different services and agencies.

The facility also offers more space that Graham is expecting will attract two new doctors. WECHC received funding approval earlier last year for a second full-time doctor and just last month, received word funding is in place now for three doctors.

Coupled with an increase in the salary doctors can be paid in this geographic area, announced last month, Graham is hopeful their current, aggressive recruiting campaign will bring two more doctors to West Lorne soon.

"Our highest priority is to get those physicians now that we have space," said Graham, adding there has already been some response to advertisements the centre has placed in a national medical journal.

Despite tough competition across the province for doctors, Graham said, "We're hopeful by summer we'll fill those positions."

He said space was their biggest problem with doctor recruitment, which the new facility resolves.

While clients will get to see the new facility as they do business there, Graham said they will be having an open house with tours at the end of April.

Meanwhile, fund raising for the facility continues with $20,000 left to raise.

The current campaign includes an aggressive raffle that has reached the break-even point now. Graham is hoping between now and the February draw, the raffle will be able to help bring them closer to the end of their final stretch of fund raising.

"The community should be very proud," he said of its support for the facility so far.

Since November alone, about $20,000 was raised locally, in addition to thousands that have already been raised in the past year.

"It's a huge accomplishment for the community," he said.

HEALTH + WELFARE 2004

Alzheimers focus of candlelight dedication at St. Mary's Parish Hall on Monday night

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

A rising musical talent from St. Thomas is performing her debut single One More Memory to raise money for the Alzheimer's Association Elgin - St. Thomas next Monday.

Sara Westbrook's grandfather died in 1998.

He had Alzheimer's and wasn't able to communicate with his daughter Linda, Sara's mom.

Linda began advocating for Alzheimer's and volunteering for the Alzheimer's Association.

She met another Alzheimer's advocate, Brenda Hounam who discovered she had Alzheimer's at the age of 53.

Brenda, of Paris Ont., was very open about her experience with Alzheimer's.

Brenda had the same problems writing letters to her children as did Linda's father.

Linda wanted to get inside of Brenda's head and find out more about the brain degenerating disease.

Sara spent six hours interviewing Brenda.

Brenda was struggling to tell her children about her before the disease took over.

What came out was a song and story Brenda had waited a long time to tell.

"It's making a huge healing difference for people," said Linda

The song has been heard all around the world including Sara's performance at a Canadian Idol concert in Sarnia last month.

The song has touched families who have lost members from cancer to heart attacks.

Sara, 22-years-old, will perform the song at a candlelight dedication to families and friends affected by Alzheimer Disease and related dementias at St. Mary's Parish Hall at 7 p.m. Dec. 13.

Man rejected for flu shot protests

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

Ben DeClercq took up a battle for universal health care by protesting along the sidewalk in front of West Elgin Community Health Centre after he was told he could not get a flu shot last Thursday.

He came back a short time later wearing a cardboard sign, walking up and down the sidewalk in front of the centre last Thursday saying, "Health Centre Government $?. Can't Get flu shot"

DeClercq, from Fisherville, east of Simcoe, does not live in the WECHC catchment area and does not qualify for service at the centre.

While visiting his mother's grave in the area and checking her house in West Lorne, DeClercq heard the centre was holding an influenza vaccination clinic last Thursday.

With his health card in hand, he said he thought the provincial dollars spent on the centre would afford him access to the vaccine.

In the health centre, he said staff pointed him toward a pamphlet next to the check-in window saying, "influenza clinics available to only WECHC clients please"

DeClercq was upset he could not get a flu shot at the centre where he said his provincial taxes help fund.

The flu shot clinics are contracted by the medical officer of health at the Elgin St.Thomas Health unit to the physician at WECHC to administer here in western Elgin County.



Ben DeClercq protests for a flu shot at West Elgin Community Health Centre, Oct 14.

The physician, along with the registered nurses are only contracted to serve registered patients at the centre.

Anyone can come to the public health flu shot clinics being held Nov. 1 at West Elgin Secondary School from 3:30-7 p.m., Nov. 2, Nov. 16 and Nov. 30 5-8 p.m. at Dutton Medical Clinic and Nov. 17 2-7 p.m. at the Dutton-Dunwich Community Centre, whether they area local residents or not.

However the five flu shot clinics held at WECHC are for the 3,000 registered clients serving under one physician.

"We are not a public health facility," said Doug Graham, executive administrator at WECHC. "If he resided in our catchment area we could put him on the waiting list."

There is a lengthy waiting list to meet the physician and have health records assessed to become a patient at the centre.

Graham said the centre's doctor and registered nurses need to know his medical history before treating him, so his files would have to be sent to WECHC before he could register as a patient.

As for the protest in front of the health centre, Graham said, "He demonstrated his rights, that's the great thing about this country,"

DeClercq was instructed to go to the health unit in St. Thomas.

He said the new provincial Liberal government and federal government better open up access to health care.

He thought the $4 million facility, with around $3 million paid for by the province, would entitle access to all Ontarians.

OCT/04

Continued on Page 2



SERVING UP SCOTT HILGENDORFF/CHRONICLE

Nancy Mott, left, of West Elgin Support Services, serves up some hotdogs. Staff from the centre held an open house in West Lorne Friday to raise awareness about employment opportunities for students. About 100 students attended the barbecue as well as members of the community, like Bob Kuska, right.

Walk-in clinic offered

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

After about four months in private practice, Dr. Michael Tenki is taking on at least 100 new patients and will be offering a walk-in clinic on a trial basis.

"I live in the area and came here to service the area," said Tenki of his plans to expand his practice.

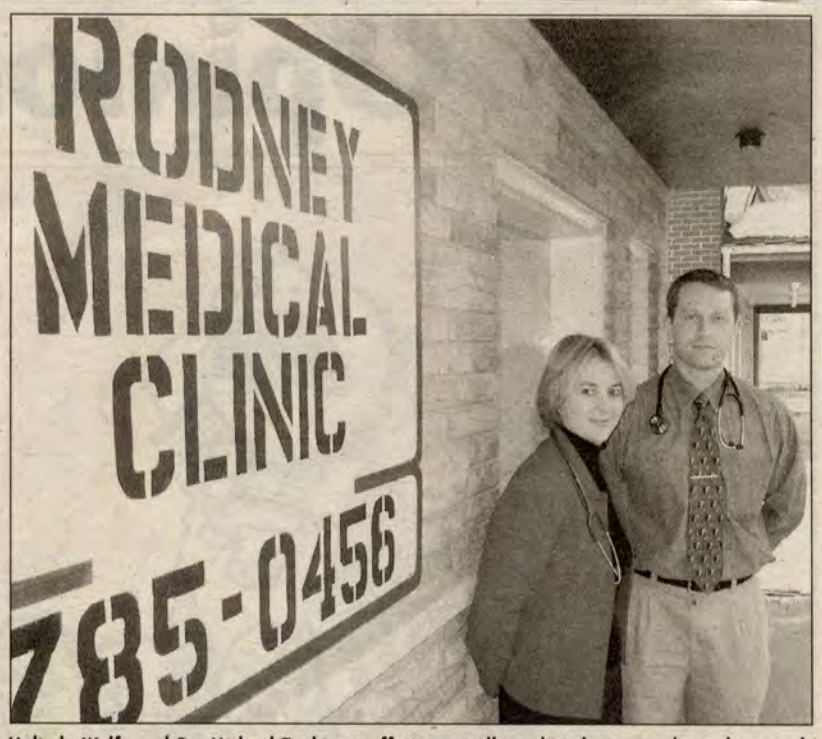
He left Four Counties Health Services in Newbury last October to go into private practice but, just starting out, was not sure how many patients he could effectively serve.

Settled in at his office in Rodney now, Tenki said it was time to expand.

With no walk-in clinics in the immediate area, Tenki wants to give it a trial run to help people who are without doctors by providing short-term care through the clinic.

He reminds people the clinic is for medical problems like sore throats and the flu and hopes by taking on more patients, he can follow them through long-term care needs as well.

Recognizing the doctor shortage, Tenki is hoping the medical practice will be filled with local patients from the area who have been without a primary physician.



Melinda Wolfe and Dr. Michael Tenki are offering a walk-in clinic beginning later this month on a trial basis. He is also taking on 100 new patients.
Chronicle photo

"I want it in West Lorne but this is good news," said Coun. Michael Mooser at West Elgin Council's Feb. 12 meeting where council learned of Tenki's plans.

Mayor Graham Warwick has been talking to Tenki previously about the plans and said the doctor is trying the clinic in response to a need he is hearing from people in the area.

"I think he's trying to work with us," said Warwick of Tenki's response to local needs.

"I just wish something would happen at the medical centre in West Lorne," said Mooser.

Tenki's clinic will begin operation at his building, The Rodney Medical Clinic at 226 Furnival Road on Feb. 24.

The clinic will be open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Warwick is hoping the clinic will see use by local people and not end up being flooded by patients from as far away as Chatham and London.

"Nobody in the world has a doctor," said Warwick of the shortage that sees Elgin County recognized as an underserviced area.

That designation helps communities and hospitals provide incentives for new doctors to come.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Princesses prepare for Hallóween

Princess Natalie and Princess Andrea Stone dressed up for the seventh annual Family Fun Night hosted by the West Elgin Community Health Centre at the Rodney Recreation Centre Monday night. The girls got to carve and take home their own pumpkin. With many organizations helping put on the event, it was anticipated 400 people would attend. About 200 pumpkins were purchased for the children.

Community support services spotlighted

The area's community support services were toured by MPP Steve Peters last week.

Throughout the afternoon, Peters and Mayors Bonnie Vowel and Graham Warwick were taken on tour by volunteer drivers and community support organizers.

Showing the strength of volunteers, the tour spotlighted services being provided like Meals on Wheels and transportation services.

Peters also saw the need for provincial help in future planning of services in the area.

A variety of community support services is offered by several agencies in the area.

Coordinated by the West Elgin Community Health Centre, West Elgin Seniors Projects Action Committee and Elgin Support Services, programs are brought to seniors and the disabled to help them live in the comfort of their own home with the safety net of a community support network catering to any need.

Helping coordinators are volunteers spending countless hours with seniors and the disabled to ensure the programs work.

"If there is one thing we're rich in around here it is volunteers," said Vowel.

WECHC has 100 volunteers each providing anywhere from two to three hours a week to eight to 10 a week.

"It's just neighbours helping neighbours," said Teresa Bobier who drives people to appointments in the area and to cities.

It started with a volunteer helping her, now she is giving back.

Lena Campbell has used the agencies to get transportation.

"Anything I need or want, I know they can help," she said as she taste tested frozen meals at 144 Main Street in West Lorne.

The frozen meals can be purchased and delivered to those unable to cook full meals easily in their own homes.

Several clients of Community Support Services at WECHC live at 144 Main Street, operated by the Elgin St. Thomas Housing Corporation which finds housing to income and needs.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Taste testing meals on wheels

Left: West Elgin Mayor Graham Warwick dishes out some maple ham, a meals on wheels meal, while eating with Blanche Graham, left, Dutton/Dunwich Mayor Bonnie Vowel, right and Gene McRae while MPP Steve Peters talks to Lena Campbell.

"We're a community focussed on helping people at home," said Bonnie Rowe, an registered nurse and program coordinator at WECHC.

She said the Ministry of Health and Long-term care is currently looking at the need for more seniors housing in the area.

Autistic boy getting to know his new friend

The Dunn family received a guide dog for their autistic son Jacob last month.

After more than a year of waiting for a dog that would fit in with the family, Monte a 20-month-old chocolate lab came to his new home Nov. 11.

During that year, Monte was being trained to help autistic children and taught simple commands with National Service Dogs.

Meanwhile, Scott and Linda Dunn were busy raising money for the costs to have a dog.

With community support, services clubs, family and friends, the Dunn's raised more than



A new classmate

National Service Dogs vest when he is working.

His attention is to be focussed on Jacob and commands from a parent or teacher.

It's been tough, so far, for the Dunns because everyone on the streets wants to pet the handsome dog and find out what he

Jacob was one of 25 people to qualify for a dog last year, out of thousands of requests to National Service Dogs.

Like all dogs, Monte gets to play at the house and relax when he is not working.

Unlike other dogs, Monte has

The Dunn's have had to adjust to bringing a dog everywhere they go now.

They have had trouble at restaurants in London where owners didn't understand it is the Dunn's legal right to bring a service dog in.

The Ontarians

crimination against anyone with a disability, including physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal.

He is not possessive of his food and can tolerate Jacob who is being trained not to pull on the dogs ears, or put his little hands in Monte's mouth.

HOLIDAY IDEAS START HERE



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Fun with bubbles

Rhodric Hales makes bubbles at the annual Teddy Bear Picnic held at the Rodney Recreation Centre Aug. 10 by the Let's Connect Office with the West Elgin Community Health Centre, the Ontario Early Years Centre and the Elgin-St thomas Health Unit.

HEALTH + WELFARE 2005

Women wanted for breast cancer focus groups

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Local women are among thousands believed to be missing vital breast screening due to the pronvinces doctor shortage.

"What we see is generally women aren't going on their own to get breast screening. They don't take the initiative on their own. Not until they find something. Generally they only go with direction of a nurse practitioner or physician," said Cynthia Roodzant, health promotion coordinator at West Elgin Community Health Centre.

If a women doesn't have a family doctor to send her for screening, the concern is, she won't have one done.

"We know we're under serviced," she said.

She is working with the Ontario Breast Screening Program to help save lives and get women to take advantage of free breast screening.

Women's health fair held

Women control the world, says Sharon Little

Before 145 women at the women's health fair at St. Mary's Parish Hall in West Lorne May 12, strength, encouragement and wellbeing were preached by motivational speakers, spiritual gurus and health professionals.

Little, a Rodney music teacher and wellness consultant told the room full of women to stop feeling guilty when they take time for themselves.

"145 women are here and the world won't collapse," she said. "So often we feel fear that we are not doing enough, not being enough, not giving enough not loving enough. Just stop! These feelings create stress which lead to health problems," said Little. "When we feel fear, our cells reverse and protect. When we are comfortable our cells grow."

While Little added retrospective to the evening, motivational speaker and humorist, Eleanor Wood from Troy, near Hamilton, had women roaring with laughter and sighing with emotional connectiveness.

"Women can deal with things better with a sense of humour," Wood told the audience. "Don't let people take your sense of humour away. That is what helps you cope."

Wood said women cope with a lot in life.

She ran a dairy farm for 10 years while her husband Harvey worked at the bank.

"I didn't know anything about cows when I first started. I didn't know what was a wet one or a dry one...now I can come home in high heels and birth a calf," she said.

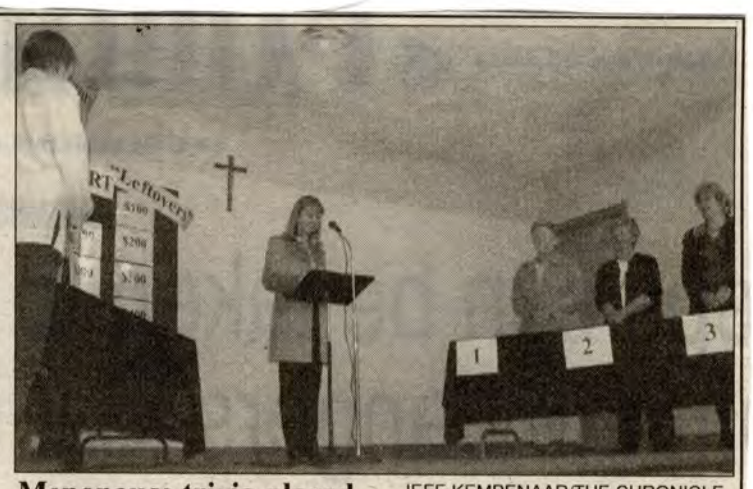
The women's health fair was organized by the West Elgin Community Health Centre, Healthy at Heart Elgin and St. Thomas-Elgin Health Unit.

It was organized to provide information on osteoporosis, menopause, breast cancer screening and well being.

"We're looking for gaps in services provided to women. To make sure they are finding all the information and services they need," said Rose Marie Vandenbrink, registered nurse and cancer prevention programmer with the health unit.

She said the event was for all women but mostly for women reaching the age of menopause (45-50), where women stop menstruating and producing estrogen.

"As you begin to age and start the next part of your life don't lose your sense of humour," urged Wood.



Menopause trivia played JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE
Nurse Practitioners, Karen Katsademas, left and Adrianne Tufford, centre, with the West Elgin Community Health Centre run a menopause trivia game with contestants Thea Long, Claire Champ and Huguette Sinasac at the Women's Health Fair May 12.

Local efforts made to stop same-sex marriage

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Local efforts are being made to stop same-sex couples from being included in Canada's definition of marriage.

A letter to Prime Minister Paul Martin and Elgin-Middlesex-London MP Joe Preston was circulated around St. Mary's Parish the first two Sundays of the month, requesting the definition of marriage not include same sex couples.

"It's one of the basic principles in the church that marriage is between one man and one woman," said Rudy Huver, Grand Knight with the Knights of Columbus, West Lorne Chapter.

The Knights of Columbus were circulating the letter following a request from the Ontario Catholic Council of Bishops and the Ontario State Council of the Knights of Columbus that local parishes send letters.

About 225 letters were handed out at St. Mary's Church in West Lorne and St. Helen's Catholic Church in Wallacetown.

Huver received 150 signed letters back and forwarded them on to the politicians before new same-sex legislation is voted on in the House of Commons in Ottawa within the next two weeks.

The letter asks the Prime Minister for a free vote on the new legislation redefining marriage, so Liberal backbenchers could vote "in accordance with their conscience."

"The sanctity of marriage would be downgraded with same sex unions," said Huver.

He also said a free vote is the most democratic way to solve the issue.

He said he decided to circulate the letter because he believed in a paragraph in a letter from the Diocese of London.

It said: "Parliament can leave marriage unchanged while meeting civilly the requirements of those in other interdependent relationships."

It asks concerned citizens to declare they are against the redefining of marriage to include same sex couples and uphold the traditional meaning: "Marriage is the origin of the family."

Meanwhile, the United Church of Canada sent a news release to local churches saying: "Not everyone who speaks from the Christian perspective is opposed to same-sex marriage."

Please see Churches, *page 2*



SCOTT HILGENDORFF/THE CHRONICLE

Delicate touch
Sabrina Howarth works through a finger dexterity test at West Elgin Community Support Services. Local high school students in the Wildcats Employment Skills Training Program took part in finger and manual dexterity training Friday, earning certificates. The training was just one of many components the students study through class time and work placements. The dexterity training received support from the West Elgin Chamber of Commerce.

Asthma educator joins WECHC

An asthma education program has started at the West Elgin Community Health Centre.

Providing information and support for asthmatic patients at the centre, the program will also include public outreach.

Tracy Gooyers, certified asthma educator assists clients in managing their asthma through, what's being called, the Primary Care Asthma Program.

"People don't have to suffer with the symptoms," said Gooyers.

Gooyers will work with the primary health care team at the centre and is funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care.

She'll provide breathing tests called spirometry to help clients get control of their asthma.

A coroner's inquest into the death of a young Toronto man led the province to extend asthma education to address the severity of the disease.

The disease of the lungs affects 10 per cent of Canadians.

Many live with asthma that is out of control dealing with coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath and chest tightness.

She encourages asthmatics to take the 30 second Asthma Test : (provided by The Lung Association)

1. Do you use your blue inhaler 4 or more times a week? (Except one dose/day for exercise)

2. Do you cough, wheeze, or have a tight chest because of your asthma? (four or more days a week)

3. Do coughing, wheezing, or chest tightness wake you at night? (one or more times a week)

4. Do you stop exercising because of your asthma?

5. Do you ever miss work or school because of your asthma? (In the past three months)

If you answer "YES" to one or more of the following questions, ask your health professional how you can feel better.

To learn more about the new program and getting control of your asthma, contact Tracy Gooyers at 519-768-1715.



New program JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE
Tracy Gooyers is bringing asthma education to the area through West Elgin Community Health Centre.

HEALTH & WELFARE 2005

Seniors' home coming to West Lorne

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Funding was approved to build a 16-unit affordable retirement home in West Lorne.

Ground could be broken mid-July with doors possibly opening Spring 2008.

The home will be located on former railway land next to the West Elgin Community Health Centre.

City of St. Thomas council approved an Ontario Works recommendation to fund $3.5 million toward the construction of 51 units in three projects in the city and Elgin County.

Heritage House will receive $72,993 per unit for a total of $1,167,892.

West Elgin taxpayers will chip in a total $622,221 in financial concessions, waiving of fees and the donation of land and a $450,000 grant.

The total capital budget is estimated at $2,264,796.

West Lorne Heritage Homes, the not-for-profit organization behind the project will raise $70,000 through fundraising.

"It's definitely a turning point for the village and for its seniors," said board chair and former Aldborough Reeve Harry Mezenberg.

"It's to be big for people who are retiring and wish to stay in West Lorne," he said.

The project was selected because it includes the largest municipal contribution in addition to contributions to cover costs to clean up the former railway land and extend Munroe Line.

As well, community groups and service clubs were brought together to form the corporation, which showed the community was behind the project, said Mezenberg.

Please see City, *page 2*



Heritage Home CONTRIBUTED

Construction of the Heritage Home will begin this year beside the West Elgin Community Health Centre in West Lorne. Here is a sketch of the 16-unit affordable housing for seniors project.

Health centre close to signing new doctor

Prospective physicians taken for tour around area hospitals

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

West Elgin Community Health Centre is close to signing a contract with two new physicians.

"The sun is rising over the hill. All we need is ink on paper now," said Executive Director Douglas Graham.

He said he hopes by summer two new physicians will be operating out of WECHC full time and the centre's hours will be extended.

Recruiting two new doctors was Graham's last big task before he leaves the centre the first week of May.

He said the two new doctors will help the centre expand its client list to near 6,000 patients.

Currently, the centre has Dr. Kevin Mardell on full time and a part time doctor from London.

The centre received funding approval to hire new doctors earlier this year.

Graham said he has taken prospective doctors to Four Counties Health Services in Newbury and St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital.

He encourages doctors to work with the hospitals and maybe pick up shifts in the emergency wards.

"Four Counties is an important hospital to us," said Graham. "We want to keep that emergency room open."

Please see WECHC, *page 3*

Part-time doctor joins West Elgin Health Centre

A part-time doctor joins the West Elgin Health Centre this week.

Dr. George Kim, a resident physician from the University of Western Ontario signed a contract to see patients until next July in the primary health clinic.

"I'm delighted," said Cate Melito, new executive director for the health centre. "As people meet with him they will find him very approachable."

Kim will help Dr. Kevin Mardell on a part-time basis.

He has a special interest in managing chronic pain, said Melito.

The health centre has had several part-time family physicians before but each one requires a recruitment process and meetings with many doctors.

Dr. Kim visited the centre recently with his family, excited to work in a team atmosphere, said Melito.

His arrival comes during an active doctor recruitment process to bring full-time physicians to the health centre.

More clients and expanded hours won't start at the health centre until a full-time physician is contracted.

"Getting those two physicians is critical to that," said Melito.

As for the on going doctor recruitment, "I don't want to say anything until I have something tangible," said Melito.



Stretched SCOTT HILGENDORFF/THE CHRONICLE

Kim Rowsom holds her eight-month-old son Karter still as Let's Connect Dietitian Diane Marcou gets a measurement. Weights and health information are collected monthly when a group of moms gather at Tiny Tots for the Growing with Babies program.

Youth centres ready to open in West Elgin and St. Thomas

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Teens will be finding more to do in the coming months as two drop-in centres near openings.

A Youth Board of Directors has been formed to start a teen centre at the West Elgin Community Health Centre.

Ashley Wooley, Brittany Jewell, Justin Regnier, Craig Hogland, Ashley Phillips and Caitlin VanRaes are on the "front line", developing contacts in the community and setting up a drop in room at the health centre for youth.

A kick-off event is planned to be held at the West Lorne Arena soon as the teens begin fundraising campaigns to bring the project to life.

Meanwhile, the teens are working to create partnerships with community members and organizations to establish a committee to oversee the long-term future of the drop-in centre.

After three years, a permanent location for the drop-in centre is hoped to be established outside of the health centre.

Claudia Mior-Eckel and Gena Chandler, program coordinators have been working with the teens to develop leadership, conflict management and mediation skills.

The centre was hoped to open in the next few weeks after school, until 9 p.m. this week for ages 15 to 19, with plans for programming for younger ages soon.

Meanwhile, a second, county-wide centre is nearly opened in St. Thomas.

Maryjo McWilliam and Carolyn Smith, students from West Elgin Secondary School, have been sitting on a board to start the Elgin Youth Resource Centre.

This youth centre is focussed on giving teens a place to go if they need to get away from school or home.

At first the centre will house the Youth Employment Counselling Centre.

YECC purchased 5,000-square feet of space at 755 Talbot St. in St. Thomas where one full-time and two part-time staff members will provide programming for youth aged 12-24.

"It's not just for youth in school but for all youth," said Libby Barrett-Futcher coordinator. "We hope to reach youth who have either dropped out or are very near to dropping out of school."

She said there are homeless youth in St. Thomas and across the county who are staying on friend's couches and barely getting through school.

She said the centre will offer a safe place for all youth to go where they can access mentoring resources, jobs, and a pool table.

Three youth were hired to gut and construct the centre in St. Thomas.

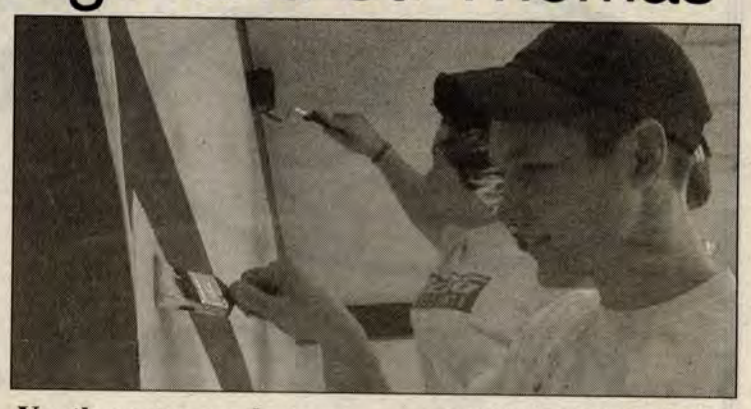
Barrett-Futcher said plans have been made to use part of the building but concepts are still being discussed on how to use the space.

"How do you see the space?" she asks local youth.

Barrett-Futcher said the centre is holding a contest for youth to design a logo and name the new centre, any local students are encouraged to enter.

While both centres are in early stages, they are still looking for more youth involvement.

Collaborative programming is being discussed between both coordinators.



Youth centre ready to go JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Craig Hogland and Melanie Knapp, community youth worker, paint walls at the new teen centre that was hoped to open after school the next few weeks at the West Elgin Community Health Centre.





Prisoner of War remembers

George (Scotty) Bell from West Lorne was a Prisoner of War for six weeks in 1944 in Leeuwarden, Holland during the Second World War.

German infantry in Hackworth Forest Germany captured him in March and took him hostage to a hospital until Allied forces liberated Holland.

He had fought with the Algonquin Battalion, Third Division through France, Belgium and Holland, reinforcing the front line liberation army across the Rhine River into Germany.

Today he is a cheerful, mild mannered, short but solid man, 83 years of age. When he joined the army Oct. 1, 1942 he was 19-years-old and 145 lbs.

He trained for two weeks in England before going to France to join the reinforcement battalion after D-Day.

"I was scared from the minute I left Halifax until the minute I got home," said Bell.

Travelling with tanks, a rifle and 100 rounds of ammunition, Bell first saw fighting in Holland.

The front line had pushed the Germans out of Holland and Bell's battalion followed the movement into Germany.

Entering a forest that was supposed to be cleared out, tracers bullets began to fly.

Bell and another soldier hid in a hole no more than one metre wide over night.

By daylight, they saw a tank with an 88 calibre gun less than 60 metres away set its target on Bell and the soldier.

The gunner opened fire killing the other soldier in the hole and the shrapnel hit Bell in the back left shoulder.

Bell climbed out of the hole and ran to a stretcher house where injured soldiers were being treated.

Before he could be treated, the Germans caught up with him.

Any soldier able to walk was ordered out of the house. Bell and six other Canadians were captured.

He was taken back across the Rhine River to a POW hospital in Leeuwarden.

The Germans were good to Bell, the eight other captured Canadians and two Americans. They knew the war was about to end.

"I was one of the lucky ones," said Bell.

In Leeuwarden, Bell and other POWs were kept on the second floor of the hospital

They were fed sandwiches every meal and had a bed to sleep on.

His wound was treated and healing.

He was captive from early March until April. 6.

The Canadian army that had conquered Italy in November 1944 joined the Allies in Holland and liberated the POW camp, freeing Bell.

He was taken in ambulance to England where he was sent home in August 1945.



SALUTING OUR VETERANS



Charlie Cronkite fought in Second World War for Canada.

Charlie Cronkite fought in the Second World War with the First Canadian Airborne at 16-years-old.

In November 1940 he signed up to parachute into Holland.

He was trained in Toronto, Orillia, Shilo Manitoba, with the airborne division than in England before seeing action.

In 1943 he saw his first action with the Victorian Highlander infantry in Italy.

Once Italy was liberated, Cronkite went to Holland after D-Day and helped the Allied Forces liberate Holland and push the Nazi Germans back.

He climbed the ranks and became a sergeant.

He suffered a gun shot wound to his lower right leg while fighting in Holland.

He said he was treated very well by nurses and people in England.

He returned to Toronto Oct. 26 1945 and was discharged from the Canadian military in the fall of 1946.

He lives in West Lorne and is an active legion member.

D-Day Dodger remembers fighting in Italy

John (Johnny) Perger, from West Lorne fought in the Second War World in Ortona Italy 60 years ago.

It was his first exposure to the brutalities of war.

He had trained in England and Algiers, Northern Africa before shipping off the Florence Italy.

Perger was 24-years-old, hauling a 40 calibre Boford anti-aircraft gun from Ortona along the Adriatic Sea, almost to Rome with the 5th Division, 42 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment.

This year he is remembering a lost friend who he travelled with, Roy Roden, from Toronto, who was killed in Italy.

His memory is sharp at 84-years-old. He is tall, with steel eyes.

His battallion is credited with taking down three planes near Ortona.

He could spend hours talking about close calls and times he should have died.

"I was one of the lucky ones," he said.





John Perger fought in the Second World War.

Fighting house to house, he remembers running up a street with his battallion when air bombing demolished a house he just left.

After experiencing heavy shelling in Lee Valley where his entire camp was bombed by German aircraft, he joined the First Canadian Corp. in Naples.

The Corp. assembled to return to France and begin to push the Germans out of Western Europe.

Experiencing more fighting in Holland, Perger made it through the war unscathed.

However, he would rather talk about when he came home days before Christmas 1945.

Two years upon returning he married his wife of almost 58 years, Alice.

He grew tobacco for a few years until one year the entire crop froze in August.

He went on to work at Erie Flooring and still lives in West Lorne.

With ailing health and his wife ill in a wheel chair, Perger said he was glad to see the Canadians who fought in Italy recognized for their contributions in the war.

It was thought the soldiers fighting in Italy were D-Day Dodgers, missing the largest battle of the war at Normandy France.



OPTIMIST CLUB OF WEST LORNE INSTALLS 04/05 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SUBMITTED

The Optimist Club of West Lorne recently held the installation of its 2004/2005 Board of Directors. Pictured left to right front: John Eagleson, Pres.; Dorothy Staddon, Sec.; Zone Lt. Gov. Marlain Wolfe of Bothwell who lead the installation; middle row l to r: Doug Staddon, Dir.; Shirley Lorch, Dir; Bill Trask, Treas.; back row l to r: Ken Neil, Dir., Karen Goncalves, Dir. and Richard Hale, Dir. The club will be hosting the annual Santa Claus Parade on November 26.

SERVICE CLUBS 2004

Cadets, Legion receive high praise at inspection

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

It's one of the best little cadet corps, was the compliment from Major Rick Trute, the detachment commander who oversees more than 80 cadet corps in his region of Ontario.

"This is one of the best little corps I've ever seen" said Major Trute following an inspection of the 2884 West Elgin Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps last Thursday night.

Captain W.A. Stinson, who oversees the successful training of the cadets was also among the recipients of accolades from the major.

He also had high praise for West Elgin Legion Branch 221 and Rodney Legion Branch 525.

"Your efforts are truly, truly appreciated," he said of the Legion which supports the corps.

Major Trute was pleased to see members of both Legions at the inspection to show their support for the corps.





Left photo, Master Warrant Officer Josh Knight introduces himself to Major Rick Trute and tells the major members RCACC 2884 are ready for inspection. Right photo, Major Trute speaks with Cadet Christopher Huver.

Chronicle photo

He said a corps' success depends not only on good leadership within but on solid support from its community.

With little warning, he had announced to the corp leadership he was going to come for an inspection of the corps, something considered an honour despite the extra pressure it can place on the cadets facing the inspection.

But Major Trute had nothing but kind words for the cadets, taking time during the inspection to ask personal questions of some of the members.

He also had a few surprises including a presentation of a certificate to Warrant Officer Daniel Balint who was the first cadet from 2884 to receive his national star qualification.

The National Star Certification Exam is the highest qualification an army cadet can receive and are prepared through the Department of National Defense in Ottawa.

Less than 50 per cent of cadets taking the exam pass and Balint scored within the top 10 per cent of those cadets.

Legion President Joe Santos also had presentations to several cadet members who received an honourary certificate of appreciation for work they did helping with Legion clean-up efforts.



Sergeant Matthew Loos, left, and Cpl. Jessica Kalita of the flag party wait while Major Rick Trute conducts his inspection.

Chronicle photo

June 24, 2004



KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

FLORAL SHOW

Doreen Baxter of Appin looks at a plum delight arrangement at the West Lorne Horticultural Society's flower show held Friday at the West Elgin Community Health Centre. Cherie Bowering won first place in the plum delight category with a Japanese maple cut leaf bouquet. Arrangements were on display throughout the day and evening following the show's judging.

Lawnbowlers hold season's first tournament

The West Lorne Lawn Bowling Club held its first tournament of the season.

The games started at 10 a.m. consisting of 12 ends per game. Lunch was prepared by Jean Vanseader and enjoyed by 12 members and six guests.

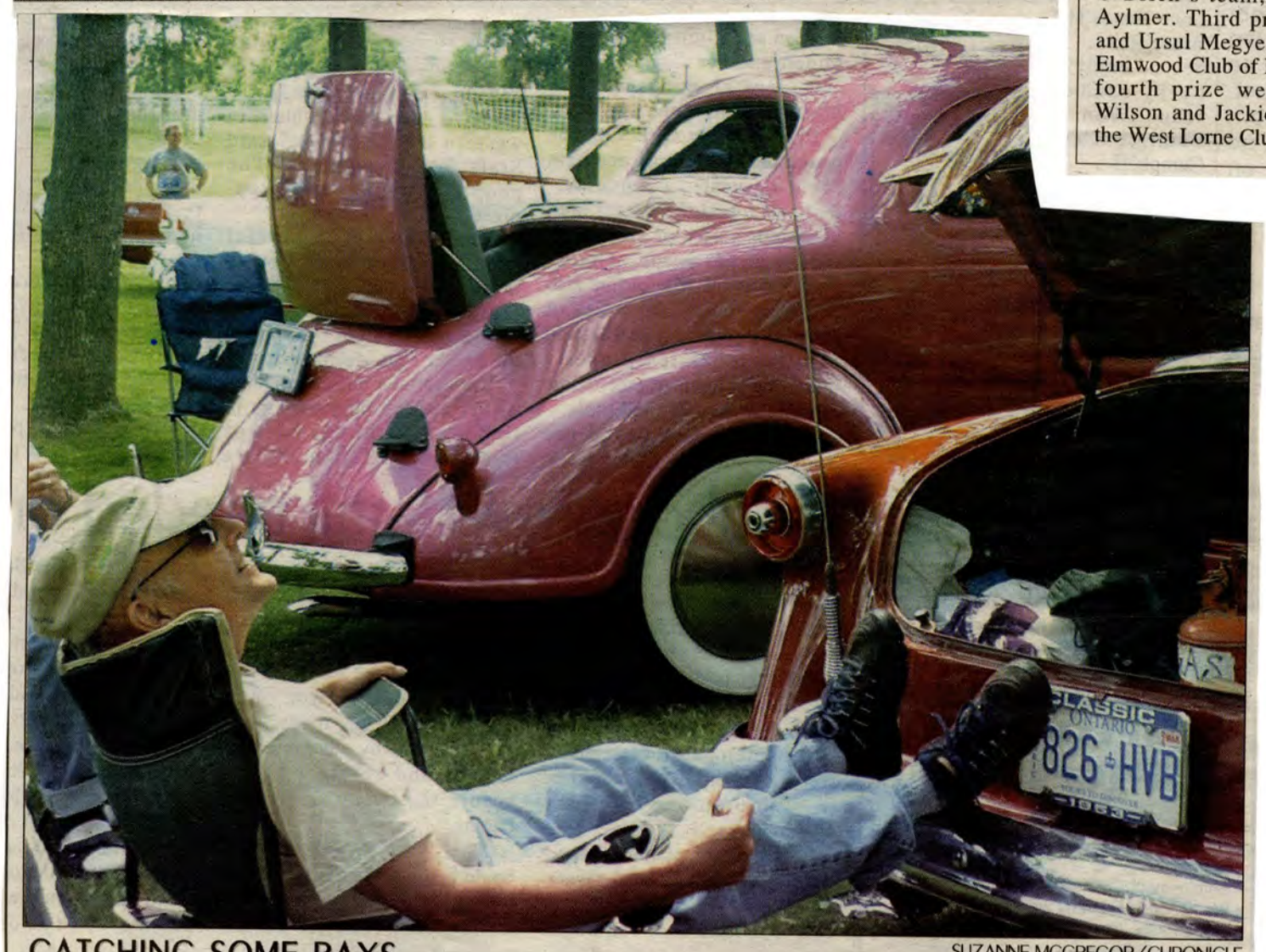
Prizes went to the four top teams.

First prize went to Teake Veenstra and Ray Kennedy's team of Aylmer. Second to Frank Boussen and Ed O'Brien's team, also from Aylmer. Third prize to Ted and Ursul Megyesi from the Elmwood Club of London and fourth prize went to Ken Wilson and Jackie Leitch of the West Lorne Club.

June 18 proved to be an enjoyable day for 14 members and 12 guests at the West Lorne Lawn Bowling Club. . The tournament was sponsored by Erie Flooring and Wood Products of West Lorne. Aylmer prevailed and took all of the four winning prizes.

Teake Veenstra and Helen Kennedy's team took first. Ed O'Brien and Ed Walcarius's team took second, the third place team was Don Ingram and David DeVries and fourth place was the Keith Benner and Kathleen Tribe team.

The public is invited to come and enjoy at 7 p.m. every Monday and Thursday.



CATCHING SOME RAYS

SUZANNE MCGREGOR/CHRONICLE

Bob Miller of Rodney takes a rest with his '53 Ford for support. He was taking part in Sunday's Optimist Club Show 'n Shine in West Lorne. Miller's display brought back lots of memories. His display included a set of drive-in speakers and a trunk filled with authentic period Coke items and a gas can.

SERVICE CLUBS 2004

West Lorne Horticultural Society prepares trip to Canada Blooms floral event

The West Lorne and Community Horticultural Society held its annual potluck supper on Dec. 9.

Along with our own members, District 10 Director Jim Mabee was present as well as several guests from the Rodney and District Horticultural Society.

Everyone enjoyed a delicious meal and an enjoyable evening of friendship and laughter.

On Jan. 13 the West Lorne society held its annual meeting.

President Liz Clark welcomed everyone, and thanked them for attending on such a cold and blustery night. Committee reports for the past year were given, and members were given the chance to sign up for the committees of their choice, for this year.

The election of officers, for the coming year was held. The following people will represent the new Executive: President: Liz Clark; Vice-President/Secretary: Susan Lilley; Treasurer: Betty McKillop. Directors for 2003-2005 are Colin Kittmer, Elmer Dean, Nancy Baillie, Mary Lippold, and Pat Watterworth; these directors have one year left for their term. Directors for 2004-2006 are Teresa Knight, Kim Penney, Helen Kovacs, Betty McKillop, and Susan Lilley; these directors have two years left for their term. President Clark thanked departing director Frances McCallum, for her contributions to the Board, for a period of many years. Clark also welcomed the new directors to the Board and promised that the year of 2004 would be another year of growth, for our society.

President Clark announced the latest bus trip, undertaken by the Dutton/Dunwich Horticultural Society, the Rodney and District Horticultural Society, and the West Lorne and Community Horticultural Society. We will be going to Canada Blooms, in Toronto, on Thursday, March 4, and the trip also includes a meal at the Mohawk Inn.

If you've never been to Canada Blooms before, you don't want to miss it. It is Canada's largest indoor gardening event, full of floral displays, seed retailers, all the latest rages in the perennial world, world-class guest speakers, and everything under the sun that has to do with gardening. Just contact any member of any one of these horticultural societies, to book your seat. Liz Clark is taking bookings and her number is 768-1282.

Refreshments were enjoyed by everyone and the meeting was adjourned.

The next general meeting is Feb. 10 at 7 p.m., at the West Lorne Complex. The guest speaker will be Jim Anderson, a London landscaper, who will talk to us about "Lighting for the Garden". Jim will have information on the purchase and installation of lighting to enhance your plants, ponds, and patio areas.

Everyone is welcome to attend and our meetings are always fun, free, and informative. For more info, call Susan Lilley, 768-2665.

West Lorne Horticulture Society discovers magic of special lighting used in landscaping projects

Jim Anderson, of Serenity Landscape Design, was the guest speaker for the Feb. 10 meeting of the West Lorne and Community Horticultural Society.

Serenity Landscape Design is a small landscaping company located in London, and Anderson was present at the meeting to talk about "Lighting in the Garden".

Adding a lighting system, to your garden, pond, or landscape provides certain elements.

Lighting extends the length of time you can enjoy your garden, it provides security, it provides safety by making pathways safe to traverse in the dark, and it provides an aesthetic value, setting the mood and tone of the landscape.

Low voltage lighting, which Anderson recommends, has several advantages over in-line lighting. A low voltage system runs on twelve volts, so it's much safer, and you do not need to hire an electrician, making it less expensive to install. This system is also more versatile, than in-line lighting.

Anderson advises using a larger transformer than what you will actually need, maybe using more wire, but giving a better quality of light. Anderson uses a heavier wire and better connections, in his installations, than you would get if you were to purchase the kits available at retail stores.

Garden lighting should be used to highlight interesting areas or to create an effect (plants, foliage, trees, garden structures, statuary, ponds, etc.). Downlighting, where a light is placed in the upper branches of a large tree, gives the effect of moonlight, to the area below. Uplighting can single out a specific item.

Anderson says to be creative, but also be selective. You don't want to light up every single item in your garden, just enough to make your landscape interesting. This effect was visible in several slides, which Anderson showed, where lighting made a winter landscape more interesting than a summer shot of the same area.

Anderson answered several questions from the members and guests present.

Susan Lilley thanked him for his interesting talk, and President Liz Clark reminded everyone about the upcoming bus trip, March 4, to Canada Blooms, in Toronto.

The society also held a seed exchange, this evening, and many people went home with something new to try out in this year's garden. Dutton Flowers owner, Marilyn Howse, generously donated the door prize, a lovely Valentine's arrangement, which was won by Craig Watterworth.

Please join us nex month, when our gues speaker will be Steve Donnelly, of Trillium Gardens, London, who wil be discussing "Nev Perennials for 2004".

This meeting will be hel March 9, and it begins at p.m., at the West Lorn Complex, with everyon welcome to attend.

The next Director Meeting is Feb. 25, at 7:3 p.m.

February 12, 2004



SUPPORTING THE CARNIVAL...

Kiwanis Club of Rodney Treasurer Ron Downie presents a cheque for $300 to Deb Slaats of the West Elgin Skating Club, going toward the club's March 6 carnival. It's the club's 50th anniversary skating carnival.

Chronicle photo



SKATERS SHOWCASE...

Kelsey Vandenberg takes to the ice at the West Elgin Arena Monday night for the West Elgin Skating Club's 2004 Skaters Showcase. Members of the club performed their solo routines for friends, family and guests during the event

Chronicle photo

March 18, 2004

Horticulturalists discover perennials

Steve Donnelly, of Trillium Gardens, London, was the guest speaker for the March general meeting of the West Lorne and Community Horticultural Society.

Donnelly's topic was "Hot New Perennials for 2004" and his program was well-received by members and guests eager to put winter behind them.

Donnelly runs Trillium Gardens with his wife, Maritza. They specialize in hard to find varieties of perennials, with over 100 varieties available, for purchase, including 300 varieties of hostas, and more than 50 varieties of "Stepables", ground-covering perennials used as lawn substitutes or between stepping stones.

The Donnellys also provide a garden design and consultation service, for the public.

Donnelly informed the gathering that he owes his love of gardening to his great-grandmother and grandmother, who encouraged his interest in plants and design.

Vice-president Susan Lilley thanked him for his efforts and everyone enjoyed a social hour.

The next directors' meeting will be held March 24 at the West Lorne Complex.

The next General meeting, on April 13, should be a great one.

Guest speaker Shirley Bellows, a Master Gardener and a strong advocate for organic gardening, will be talking to our society about "Gardening with Nature".

With increasing interest, coming from home and market gardeners and farmers, organic gardening methods are gaining popularity. This meeting will be a good opportunity to learn more about this growing movement.

The meeting will be held at the West Lorne Complex.

For more information, please contact Susan Lilley at 768-2665.

Guests are always welcome at any of our meetings; you don't need to be a member to attend.

SERVICE CLUBS 2004

Master Gardeners form western county chapter

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

Master Gardeners are growing on their own in western Elgin County.

It became official Oct. 3 when the Master Gardeners of Ontario approved a new organization in West Elgin.

Previously, the members of the West Elgin Master Gardeners were part of a county-wide group but found enough support to start their own.

"It's a good thing to be growing," said coordinator Susan Patterson. "It's exciting to have a group in our own backyard."

The Elgin County group was doing a lot of work in and around St.Thomas and held meetings in Aylmer. While all along there was sun shining in the west for western Elgin County horticulturalist who saw room to grow with activity focussed from Southwold to the western edge of the county at Chatham/Kent.

The group is a knowledge base for trees, vegetables, fruit, soil, grass to biology.

"There is a lot of enthusiasm for more knowledge and endless possibilities to use it," said Patterson.

"We're about growing the skills of local gardeners and horticulturalists," said secretary-treasurer Kim Penny.

To become a Master Gardener, three correspondence courses should be completed through the University of Guelph.

The group sets a timeline of 18 months to complete the courses and members can access resources and knowledge through the group.

There are three more levels of schooling for advanced master gardeners.

"Gardeners are book people," said Patterson.

With baby boomers looking toward retirement, the ladies expect gardening to grow as a passtime.

The group can make public or private projects work more smoothly with its advice and designs.

Master Gardeners is a non-profit organization focused on teaching and educating people.

"People can get burned out with a shovel in their hand or get frustrated not knowing how many plants will fit in a space," said Penny. "Gardening can be therapy, it should relieve stress."

The group has 11 members, or Master Gardeners, in training.

Members are biology teachers, psychologist interested in children gardening or from the conservation authority. However, anyone interested in persuing gardening further can join.

The groups inaugural meeting was Oct. 19 at the Backus-Page House in Tyrconnell where they hope to do some projects.

The group will hold monthly meetings throughout the winter and encourages newcomers to join.

The Chronicle



JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Anita Hyatt, centre was presented with the Memorial Cross (pinned to Anita's sweater) for the loss of her son on a peacekeeping mission by West Elgin Legion Branch 221 President Julie Lawrence on Nov. 11 at the Legion. Herm Hyatt, right, is Anita's husband.

Memorial Cross brings closure

From Page 1

Philip enrolled in the Royal Canadian Signals, a communications and electronics branch of the Canadian Forces in 1960, as many young men did in the Atlantic provinces.

"I don't know why he joined. It was what he wanted to do.

"He was somewhat adventurous, You join because it is in you. A lot of people in the Atlantic provinces joined."

Bev's son Scott is currently peacekeeping in Bosnia and her husband Jerry served for 32-years.

Her other brother William died in Cold Lake in a military training accident.

She remembers when the chaplain and a military officer came to her home to bring word of Philip's death.

"They came to the door. They said 'he is coming home.' It was hard to believe he was gone without the body," said Bev.

Bev and Anita were living alone and held a memorial for Philips death but his body could not be transported home.

It didn't feel like closure for the women without the body present.

Philip is buried in the Canadian Section Gaza War Cemetery in Egypt.

He was posted to Canadian Forces Station Alert, 817 km south of the North Pole over a year's time for which he received the Special Service Medal with Alert Bar.

In October 1965 Philip became a peacekeeper with the UN in Egypt. On Aug. 19, 1996 he was killed in an electrical accident setting up signal equipment.

Just a week before, he wrote home to Anita with expectations of being home soon.

Anita said it was a waste for him to be there. "They are still fighting there."

She said he died doing what he wanted to do though, helping people.

In his letters home she remembers him asking to send jellybeans to give to the children.

His Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal and SSM were presented to Anita at a ceremony at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 221 on Remembrance Day last week.

The Dag Hammarskjold Medal was awarded to Anita from the Secretary General of the UN in memory of her son's ultimate sacrifice.

"This is wonderful," said Anita at the ceremony. "He was such a good son. I think of him often."

Anita's giving spirit was inherent in Philip, said Bev. She continues to knit hats and mitts for the Salvation Army.

Marketing West Elgin starts with cash boost and Chamber plans

JEFF KEMPENAAR
staff

For the first time, West Elgin now has an economic development plan.

It will "identify and execute opportunities that will enhance the economic activity of the municipality for the betterment of the community as a whole", said the mission statement in the West Elgin Chamber of Commerce business plan presented to council Nov. 25.

The municipality approved funding $20,000 of expenses incurred by the chamber including $5,000 for Web site development and $4,000 for signage to lead people to the downtown areas of Rodney and West Lorne.

Council held off on approving the budget last April requesting the chamber make the budget more accountable before it would consider its approval.

While council said the budget was itemized this time, Mayor Graham Warwick said it didn't say much.

However, Warwick, council, and the chamber members who attended the meeting said the two parties are developing a relationship of trust.

"The turtle doesn't go anywhere without having to stick its neck out. If we want to do something that has never been done we have to stick our necks out. Let's spend some dollars on something positive," said Warwick.

At the meeting on behalf of the chamber were President Ted Uffen, Keith Fretter vice-president, directors Tom Jones and Jeff Knight. Counc. Mary Bodnar is also the Chamber's treasurer.

Questions were raised about the accountability of the money being spent and where it was being spent.

Counc. Trudy Balint moved to approve the budget but questioned Fretter's interest in the money. She questioned if the money would benefit his business, Compass Realty in Rodney, indirectly.

"If we successfully bring a business to town, will Compass benefit? We might sell a home. Is that a sin? The municipality will get a broader tax base," said Fretter.

Continued on Page 2



CHRONICLE

GREENING UP

Bethany and Fraser Morton check out a section of baby spider plants while Natalia Dos Santos finds an outdoor plant she likes at the West Lorne Horticultural Society's spring plant sale held Saturday at the West Lorne Complex.

West Lorne Optimist Club host successful annual night-time Santa Claus parade

The sound of music was heard and the twinkle of the many Christmas lights were seen through the main streets of West Lorne at the recent Optimist Club of West Lorne's annual Santa Claus parade held on November 26. There were many illuminated and brightly decorated floats making it difficult for the judges to make their decisions on who would take the cash prize of the individual categories.

Winners were K.D. Metal Works (Best Commercial); Kettle Valley Volunteers (Best Service Club); The Serle family (Best Family); West Elgin Sparks (Best Youth Group); Melody Fellowship (Best Illuminated); Albert's Generator Service (Best Decorated).

OPTIMIST CLUB OF WEST LORNE Christmas Shopping Cash Draw Winners:
Wayne Hauser ($300); Kathy Staddon ($200); Ron Campigotto ($100)
We thank all who supported this fund raiser.
All proceeds to youth activities within our communities.



LEGION COMPETITION WINNERS...

Zone A-7 essay and poster contest winners are (l-r) Ryan Bedford (2nd place coloured poster), Kasey Kosik (2nd place essay) and Shannon Kindornay (1st place essay). Absent is Jennifer Watson (1st place black & white poster). Making presentations is West Elgin Branch 221 President, Joe Santos.

Chronicle photo

SERVICE CLUBS 2004



The Optimist Club of West Lorne recently hosted its 2004 Oratorical zone contest combined with the Optimist Club of Wallacetown. 10 speakers came to share the views on the topic 'thinking, working and expecting the best'. Finalist included Kasey Kosikar (1st girls), Gayle McFadden (2nd girls), Cody McCallum (3rd girls), Rishi Sharma (1st boys), Jacob Rowe (2nd boys). Rishi Sharma and Kasey Kosikar qualify for the regional final held this weekend in Bothwell *Chronicle photo*



Joanne Murray, Governor of Eastern Canada and the Caribbean District of Kiwanis International attended the West Lorne Kiwanis Club's fund raising barbecue last Tuesday afternoon on West Lorne's main street. She was presented with a special spatchula to help Bill Denning fry up some hotdogs and burgers. The event raised about $100.

Chronicle photo



The Knights of Columbus held its Substance Abuse Awareness Poster Contest. Winners at St. Mary's School include: back, left, Darren Brown, Cassandra Vandenbrink, middle, left, Dakota Poels, Ann Peifer, Melanie Ganhadeiro, front, left, Rebekah Brayton, Adam Ameida, Kasey Kosikar, Megan Simpson, Kaylee DeRooy and Mathew Westelaken.

Contributed photo

Scouting in crisis

Lack of leaders forcing local troops to shut down while Scouts Canada looks at closing area camp

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

As cash-strapped Scouts Canada looks to close Camp Timken near Iona this month, Helena Vanvugt remains hopeful the Scouting program could return to West Elgin.

"I would love to see it get started again. I think it's a good program for the youth," she said. Now a senior who finally decided it was time to quit, Vanvugt's departure as a cub leader for 35 years left a void no one else was willing to fulfill.

The program, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts, was close to falling apart from a lack of volunteer leaders and as Vanvugt retired, the last parent-leaders gave up as well.

"It's really a shame," said Vanvugt.

"By and large, volunteers are our largest challenge in providing the programs," said Myles Vanni, operations manager for the Tri-Shores Council of Scouts Canada in London.

He said there's no shortage of children wanting to take part in Scouting programs but just not enough volunteers to keep it going in every community where it was historically found.

He said Volunteer Canada is reporting a massive loss of volunteers in all sectors and suspects some of it has to do with people having less time.

Employees are often doing the work that was normally done by two or more people and in most homes, both parents have to work full-time to make a living.

He said it keeps them from having time to commit to helping programs and organizations.

"West Lorne is similar to a lot of communities," he said of the disappearance of Scouting programs.

However, he said it's not completely bleak. Some communities are coming forward with volunteers looking to start Scout troops including one that just formed in Alvinston.

In Cubs, Vanvugt remembers seeing as many as 24 children involved at one time, not counting the other Scouting levels and said there were about 12 registered for this fall when the program finally collapsed.

She said it's unfortunate because of all the work in recent years through the Optimist Club and a Trillium Foundation, the helped secure a first-rate building for Scouts.

While she misses the program it was just too much work for her to stay involved.

Not only with parents being busier, she wonders if some are scared away from volunteering because of the police checks and interviewing process

Vanvugt

"I would love to see it get started again. I think it's a good program for our Youth

— Longtime leader, Helena Vanvugt

Marketing plans for West Elgin on hold for now

Council wants more accountable budget before approving Chamber projects to promote economic development

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

The West Elgin Chamber of Commerce is being asked to do a little more homework before council will consider approving an extra $21,000 for economic development.

"We have a whole whack of volunteers who want to go out and tell the world what you already have," said chamber member Irene Puddester.

The chamber came to council last Thursday seeking support to cover the expenses volunteers would incur driving to meetings with potential industries and businesses.

However, council had several concerns with the budget, particularly from Mayor Graham Warwick who was concerned the budget was not accountable enough as to how the money was going to be spent.

The itemized budget included $1,000 for a brochure and information package, $2,500 for meeting expenses, $5,000 for travel costs and $5,000 in advertising expenses to promote the area.

There currently isn't an economic development information package available to prospective new businesses or industries.

Chamber President Tom Jones said after unsuccessful past efforts to find a way to hire an economic development officer, the chamber decided to take on the role as a group of volunteers.

The chamber restructured and formed new committees to look at promoting the municipality to the outside world while looking internally at training and education needs local industries and businesses have.

"We must move forward with economic development. The community has too much at stake. The business community is at risk, therefore employment is at risk, therefore the community is at risk," said Keith Fretter who acted as spokesperson on behalf of a West Elgin Chamber of Commerce delegation seeking council's support.

With available land for development, strong infrastructure, cheaper land and homes for sale, a close proximity to the Highway

'WE MUST MOVE FORWARD WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THE COMMUNITY HAS TOO MUCH AT STAKE,"

— Keith Fretter, West Elgin Chamber of Commerce

Continued on Page 2



ARTISTIC EVENING...

Kris King performs during West Elgin Secondary School's coffee house last Thursday evening. Students and community members exhibited art projects and performed during the evening to a small crowd.

Chronicle photo



GRADE NINERS GET ORIENTATED

JEFF KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

A muddy and wet Hunter Manley and Jamie Vanceeder, both Grade 9 students slip and slide at the Grade 9 orientation games on Sept. 24 at West Elgin Secondary School.

SEPT/04

It's like being a mom for two hours a day

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

It's the children that can be the best and worst parts of Joyce Hutchison's job.

She picks up 53 children on 53 kms of western Elgin County roads, driving school bus for Elgin Bus Lines.

"I've got a pretty good bunch of kids," said Hutchison.

The children and teens are both a challenge and a joy to Hutchison with some who touch her hearts and some who test her patience along the route that sees her collect students for St. Mary's Catholic School, West Elgin Senior Elementary, West Elgin Secondary School and Aldborough Public School.

Hutchison's day starts at 7 a.m. at the bus barns in West Lorne where she makes a daily check of the bus, inside and out, for any potential hazards or problems before heading out on the route that takes her out to Argyle Line where she works a back and forth route along the concessions before coming back to West Lorne.

"They work the routes out very neatly," said Hutchison, who found becoming a bus driver six years ago was a job that fit her lifestyle and gave her a chance to be around children.

While the driver training was intensive, she said past experience with her husband, a truck driver, gave her an advantage to picking up the defensive driving skills needed to handle a larger vehicle like a bus.

"It's bigger but not hard to get on to," said Hutchison.

The largest challenge is the children who seem to find the crucial moments, like when she's negotiating a corner or making a turn-around in a driveway, to want her attention.

"They stand up, move around when they're supposed to be sitting," said Hutchison, who finds she has to be a mom as much as a driver, making sure the kids are staying in their seats, designed to keep them safer in a collision.

She said her eyes are constantly in motion from being on the road ahead of her, on the mirrors for the road behind her and on the children in the mirrors on the bus, making sure they're safe.

"You're just going like that all the time. That's what they train you to do," she said.

She remembers when she first took over the route a couple years ago, that the children were noisy and all over the bus.

"I came home and was hoarse from all the yelling," she said of attempts to settle the children down.

Now, she said it's like a whole new bus and it just takes a look to remind a child of what he or she should be doing.

She said some parents don't realize how difficult their children can be when it comes to listening to an adult, while others are surprising in how well-behaved they are.



Joyce Hutchison enjoys time with the children on her bus route.

Chronicle photo

"Naturally, they're going to be laughing and talking," said Hutchison, but sometimes they get carried away.

"You can tell by the children when a full moon is coming up," she said.

The strictness is all about keeping the children safe and despite some tense moments, Hutchison loves being with the kids.

"I've got one little Grade 1 girl, you'd never know she was on the bus," she said. She also has another girl in Grade 3 or 4 that she swears talks like she is 25 and carries on some great conversations along the route.

As much as her job is to transport the children, she said it's often like being a mom to 53 kids.

From having to keep them in line to hearing their concerns about life, Hutchison can often be involved with the kids, hearing their thoughts and talking to them about their problems.

She remembers one little girl getting on the bus crying because other girls didn't want to be her friend anymore, needing someone to listen to her.

"If a child is upset, I try to talk to them," she said.

Outside the challenges of having 53 students on the bus, Hutchison said the next biggest obstacle to doing her job well is sharing the roads with other drivers.

"Some are bad. It's against their religion to follow a bus," she said of drivers who will do anything they can to get in front of her, not thinking that on an icy road, she can't hit the brakes hard when they pull out in front of her.

"If they see you coming, they'll pull out. They do not want to drive behind you," she said. "Just like a tractor trailer, this bus won't stop on a dime."

It's up to her to get the children to school and home again safely each day and said it's important for motorists to use care when sharing the roads with school buses.



ON THE HUNT...

Fraser Morton, left, and Calvin Dowling look for some chocolate Easter eggs hidden among the books at the West Lorne Library on Monday afternoon.

Chronicle photo

SERVICE CLUBS 2004

The Chronicle



Cliff Hooper bowls at the West Lorne Lawn Bowlers Association. KEMPENAAR/CHRONICLE

Lawn bowlers duke it out

The fifth tournament of the season on Aug. 20 began at 6 p.m. The late afternoon breeze made it very enjoyable for the participants from Aylmer and the West Lorne members to duke it out.

Three games of 12 ends were played and the lights were turned on to complete the last game. Desserts and beverages were prepared and served by Jean Vanseader and enjoyed by the 12 participants and three guests. Sharing in the prizes, sponsored by Butch's Small Engine Repair were, Don Broom and Jackie Leitch; andre and Mrs. Van Rossel from Aylmer; Cliff Hooper and Bill Kocsis; Hugh McCahon and Doug Small; Bert Jones and Rose Daniel; Bob Hailstone and Myrtle Hooper.

The public is invited to come out and play every Monday and Thursday at 7 p.m. sharp.

October 7, 2004 ~ Page 11

Nurseryman visits West Lorne Horticultural Society

Tom Intven of Canadale Nurseries, in St. Thomas, was the guest speaker for the September 14 meeting of the West Lorne and Community Horticultural Society.

Intven visited our society to bring members and guests up-to-date on what plants will add colour to the autumn garden. Intven brought along about 50 potted perennials, broadleaves, and shrubs to support his discussion.

Teddy Globe Cedar, a "touch me" evergreen, and Threadleaf Cedar, a loose mound with whipcord-like branches, were two of the evergreens Intven displayed. Broadleaves included Variegated English Boxwood, with blue-green leaves edged with white, and Castle Wall Blue Holly, a male form of blue holly ideal for tall hedges.

There was a large selection of shrubs on display for the audience. Early Amethyst Callicarpa bears purple balls of fruit, in clusters, along the branches, in fall. Limelight Hydrangea, with chartreuse flowers on upright branches, is a favourite of the florist industry. Summer Wine Compact Ninebark is a dwarf form of Diabolo, with dark, deeply serrated leaves.

Intven donated all the plants, which he'd brought with him, to the society.

Please join us on Oct. 12, when Don Yarwood, of St. Thomas, will be the guest speaker. His topic will be "Orchids" and he'll be bringing along a display of several different varieties. For more information, call Susan at 768-2665.

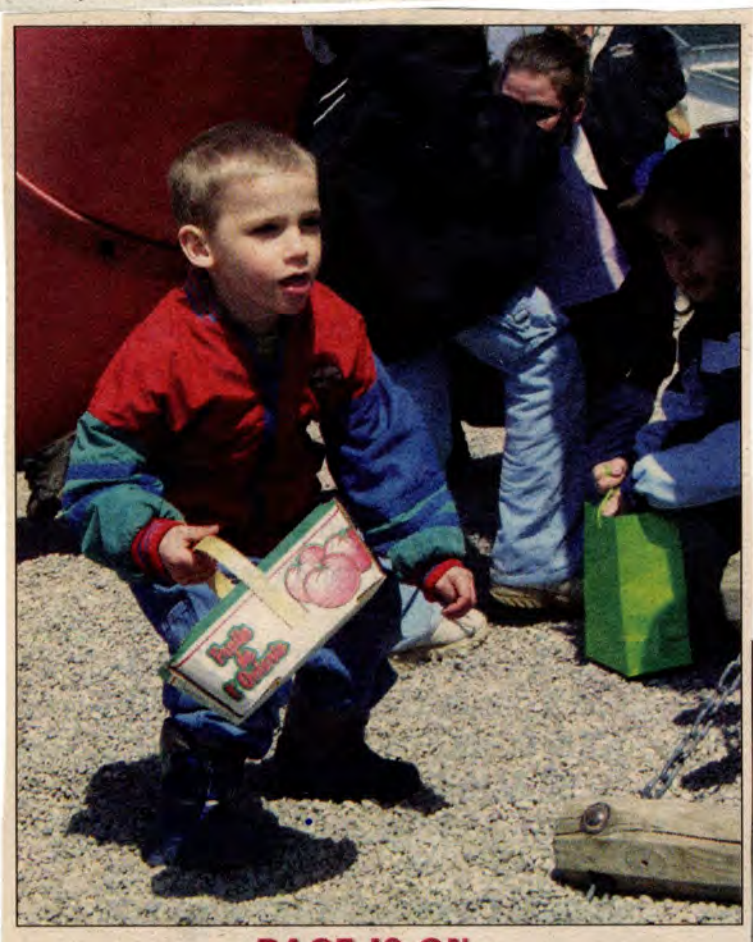
West Elgin Legion

Outdoor patio approved

West Elgin council approved a proposed outdoor patio at the West Elgin Legion in West Lorne at its Aug. 12 meeting.

The patio will be built after the building inspector reviews the plan. It is being built in expectation of a smoking bylaw in the future. Also council learned Legions will receive tax relief from the county like they already do from the municipality.

The Legion asked Mayor Graham Warwick to get the County to stop collecting property taxes from Legions. He made a presentation to Elgin County council stressing the importance of the Legion and veterans that fought for freedom in World War 2. The tax relief will begin in 2005.



RACE IS ON...

Michael Blais races around the playground at St. Mary's School in West Lorne during the Optimist Club of West Lorne's annual Easter Egg hunt held Saturday afternoon. (Top, centre and right) More than 75 children raced around the school ground in search of chocolate eggs and the special giant eggs that earned three age groups a special Easter basket of treats. Scott Langstaff offers some encouragement to his daughter Erin.

Chronicle photo





April 8, 2004

Local horticulturalists will have one last chance to learn from pro

A lifelong love of gardening has given horticultural guru, Shirley Bellows, an appreciation for the natural world, and all its inhabitants, great and small.

The regionally renowned horticulturalist will be leaving the area but local residents will have one more chance to learn from her when she speaks to the West Lorne and Community Horticulture Society before departing for the west coast.

Bellows, who first started gardening, at the tender age of two, credits her father, for her love of horticulture.

"I have a black and white photo, of my father and I, along with all the produce that we grew, in our vegetable garden. I was four years old, at the time.", said Bellows. From the age of ten, Bellows tended her own garden, planting, harvesting, and saving seeds, all by herself.

Eventually, Bellows became a Master Gardener and was the president of the London-Middlesex chapter from 1995-96. She helped to establish the London African Violet Society, in 1980, and is currently its past-president. Bellows is an active member of the Canadian Organic Growers, a group dedicated to organic gardening and farming, and responsible for an increasingly popular organic conference, held every year, at the University of Guelph. She is also a member of Seeds of Diversity Canada, fellow gardeners and farmers, who preserve heritage seeds of flower, fruit, vegetable, and grain crops.

Bellows is the "question and answer" contact, for this group, responding to letters and e-mails, from around the world. A certified flower show judge, Bellows has even schooled judges on houseplants.

She has also participated, for five years, in the Horticultural Therapy Program, at the London Psychiatric Hospital, enriching the lives of its patients. For the last ten years, Bellows has been involved in local television. She started on "One O'clock Live", with host Bruce Williams, and can now be seen on the New PL's "New Day", hosted by Bevan Palmateer.

So, what's next for Shirley Bellows? One major change, coming this summer, will be her husband's retirement, from a teaching position at Medway High School. Bellows and her husband will be leaving southwestern Ontario and relocating to the Vancouver area, to be closer to some family members there. Although she is excited by the move, Bellows regrets having to leave other family and friends behind.

Bellows will be the guest speaker, at the next meeting of the West Lorne and Community Horticultural Society, on April 13, 7 p.m., at the West Lorne Community Complex.

If you would like to learn how to garden and live, in harmony with nature, you would be more than welcome to attend. There is no admission or membership necessary. For more information, you can contact Susan Lilley, at 768-2665.

CLUBS 2004

JAN. 2004 The Chronicle



OPTIMISTS SHOW APPRECIATION TO YOUTH OF THE COMMUNITY

The Optimist Club of West Lorne held its 2003/2004 Youth Appreciation evening by hosting a delicious meal served to the students, their family members and teachers followed by a ceremony explaining what these youngsters have accomplished and a presentation of certificates by club chair member Optimist Doug Staddon and President Julie Lawrence. Pictured are the youth honoured (back row L-R) Morgan McWilliam, Rachelle Ambrose, Jenn Pinder, Justin Hwang and Matt Soos. (Second row L-R) Ann Pfeifer, Josh VanLoon, Laura Szusz, Andrew Ford and Emily Kalmbach. (Front row L-R) Optimist Pres. Julie Lawrence and Youth Appreciation Chairperson Optimist Doug Staddon.

Submitted photo

West Lorne Horticultural Society prepares trip to Canada Blooms floral event

The West Lorne and Community Horticultural Society held its annual potluck supper on Dec. 9.

Along with our own members, District 10 Director Jim Mabee was present as well as several guests from the Rodney and District Horticultural Society.

Everyone enjoyed a delicious meal and an enjoyable evening of friendship and laughter.

On Jan. 13 the West Lorne society held its annual meeting.

President Liz Clark welcomed everyone, and thanked them for attending on such a cold and blustery night. Committee reports for the past year were given, and members were given the chance to sign up for the committees of their choice, for this year.

The election of officers, for the coming year was held. The following people will represent the new Executive: President: Liz Clark; Vice-President/Secretary: Susan Lilley; Treasurer: Betty McKillop. Directors for 2003-2005 are Colin Kittmer, Elmer Dean, Nancy Baillie, Mary Lippold, and Pat Watterworth; these directors have one year left for their term. Directors for 2004-2006 are Teresa Knight, Kim Penney, Helen Kovacs, Betty McKillop, and Susan Lilley; these directors have two years left for their term. President Clark thanked departing director Frances McCallum, for her contributions to the Board, for a period of many years. Clark also welcomed the new directors to the Board and promised that the year of 2004 would be another year of growth, for our society.

President Clark announced the latest bus trip, undertaken by the Dutton/Dunwich Horticultural Society, the Rodney and District Horticultural Society, and the West Lorne and Community Horticultural Society. We will be going to Canada Blooms, in Toronto, on Thursday, March 4, and the trip also includes a meal at the Mohawk Inn.

If you've never been to Canada Blooms before, you don't want to miss it. It is Canada's largest indoor gardening event, full of floral displays, seed retailers, all the latest rages in the perennial world, world-class guest speakers, and everything under the sun that has to do with gardening. Just contact any member of any one of these horticultural societies, to book your seat. Liz Clark is taking bookings and her number is 768-1282.

Refreshments were enjoyed by everyone and the meeting was adjourned.

The next general meeting is Feb. 10 at 7 p.m., at the West Lorne Complex. The guest speaker will be Jim Anderson, a London landscaper, who will talk to us about "Lighting for the Garden". Jim will have information on the purchase and installation of lighting to enhance your plants, ponds, and patio areas.

Everyone is welcome to attend and our meetings are always fun, free, and informative. For more info, call Susan Lilley, 768-2665.

Genealogical society views historical items

New President, Mary Prud'homme, chaired the meeting of West Elgin Genealogical and Historical held Jan. 25.

Other members of the new executive are; Catherine Me Millan, Vice-president; Colin McGugan, Treasurer; John Kirkland, Secretary.

McGugan presented the financial report for the fiscal year and Don Carroll gave a cemetery report.

After a refreshment break, 12 members displayed treasured family items and explained their significance. These items included marriage certificates dated in the 1820s and 1850s, a box given by royalty, figurines, a Gaelic Bible, a tobacco cutter and a letter written to Scotland in 1817.

It was evident that each item was a cherished memento and the presentations were appreciated by the audience.

The Chronicle



DEATH BY CHOCOLATE...

Al Kirk of the West Elgin Dramatics Society joins the Friends of the Library in a murder mystery event being staged Saturday night at the WEDS theatre in Dutton. The interactive mystery is the culmination of the Friends of the Library's first Chocolate Festival. The morning features a chocolate bake sale followed by an afternoon "chocolate challenge" starting at 2 p.m. where entrants cook up their best chocolate delights for judging.

Dave Phillips photo

FEB. 12, 2004 The Chronicle

Environmental group inviting speaker on wind generation

The West Elgin Environmental Group (WEEG) is in the process of acquiring a speaker from the Ontario Power Generation organization to come and speak on the benefits of wind turbines.

There is at present a test site in the area with the results being expected in the spring of this year as to how well a turbine farm would work in our area. These giant turbines are quiet and produce power with a minimum amount of wind.

WEEG, a non-profit, grassroots organization whose purpose is environmental protection and restoration, was founded in 1989 and achieved charitable status in 1996.

Since 1989, the West Elgin Environmental Group has acted locally to raise awareness of environmental issues through school contests, community fairs, the media, and through the example of good environmental stewardship set by its members.

The West Elgin Environmental Group is a volunteer organization with some members being from the local service clubs.

This is a group of individuals concerned with the fragile state of the earth, and its increasingly diminished potential to sustain future generations. If you care about the future of your children and grandchildren, or you just have a healthy respect for nature and the environment, this is your opportunity to make a difference.

Regular meetings of the West Elgin Environmental Group are held on the third Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the West Elgin Municipal Complex in West Lorne.

The West Elgin Environmental Group would be pleased to have you as a member, so if you have any ideas or if you feel that you could be of any assistance please call Secretary-Treasurer John Eagleson at 768-1427, and become a member.

The group's next meeting is to be held on Feb. 16 at the West Lorne Complex and everyone in the community is invited to attend at 7:30 p.m.

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SERVICE CLUBS 2005

West Lorne Optimist Club 10th Annual Santa Claus Parade Float Winners

Best Commercial ~ TFT Global Inc
Best Service Club ~ Rodney Fair Board
Best Family Group ~ West Elgin Moto Cross Riders
Best Youth Group ~ Melody Fellowship Youth Group
Best Illuminated ~ Melody Fellowship Sunday School
Best Decorated ~ Albert's Generator Service

Congratulations to all winners. Many thanks to all participants, and we look forward to seeing you all next year.



SUBMITTED

Rodney Firemen honoured

On June 29 the Office of the Ontario Fire Marshall presented long service awards. Three members of the West Elgin Fire Association, Rodney Department were honoured: William Keutch, 40 years, Dennis Lee, 35 years, and Robert Wight, 30 years. Their spouses, Deputy Mayor Bernie Wiehle and Fire Chief Andy Kieraszewicz also attended to witness the presentation.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

All I want for Christmas is...

Emma Brears meets Santa Claus at the West Elgin Community Health Centre after the West Lorne Optimist Santa Claus Parade Nov. 25. While organizers felt less people came out to brave the cold and see the parade, more than 100 came to visit Santa afterward.

West Elgin Legion to honour veterans

WEST ELGIN LEGION BRANCH 221
NEWS

2005 has been declared the Year of the Veteran to thank and honour all veterans who served their country in times of war, military conflict and peace. Consequently, all West Elgin Legion Br. 221 member veterans and their spouses are invited, as guests, to attend a roast beef and cabbage roll dinner. This event will be held Sept. 11. A social time and presentations will take place from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. and then a dinner buffet from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The general public is invited to attend this event and tickets are available at the branch on John St. in West Lorne or at Murray's Video in Dutton, Krebsz Jewellers in West Lorne, Marg's Variety, in Rodney.

To top the evening off, the Fairey Swordfish fundraiser comes to an end.

All proceeds from the fundraiser are to further benefit our veterans and the communities the branch serves.

Tickets are still available at the Legion and the Chronicle.

In keeping with the spirit of the Year of the Veteran, the participation of family and friends of our celebrated veterans would be greatly appreicated.

In other news for Branch 221 RCL, members recently hosted a food booth at the August 13 West Lorne Minor Soccer cup day held at Miller Park.

Ric Whyte, Jim Stocking, Dennis Joyce, Joe Santos, Pete and Gloria Palmer, Justin Swan, Georgina Jensen, Barb Campbell, Kim Penney, Nancy Murray and helpers Stacey Penney and Brent Brown worked hard at this event.

Legion Week will be celebrated across the province starting Sept. 18 at all branches.

Many branches host activities and events to serve our veterans and community members during this week.

Take the opportunity during this week to visit one or all of the branches in western Elgin County. Everyone is welcome.

Don't forget to come out to Branch 221 West Elgin's weekly meat draws held every Friday at 8 p.m., all-you-can-eat breakfast held on the first Sunday of every month or the roast beef lunch held the last Friday of every month.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Optimists and soccer association come together

Chris Leys, President of West Lorne Minor Soccer gives Doug Staddon, from the West Lorne Optimist Club, a hand shake in appreciation for the $1,000 the club donated to the association this year.

Heritage gardening noted for flavour

WEST LORNE AND COMMUNITY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
NEWS

The West Lorne and Community Horticultural Society held its October meeting at the West Lorne Complex on Oct.11.

President Susan Lilley welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced that hanging containers have been removed from the downtown area as well as flower boxes and beds having been emptied and cleaned up. She also said that tulip bulbs, celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Ontario Horticultural Association, are available. Some bulbs have been donated to the high school for students to plant and that the remainder will be planted in the arena bed.

Members and guests attending were treated to a very informative talk on Heritage Gardening by Master Gardener, Kim Penney of Eagle.

Kim stated that vegetable gardening was introduced to New England in the 1700s by the Dutch, French and Germans. The Dutch and French introduced the more formal and elaborate kitchen gardens in the New York area while the Germans, known for neatness, etc., introduced their gardens to the Pennsylvania area. Flower gardening was not too popular until the 1800s, mainly because they needed garden space for vegetables and herbs etc. for their very survival. They did, however, have shrubs, such as lilac, forsythia and hydrangea, as well as roses.

Seeds were not available commercially until the Shakers introduced packet seeding of a wide variety of herbs and flowers. By the mid-1800s larger seed companies introduced the colourful packaging similar to those now, which gradually led to the demise of the Shaker business.

Heritage seeds are available today from various seed companies for flowers, vegetables and fruits. To be noted is the flavour of heritage produce as compared to hybrid varieties of today.

Kim explained that local Master Gardeners were asked to plant a heritage garden at the Backus-Page House at Tryconnell, which turned out to be a very successful venture.

By way of slides Kim showed the five most popular types of heritage gardens: Country Cottage; Medieval Herb; Old Fashioned Parlour Garden; Old Fashioned Fruit Garden and a Kitchen Garden.

Susan thanked Kim for coming and the evening concluded with lunch served by Susan Lilley and Wendy Goodall.

RODNEY LEGION Branch 525 785-2111
"WE WILL REMEMBER THEM"

Remembrance Day | November 11th

To all those with loved ones in the war remember you are not alone

We understand that this is a hard time for all of you that have had to say good-bye, for a while, to loved ones that have left for the war. What your family members and friends are doing is something that one considers to be the 'ultimate sacrifice' that a person can make. We must give thanks to all of those that are currently in the war and to those that have already served in a war. These men and women are taking a stand and standing up for a country that they so strongly believe in and want to keep safe.

It is important at this time to remember why your loved ones are there and how proud you should be for their bravery. I could tell you not to worry and not to jump every time you hear that doorbell ring, but I know that you won't. It's that feeling of wonder, wondering where they are, how they are, wondering when they are going to come home and how they will come home. It's a long wait that seems to want to drag on and on, but hold on, this will get easier and when they come home you will feel like they had never left.

Good luck to all those who are involved with the occurring war, and to all those waiting for their arrival home. Hold on, stick in there, and only think good thoughts and memories. And remember, you aren't alone, there are people that you can talk to and comfort in, use those peo ple and it will make all the difference

— Stacey Penne

Canadian virtual war memorial (NC)

The legacy of Canada's Veterans lives on in the Canadian Virtual War Memorial. This on-line registry contains information about the graves and memorials of more than 116,000 Canadians who served and gave their lives for their country. Veterans Affairs Canada is encouraging Canadians to send in photos or memorabilia of Canada's war dead. To participate, go to canada.gc.ca, click on Veterans in the A-Z index and then visit the Canada Remembers site.

The Scars that never fade...

The Veteran Project 2005 brought West Elgin Secondar School students together with local veterans.

Students interviewed local veterans about their experience and it resulted in a book released this past October.

Writing from the book has been contributed to this speci section marking Remembrance Day and Year of the Veteran.



KAREN GONCALVES/THE CHRONICLE

West Lorne remembers

War Veteran and West Elgin Br. 221 RCL Comrade Scotty (George) Bell stands guard at the West Lorne Cenotaph with #2884 West Elgin Army Cadets William Feere and Jessica Kalita during the annual Nov. 11 Remembrance Day Service.



Optimist youth appreciation KAREN GONCALVES/THE CHRONICLE

The Optimist Club of West Lorne held its annual Youth Appreciation Week this November where a dinner was hosted for students and members of their families. These students are choosen as outstanding young people of our community, for many different reasons, by their teachers. The club presented them with certificates following the meal and a brief outline of each individuals accomplishments was given. Pictured L to R back row: Optimist Pres. Doug Staddon, Jonathan Godfrey, WESES; Thalia Weis, Aldborough Public School; Stephanie Duarte, St. Mary's Catholic School; Andrew Gumpert, St. Mary's Catholic School; Danial Wittek, Aldborough Public School; front row: Jessie Lowes, WESS Jr.; Rachel Cardol, WESS Jr.; Laura Szusz, WESES and Drew Lebedz. Missing from photo Brittany Jewell, WESS Sr. Free public skating was also offered by the club on Sunday, Nov. 20 in appreciation to our community youth.



Marching in remembrance JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Second World War veteran Charlie Cronkite, right, leads the colour guard from the Royal Canadian Legion Branches 221 and 525 West Elgin and Rodney Sunday morning on Shackleton Road in Dutton before taking part in a remembrance service at Knox Presbyterian Church.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Octoberfest golf tournament a big draw

With 112 golfers, the 1st annual Octoberfest Gold Tournament was held at Dutton Meadows Golf Club Oct. 15. An 18-hole scramble was played under blue skies for most of the afternoon. Above, Lynda Cosens putts on hole #7 with teammates Charlie Cronkite and Brenda Sheridan watching behind. Right, Ric Whyte discusses Rosalie Krebsz's next shot on hole #9. The event raised more than $7,000 for the West Elgin Daffodil Society in its efforts with the Canadian Cancer Society.





Knights of Columbus donate to WECHC CONTRIBUTED

Alex Schadenberg, Grand Knight of the West Elgin Knights of Columbus, right, presents a $2,000 cheque to the West Elgin Community Health Centre. Accepting the donation, is Martin Joldersma, Chairman, and Cate Melito, Executive Director, of WECHC. The donation included proceeds from the August 2005 Fish Fry and the Annual Knights of Columbus Car Raffle.

Daffodil Auxiliary, unique in Canada

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

A dedicated group of community members continues to reach out to people with cancer to help them with expenses, through the West Elgin Daffodil Auxiliary Cancer Fund.

And the group continues to be supported by the community with great response for the up coming golf tournament.

Started in 1956, by the wife of a local doctor, Helen Saunders started driving cancer patients for treatment in London, doing homecare duties and helping financially.

In time, more people came to assist Mrs. Saunders, particularly the Women's Institute.

This was before medical plans and even the Canadian Cancer Society existed.

Because of its early start, the Daffodil Auxiliary is the only registered organization in Canada that can raise funds for cancer and not be required to forward the funds to the Cancer Society.

Having helped hundreds of people over the years, the auxiliary provides funds to cancer patients needing medicines not covered by drug plans.

The auxiliary is also used to pay for patient's lodgings when they visit the London Regional Cancer Centre.

As well, the auxiliary helps pay for gas money when the patient doesn't wish for a volunteer to drive.

"Many of us have been touched by cancer. That's kind of why we do it," said treasurer Leola Lawrence of West Lorne.

Reaching out to current cancer patients is always a challenge for the society.

While the volunteers are community oriented, sometimes patients don't know the auxiliary exists.

However, local doctors and pharmacists have helped patients access the auxiliary for needed funds.

Sometimes, pharmacists will even charge cancer medication to the auxiliary account.

The Daffodil Auxiliary receives funds from two sources: a quilt, donated by the Fingal Quilting Group for the last 28 years and fundraising donations, including memorial contributions.

The volunteers also help organize local cancer fundraisers like the Great Ride and Stride and the sale of daffodils.

For the first time, Dutton Meadows Golf Club is donating funds raised at its Octoberfest Mixed Classic Tournament to the West Elgin Daffodil Auxiliary.

Krebsz Jewellery has donated a diamond ring to the event.

Brian Girard, owner of Dutton Meadows is donating proceeds from the tournament in honour of his mother Liz Girard.

She passed away in 1994, at the age of 55 from breast cancer.

While the tournament's field is full, people can still get on the waiting list.

For information about the charity golf tournament, call Dutton Meadows at 762-3435.

For information about the West Elgin Daffodil Auxiliary, call Leola Lawrence at 768-1526 or Norma McMillan at 762-3721.



SCOTT HILGENDORFF/
THE CHRONICLE

Put that fire out

Chris Ward, 12, of West Lorne learns from West Lorne Firefighter Craig Eliott how to properly use a fire extinguisher. Members of the public were invited to the fire hall Oct. 12 for a Fire Prevention Week open house. Stoves were set up in the parking lot where grease fires were simulated and people were given a chance to learn how to safely put out the fires.

Second country music jamboree being held at West Elgin Legion

Br. 221 of the Royal Canadian Legion in West Lorne will host another country music jamboree Oct. 29 starting at 1 p.m.

This family event is a follow up of the first jamboree held this past March that was a huge success and enjoyed by many young and old. Local and outside entertainers are expected from as far away as Windsor, Chatham and Sarnia. Organizers are Jim Carmichael and Bill Graham, both of West Lorne, with the help from Al Schnekenburger of Glencoe. Carmichael spearheaded the first jamboree after attending and performing at similar events held at other Legion branches in the area where he witnessed the joy of all who were there.

Everyone is welcome to get up and play an instrument, sing, dance or just sit and listen to the many great musicians performing. The cost for the event is a donation at the door.

For more information call Bill Graham at 768-1798 or Jim Carmichael at 768-2697.

Stew, hamburgers and hotdogs will be available for a donation as well. All proceeds to Legion activities to support the communities of West Elgin.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Dancing at country jamboree

Bud Welch and Marg Varga dance along to a tune by musicians jamming at the country jamboree held at the West Elgin Legion Saturday. Jamming are Jake Zoller, left back, Betty Tetreault, John McIntyre, fiddle, Frank Merryfield, Jim Zoller and Don Varnier.

Optimists start new year with installation of Board of Directors

Oct. 1 marks a new year of operations for Optimist International and the Optimist Club of West Lorne has just installed its new board of directors for the next year of service to our communities.

President for 2005/2006 is Doug Staddon, Vice President; Ken Neil, Secretary; Dorothy Staddon, Treasurer; Bill Trask, Past Pres.; John Eagleson and six directors; Richard Hale, Ric Whyte, Jim Carmichael, Brad Reive, Elsie Beaudoin and Karen Goncalves.

The Optimist work throughout the year to raise money for the youth within our communities from local sports teams and school functions to musical events and health the Childrens Hospital.

Next on the agenda is organizing the annual Santa Claus parade coming on Nov. 25 and the club has already planned a ham and turkey bingo to raise money for this event on Oct. 30 to be held at the West Elgin Legion starting at 1 p.m. Lots of work and effort goes into putting together this parade and volunteers are always a welcome.

If you are interested in helping out please call John at 768-1427 or if you have any questions or are interested in becoming a member please call President Doug at 768-2972.

SERVICE CLUBS 2005



Picking a plant SCOTT HILGENDORFF/THE CHRONICLE

Susan Lilley, right, of the West Lorne Horticultural Society, helps mom Stephanie Martin and her daughters Brittany and Jessica pick out some plants at the garden fair held Saturday at the West



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Girl Guides paint town for water conservation

Kelsey Shaw, right, Jamie Stallon, Jessica Wilson-Evettes, Jessalyn Betsh and Sandra Wilson, leader, left back, and the First West Lorne Girl Guides painted yellow fish at storm drains in West Lorne Monday and informed residents about the importance of properly disposing hazardous waste to protect fish in our lakes.

Container gardening discussed at meeting

WEST LORNE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWS

The General Meeting of the W. L. and Community Horticultural Society was held at the W. L. Complex April 12. Pres. Susan Lilley opened the meeting. Susan introduced guest speaker Diane Vaughan of St. Thomas, who gave a very informative and amusing talk on Container Gardening. Diane started out by explaining the difference between containers suitable for potting and those that are not. There are hundreds of different containers available on the market but some of the most interesting are those made out of unusual items, such as old boots, baskets, pails, etc.

One of the most popular is the clay pot, but these tend to dry out much faster than others so have to be watched closely. She explained that if using a clay pot make sure it is soaked in water for a day before planting so that the pot does not pull all the moisture from the soil and therefore dehydrate the plant. Baskets can be used by simply lining them with plastic before adding soil and plants; half baskets make interesting planters to hang on doors, etc.

Potatoes can be planted in a container made out of an old laundry basket lined with heavy black plastic. Fill basket half full with soil and then plant potatoes. Once growth appears cover with more soil, and do this until basket is full. Once potatoes appear through top layer let them grow like those in a garden. She stressed that fertilizing is very important. Read labels carefully and follow them. If using a pellet fertilizer labelled "good for three months" do not add any more for that length of time.

Over-fertilizing can be disastrous, as can over or under-watering. Set up a routine for watering and check plants every day. Watering amounts can differ greatly depending on sun and heat. If containers are very deep a piece of plastic pipe drilled with holes can be placed in soil and water poured in. This makes an even distribution of water possible. To make a lovely display in any area, use different size pots and group them together with larger planters in back or centre and use different textured plants to create interest.

There are wonderful plants suitable for pots such as hosta, evergreens, cactus and grasses, etc. Deadheading is very important to keep plants blooming and looking their best and always keep some extra plants on hand to replace those which have become straggly or have died. She gave many helpful hints such as placing a piece of pantihose or fine screen in bottom of planters to prevent earwigs from getting in. Plants can be given a shot with the hose to help get rid of bugs or use a mild solution of soap and water. These ideas are environmentally friendly and will help keep butterflies, and birds around. If strong chemical products are used you can be sure there won't be any butterflies. Most container gardens will survive the winter if they are buried two feet under the ground and covered with burlap, soil and leaves.

Susan thanked her for coming and presented her with a gift on behalf of club members.

A lunch followed served by Elaine Conway and Sally Cantelon.



Kickin' out the jams at the West Elgin Legion JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

John McIntyre plays fiddle, left, with DaveTuffin on guitar, John Foley on mandolin, Bill Graham on guitar and Jake Zoller on bass Saturday afternoon at Branch 221 West Elgin Legion as part of a music jamboree held from noon to 9 p.m. to raise money for the Legion.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLEE

Optimist support WESES volleyball

West Lorne Optimist Club President delivered a cheque for $350 to West Elgin Senior Elementary School teacher Krista Price for the volleyball program.



Fairey Swordfish ride donated to West Elgin Legion SUBMITTED

Nancy Murray (West Elgin Legion), centre presents Bob and Marie Spence with a 'Hats Off' award in recognition of donating a ride in this Second World War bomber to raise money for the new patio at West Elgin Legion Branch 221.

West Lorne Legion an emergency centre

For the Chronicle

Elgin county is hoping to succeed with an application for an 11,000-watt portable generator to be shared with the West Lorne Legion and the Rodney ambulance base.

The county is applying for $6,951 to the federally funded Joint Emergency Preparedness Program both to wire locations and purchase a generator.

The West Lorne Legion has been designated as an emergency operations centre.

"The Rodney ambulance base is also not equipped with a generator back-up power in an emergency," said Larysa Andrusiak, ambulance and emergency management co-ordinator for the county.

If the grant was approved, the county's share of the project would be $4,170.

Girl Guides fold, more leadership needed to continue

Jeff Kempenaar

Staff

The West Lorne Girl Guides are looking for volunteers to prevent its demise.

Bonnie Robertson is fighting to keep the group going after volunteers moved on.

Recently, the last Girl Guides graduated on to the Pathfinders group taking their mothers along, who worked as Guide leaders.

This, and other members leaving to join the burgeoning West Elgin Cadet Corp. 2884, has left girls wanting to be in the group, but not enough volunteers to organize and run the Guides.

Not running right now are the Sparks, for girls four and five, Brownies, six to eight, and the Girl Guides for eight to 12-year-old girls.

"I'm willing to open anything," pleads Robertson. "I'm the only one left and I'm willing to open up any age group. I just need someone to help."

Please see Pathfinders, *page 7*

SERVICE CLUBS 2005

Nature Club and Padfield partner

The West Elgin Nature Club is getting support from a new memorial service offered by Padfield Funeral Homes.

Trees at the West Elgin Nature Reserve on Downie Line will be affixed with a name plate honouring the memory of someone lost to be hung on a tree in the memorial forest.

Friends and family of the deceased will be able to purchase a plaque through Padfield's.

The club wants to continue to raise money for the memorial forest which lines the front of the nature reserve.

"More than just a fitting tribute, this program provides for trees that shelter our wildlife, reduce water and wind erosion and contribute to the purity of the air we breathe," said Ken Neil, club member.

"This program will be accompanied by an annual memorial service to commemorate friends and family lost over the preceding year," said Jim Price, President of Padfield Funeral Homes.

For information about the new program, contact Bill Denning at Padfield Funeral Homes at 785-0810.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Lost to be remembered
Jim Price, left, and Bill Denning, right of Padfield Funeral Home met with Bill Prieksaitis, centre and announced a new memorial service at the West Elgin Nature Reserve last week.

Optimist Club hosting fun night

WEST LORNE OPTIMIIST CLUB
News

If you're looking for something fun and different to do this weekend, try the Optimist Club of West Lorne's Annual Adult Fun Night. The event will be held on Feb. 26 at the Rodney Legion hall with many activities offered including a live and silent auction for you to bid on. All items auctioned are generously donated by local merchants and businesses. Their is also a lunch available.

This is the club's largest fundraiser of the year and all proceeds are for youth activities and sports. Some of this year's proceeds will be set aside for the anticipated washroom and food consession facilitiy being planned for Miller Park in West Lorne.

For ticket information call Ken Neil 768-2691

Historical photos being put on DVD

WEST ELGIN HISTORICAL & GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
NEWS

Meetings held November 2006 and January 2007 consisted of reminiscences of bygone years of Rodney.

Guest speakers, Harley and Nancy Lashbrook, showed a DVD of pictures taken from the Rodney Mercury covering the period of 1870s to 1950s. Harley and Nancy are in the process of transferring their large files of photos to DVD.

The community owes a debt of gratitude to them for the preservation of the past for future generations.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Optimists give to Jacob's Paws
President of the West Lorne Optimist Club John Eagleson donates $500 to Linda, Scott and Jacob Dunn on behalf of the club. The money goes to National Service Dogs for Jacob's Paws. A medieval dinner is being held this Saturday at the International Club for Jacob's Paws.

Fish ponds need water changed

WEST ELGIN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
NEWS

The West Elgin Horticultural Society met at the West Lome Complex March 8.

Pres. Susan Lilley opened the evening by welcoming the crowd and noting some up coming events.

Betty McKillop introduced guest speaker Lorraine Gregson of London, who gave an informative talk on water gardens and fish.

Lorraine stressed the most important element to a pond is filtration whether by veggie filter or by making or purchasing a biological filter.

Lorraine, who has 14 ponds on her property, talked about and demonstrated biofiltration. She explained types of filters, some costing up to $1,800, none of which seemed to do an efficient job. So, she came up with her own simple design made out of a plastic garbage can, some plastic pipe a t-joint and plastic scrubbies which are put into a mesh bag, total cost of which is about $50.

She explained water changes are compulsory to maintain the health of fish, and also recommended not over-feeding as this tends for fish to produce more waste, which produces ammonia which in turn produces nitrate which has to be filtered out. Foreign plants should be avoided, e.g. don't transplant river plants, grass, etc. to a garden pond as they may contain foreign eggs which when hatched will destroy any eggs from you rown fish. This could bring different fish than your own. In fact, Lorraine recommends using no plants at all as they will use up oxygen and will also guck up filters.

She talked about good and bad algae and how some can be dried and used as fish food as it contains nutrients.

Betty McKillop presented her with a gift and thanked her on behalf of the club and all attending. Lorraine offered a free membership to the Southwestern Ontario Pond Keepers as a prize which was won by Sally Cantelon. June Smart and Theresa Knight served lunch.

The next meeting will be held April 12 at 7 p.m. at the West Lorne Complex when Diane Vaughan of St. Thomas will speak on container gardening. The public is invited to attend and admission is free.

Horticulturalists view birds of Elgin County

WEST LORNE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
NEWS

The West Lorne and Community Horticultural Society held its annual potluck supper, at the West Lorne Community Complex, on Dec. 14. The thirty-seven people attended and enjoyed a delicious meal in the festively decorated meeting room and many of them stayed for the Annual Meeting afterwards.

District director Jim Mabee was present and listened to committee reports, from various chairs, and the president's remarks, from the outgoing president, Liz Clark. Mabee then installed the new executive and board of directors. They are, as follows: President Susan Lilley, first vice-president Betty McKillop, second vice-president Helen Kovacs, secretary/treasurer Kim Penney, and Immediate Past-president Liz Clark; directors for one year are Kim Penney, Teresa Knight, Maureen Romero, and Wendy Goodall; two year directors are June Smart, Margaret Murray, Elaine Conway, and Sally Cantelon. These people are responsible for the business decisions of the society, and if anyone has any concerns, questions, or comments, please feel free to contact any of them.

The service certificate was presented to Frances McCallum, the Life Membership Award was given to long-time member Mary Lippold, and the President's Award went to Betty McKillop for her hard work over the past year.

At the Jan. 11 general meeting of the society, new President Susan Lilley welcomed everyone and introduced the new executive and board of directors to the general membership and guests. She then introduced the evening's guest speaker, Chris Leys of West Lorne, who presented a slide show and discussion on The Birds of Elgin County: A Century of Change.

The book, now in its second publication, was the brain child of former West Lorne resident and bird lover Harold Lancaster. Lancaster wanted to see information about present day bird species captured in print before some people were no longer able to contribute information. A committee was formed to pursue this idea and, along with Lancaster, Chris Leys, Dave Martin, and Bill and Marjorie Prieksaitis saw the book through, from concept to completion, a period of five years.

The Birds of Elgin County: A Century of Change, printed in 2003, is a compilation of information gathered from local naturalists, the public, and information included in two predecessors to the book, a book by Frank Farley published in 1891, and another printed in the 1950s by Ronald Brooman and several other contributors, including Harold Lancaster.

The newly published book gives a one hundred year perspective of the bird life, in Elgin County. The 1891 book listed 190 species, the 1950s book had 274, and the 2003 book has 333 species listed. The book has been donated to local schools, universities, the Royal Ontario Museum, and the Elgin County Public Library system.

Susan Lilley thanked Chris Leys for his interesting talk, and everyone then enjoyed a social hour.

Horitculturalists learn about matching a garden to the home

The monthly meeting of the West Lorne Horticultural Society was held at the village complex on Feb 8.

Kim Penney, of Eagle, was guest speaker and gave an informative talk on the Five Principles of Garden Design.

She explained the first important element of garden design is unity and simplicity which basically means to keep the number of objects in a garden to a minimum, too many objects create chaos. Mass similar plants together and repeat colours, textures and/or shapes. Also, to create unity use landscape materials common with the home. For example, a wooden home should use wooden materials for fencing, arbours and edging, whereas brick walks and fencing should be used with a brick home. Also mirror the curves of the house in flower beds.

The second element is proportion and scale. This element is very important and means large elements should be used in large spaces and small elements in small spaces. A basic rule to follow is "the height of the tallest element should not be more than half the size of the garden." For instance a statue five feet tall needs 10 feet of garden space.

The third element is rhythm and line. Curving lines flowing and connecting gardens together are restful and pleasing to the eye whereas jagged diagonals or vertical lines tend to create excitement. Repeated colour schemes and forms create rhythm and reduce confusion.

Balance is also very important. The basic rule of balance is: foundation plantings should extend from the house at least one-third the height of the house. A 30-foot home requires gardens extend 10-foot from the foundation. Balance is achieved when gardens are visually equal or symmetrical or an asymmetrical garden balance that is weighted visually equal.

The final principle of design is focalization. An example of focalization being: too many focal points make the eye bounce around which creates confusion. She explained these fundamentals by showing slides of different garden design and how they appear when certain elements are added or taken away.

Kim has booklets available, which she prepared on garden design, explaining the basic fundamentals using text and pictures.

Following the program lunch was served by June Smart and Margaret Murray.

The next meeting will be held March 8 at 7 p.m. when Lorraine Gregson will present the program on Ponds, and fish, etc. Everyone is welcome to attend and admission is free.

SERVICE CLUBS 2005



SUBMITTED

Legion opens patio

West Elgin Legion Br. 221 Past President Julie Lawrence and Vice President Mike Mooser officially opened the Legion's new outdoor patio with a ribbon cutting ceremony in June. The patio was built in preparation for upcoming laws that may ban smoking indoors.



Cadets hold annual ceremony

Capt R. Goldick presents the Most Improved Award to Spr. Holly Baughman, left at the West Elgin Army Cadet Corps 3rd annual Ceremonial Review. Capt W. Stinson presents the Espirit de Corps Award to Spr Amy Kalita, right. SUBMITTED



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Kiwanians hold talent show

Adjudicator Mary-Lou Phoenix-Sheeler critiques pianists Aerial Whalen, furthest away, Jacob Rowe and Hillary Hodder at the Kiwanis Talent Show held at the WEDS Performing Arts Theatre March 4 and 5.

West Elgin Chamber ready to roll out economic development campaign

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

West Elgin Chamber of Commerce will receive additional taxpayer's money for business development and education programming.

The additional $1,000 in 2006 would be used for possible initiatives like a job fair at the high school.

The request at the West Elgin Council meeting Feb. 9 was far less than the $20,000 the Chamber was figuring on asking for almost two years ago.

However, Ted Uffen, President of the Chamber said the past year has been frustrating for the volunteer group trying to spur economic development in the area.

"It's taken us a lot longer to do what we wanted to do," said Uffen.

The chamber has spent around $2,500 of a $20,000 municipal grant given in 2005.

Some of that $2,500 was spent on designing and creating a Web site with a community calendar, marketing material and business directory, as well as information on available land.

The Web site roll out could be by the end of March with a breakfast.

The Web site is included in a $14,000 plan for business development.

A new signage proposal is being brought to Elgin County to place Welcome to West Elgin signs at Furnival and Graham Road on Highway 3.

An original plan to allow businesses to rent space on signs proved too cumbersome to maintain in a feasibility study.

"We're committing the sin of estimating high then coming in under budget," said Uffen.

Uffen apologized for intangible results so far but said all the initiatives would be complete by Sept. 1, the end of the chamber's fiscal year.

"Don't apologize for not spending taxpayers money. Volunteers have lives too. It's important you think about it," said Mayor Graham Warwick.

The unspent portion of the $20,000 grant was approved for renewal by council for 2006 and $1,000 was added to the annual $3,000 grant.

Uffen said this year the chamber is pushing to increase membership.

He said only about 40-50 per cent of businesses in West Elgin are members of the chamber and if membership can increase, the chamber should be able to pay for the majority of its expenses going forward.



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Optimists give Easter gifts

The West Lorne Optimist Club held their Easter egg hunt March 26. Children who found large eggs in their age group won an Easter basket. Winners were, Charlotte Stone, back left, Twan Dieker and Ashley Lowes.



SUBMITTED

Knights of Columbus teach drug awareness

The Knights of Columbus recently held their annual Substance Abuse Awareness poster contest. Pictured here are the winners of the contest: Megan Campiotto, Jessica Jensen and Anita Rastapkevicius.



SUBMITTED

Optimist's host zone oratorical contest in West Lorne

The Optimist clubs of West Lorne and Wallacetown recently hosted their oratorical contest with two 1st place winners going on to the regionals in Windsor in April. Pictured L-R: (girls) Taylor Moorby-Blain, 3rd; Taylor Cundy, 1st; Karlee Willcocks, 3rd; (boys) Alex Kirscher, 3rd; Jacob Rowe, 1st and Rishi Sharma 2nd.

West Elgin Legion holding jamboree this weekend

Local musicians will be kicking out the jams at the Legion in West Lorne this Saturday starting a 1 p.m.

For the first time Branch 221 of the Royal Canadian Legion in West Lorne will host a country music jamboree.

"Anyone who likes music or dancing should come out. The legion is a great place to have some fun," said Allan Schnekenburger, musician.

A family event, local musicians like 14-year-old Jake Zoller will play some old style country guitar.

Bill Graham and Jim Carmichael have organized the event and are bringing talent - young and old - from as far away Windsor, Chatham and Sarnia.

After seeing jam sessions at other legions, like Newbury, Carmichael thought it would be a great idea to host one to support the West Lorne branch.

"Legion's can't continue to be a great place for the community gather if they aren't supported," said Schnekenburger, adding it's all volunteers who are putting together this jamboree.

Hoping to raise $1,000, everyone is welcome to get up and sing, play an instrument or just sit and listen to some great musicians.

Donations will be taken at the door and irish stew, hamburgers and hot dogs will be available inside.

All proceeds will go to the Legion's activities in West Elgin.

West Elgin Legion is currently raising money to build a patio.

Families are encouraged to come out to this afternoon of great entertainment.

For more information call Bill Graham at 768-1798.

SERVICE CLUBS 2005

Environment group putting plans into action

Door-to-door campaign to hand out weed combatant starts this week

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Next week you could find a small package of white clover seed hanging from your front door.

It's a gift from the West Elgin Environmental Group to help you combat weeds in your lawns.

After 30 people attended the environment groups first meeting in May, the Local Home Schooling Group joined to help with the Eco-Elgin Project.

The group will go door-to-door in Dutton, West Lorne and Rodney handing out white clover seeds.

Clovers compete against dandelions and do not grow as high as the weed.

Also, they break up the soil and add nitrates to the soil.

Starting June 22, the group is also giving residents a chance to test drive a reel lawnmower.

Unlike they were 50 years ago, they are much lighter now, says Amanda Murray, an organizer with the environmental group.

"They are much better for the environment than lawnmowers with engines," says Murray of the reel mower which has rotating blades that turn with the wheels as it is pushed.

Murray says it is ideal for trimming and perfect for smaller lawns.

"A two stroke engine lawnmower, running for an hour, emits the same amount of gases into the air as 30 cars idling for an hour," says Murray.

The group is looking to purchase a reel mower to rent out to people wishing to see how they work.

Reel lawnmowers emit no exhaust into the air.

These two project were among three main programs the Eco-Elgin, West Elgin Environmental Group is taking on.

Craig Hoglund, of the West Elgin Youth Centre, is helping organize a relamping program where the group will hand-out compact florescent bulbs which require less energy, last longer and provide the same amount of light as incandescent bulbs which release CO_2 a greenhouse gas which limits oxygen.

He hopes to hand out bulbs and information in the community at the July 16 Farmer's Market at the West Elgin Community Health Centre.

"There are many myths out there about these bulbs. Hopefully, if we show some data on how they save money and the environment, people will see the benefits," said Hoglund, a graduating high school student.

The health centre's Diane Van Dyk, community worker, helped reinvigorate the environmental group which had been stagnating the last few years.

"It's been great to see so many people come out and start right away on these projects," said Van Dyk.

Long-time West Elgin Environmental Group Chair Marcia White, formally of the Rodney area, is tickled green to see the group revitalized.

She is planning to place No Idling Signage posted in the villages which will encourage people not to sit idling in their cars while waiting.

Their next meeting is June 20 at the West Lorne Complex at 7:30 p.m.

WEST LORNE AND COMMUNITY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWS

mented, combining 1.5 ASA tablets (uncoated), two gallons of water, and two tbsp of liquid dish soap. This mixture was sprayed on plants, in a controlled test, and the plants responded. They thrived and grew larger than normal. ASA also improves seed germination.

Plant hardiness zones in Canada differ from those in the United States. Our map puts the West Lorne area in Zone 6, but we are considered Zone 5 on the U.S. map.

The Canadian map is a more comprehensive map, with many more factors used than the American map, and we are working on revising this map again.

Seed viability can be determined by wrapping seeds in a dampened paper towel. If less than 7 out of 10 seeds germinate, then Kim recommends purchasing fresh seed, to ensure success.

When purchasing seeds at the nursery, there are some things to keep in mind:

Choose bushy plants over tall, spindly plants. They are bushy because the nursery took the time to pinch them back to encourage new growth.

Don't buy root-bound plants because they will just sit in the ground and won't grow well.

Plants should be purchased for the contribution of its foliage, not just its blooms. Remember, it won't always be in flower.

Be careful that your new plant does not have unwanted insect pests, which will infest other plants in your garden.

Try to not buy plants that are flowering. A plant's energy should be directed to the root system, to establish a good beginning, rather than flowering and producing seed.

Be prepared for your plants. Have flowerbeds worked up and large holes dug before you bring your plants home from the nursery.

Kim Penney was thanked by Susan Lilley for her presentation. Everyone enjoyed a light luncheon, prepared by Marilyn Young.

Memberships for 2007 are available, and at a price everyone can afford. Your contribution helps the society beautify West Lorne.

One new project will be the restoration of the flower beds, at the West Lorne Complex.

A membership also entitles you to discounts at various nurseries and garden centers in southwestern Ontario. Any society member can help you with the purchase of a 2007 membership.



100 attend barbecue JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Candace Conway gets a hotdog from Jenny Morland, Community Program Worker with the Employment Services Elgin at a barbecue held for Hire a Student Week at West Elgin Support Services, June 10.



Plant show held JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Joe Jung recieves his second place ribbon for his wind chimes from June Smart at the West Lorne Horticultural Society's Plant Show at the West Elgin Community Health Centre June 10. Elaine Conway won best of show for house plants. Betty McKillop won for best design.



Cadets clean Port Glasgow JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

About 35 members of the 2884 West Elgin Army Cadet Corp. combed Port Glasgow Marina and beach area, cleaning garbage for about four hours June 11.

Horticulturalists see presentation about ornamental grasses

WEST LORNE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWS

The West Lorne and Community Horticultural Society held a meeting at the West Lorne Complex May10.

Pres. Susan Lilley opened the meeting with announcements of upcoming events such as the bus trip to Paris, Nanticoke, etc. to view perennial gardens; the Nanticoke Nursery; Huntington Gardens and Chris Cox who grows astilbe, etc.

Guest speaker for the evening was Dale Smith of St. Thomas, who gave a wonderful slide show and commentary on ornamental grasses.

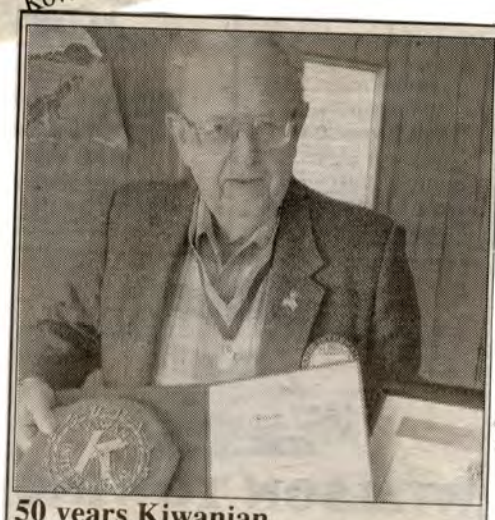
Dale explained how grasses are the very same as any other perennial and should be looked after in basically the same way. Although it is true grasses look different, they all behave in the same way, except for one or two which will spread underground.

All grasses should be left until spring to be cut back or separated. This also allows for an attractive plant during the winter season. Cut back either before or when the first sign of new growth appears. Fertilizing is not necessary. Grasses come in all sizes, heights, shapes and colours so if you want to use them in landscaping, there are hundreds of types and plan ahead of time where you want to put them. To maintain the grass Dale stressed that you water well, weed and watch. Wait a few years before bothering the plant.

Dale also said it is a good idea to take pictures during the different seasons allowing the gardener to see what should be moved and what else to plant among the grass.

She brought several species with her which she donated to the society for door prizes.

Susan thanked Dale for coming as well as the many gardeners that attended the informative evemng. Lunch was served by Helen Kovacs and Susan Lilley



50 years Kiwanian

Harley Lashbrook has been a Kiwanis Club member for 50 years. He's the longest serving member in West Lorne.

Looking Back 2005



Michigan Central Station 1904, West Lorne

— Photo courtesy of Harley Lashbrook Mercury-Sun Publications

Railways change small towns forever

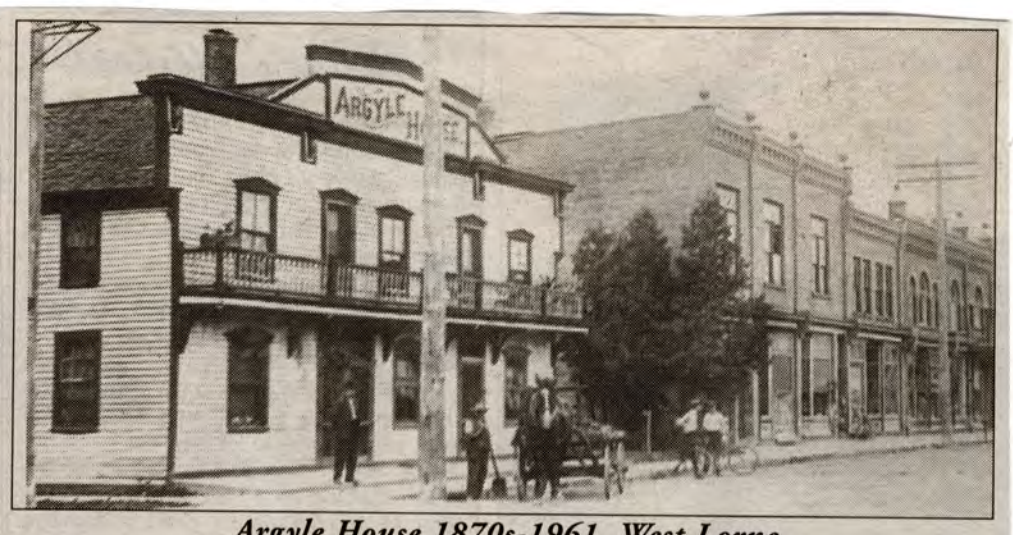
For the naming of the village railroad officials chose the name of the possible stops along the route, if no named settlement existed. Throughout western Elgin the names designated were: Iona, Currie Road Crossing, Dutton (Graham Road) and Rodney. Mr. Dutton was the name of the survey engineer responsible for the building of the railroad through West Elgin.

West Lorne

In the year 1882 the Canada Southern Railway leased their land for 21 years to the Michigan Central Railroad, and by 1902 a double track was formed. This line ran from Windsor to St. Thomas to Fort Erie. Around 1900 An "Electric Block" system was installed to prevent train to train collisions. By 1903 the Michigan Central had leased the railroad for 99 years. During the year 1934 wigwags with bells and flashing red lights were installed at the crossings and gates were lowered. Squire Schleihauf in 1872 donated land to the Canada Southern Railway on the condition that the village be called "Bismarck" after the German counselor. However it was also insisted the village be called "Lorne" after the Marquis of Lorne, who was the Governor General of Canada from 1878-1883. Another reason it was to be called "Lorne" was because of its "low lands, and swampy area" which is what "Lorne" means in Celtic. A mill operated by the name of "Lorne Mills" and when passenger trains would go though, the conductor would call out "Bismarck Station, West Lorne."

In 1901, Lake Erie, Essex and Detroit railroad was completed between St. Thomas, and Walkerville. The tracks went from Walkerville, east to Kingsville, Leamington and to Blenheim. The line continued to Ridgetown, Highgate, Rodney, West Lorne, Dutton, and South East to the south end of St. Thomas. In the early 20th century sixteen passenger trains per day stopped at both railroads in West Lorne. The first railroad station was built in 1873, on James Street, which is now known as Wellington Street. This didn't seem to be a good location. Later it was moved to Graham Street on what is now Erie Flooring property. The station was torn down in 1974.

Continued on pg. 13



Argyle House 1870s-1961, West Lorne

— Photo courtesy of Harley Lashbrook Mercury-Sun Publications

Hotels welcomed travellers to area

West Lorne

Hotels were an important part of early life. They were found every few miles along the main roads of travel. Hotels provided meals and lodging to the travelling salesmen, and to the locals a place to socialize.

The Wilton House hotel was built prior to the year 1870, the third storey was erected in 1888. In 1912 a fire resulted in its loss. The hotel contained three full floors, a bar and a kitchen. October 21st 1899 a fire occurred in the stables.

The second hotel to be built in the village was the Argyle House, built before 1870 as well. In 1961 it was torn down to make way for the new Bank of Montreal. This was the only hotel in the village that didn't burn down, it was over 100 years old.

Roome's Hotel was built in the early 1870's by Samuel Mogg. It caught fire in 1912 and burned to the ground. The story of the burning goes as follows: a shoe repair shop beside the hotel was in financial stress so the man who owned it set fire to his own shop and boarded a train to Detroit. With only four feet between the two buildings, the hotel caught fire and burned completely.

Continued on pg. 13

Post masters deliver mail across area connecting villages



Duncan McKillop
First Post Master
of West Lorne

— Photo courtesy of Harley Lashbrook Mercury-Sun Publications

West Lorne –

Citizens of West Lorne did not begin to receive mail on a daily basis until 1872. The post office was operated by Duncan McKillop who remained post master until 1919. In 1980 the office moved to Gangle's Insurance building on the north side of Main Street where it still is today. In the early years of Canada postal service there was a lot of confusion getting mail to the correct destination, because of the similarities and actual duplications of Lorne. A "Lorne" post office had opened in Bruce County north of Kincardine, in 1871. And there was another "Lorne" in Pictou County Nova Scotia. On July 1st 1873, the name West Lorne was chosen to assure correct mail delivery.

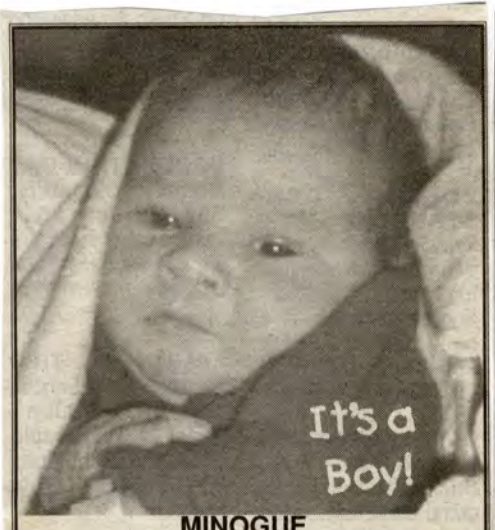
Dutton –

Established on October 1st 1874 under the official name of "Dutton Station" the first post master was Archibald John Leitch. On January 1st 1887 the name "station" was officially dropped. A.J. Leitch built a modest wooden store on the west side of Main Street, just north of the Canadian Southern Railway, called the "post office" store. Although the post office was located in various places in the village, this building stood often unoccupied, until July of 1909 when it was finally razed. By June 1910 rural mail was established at Dutton & Crinan. The people had their own mail boxes and received mail three times a week.

Rodney –

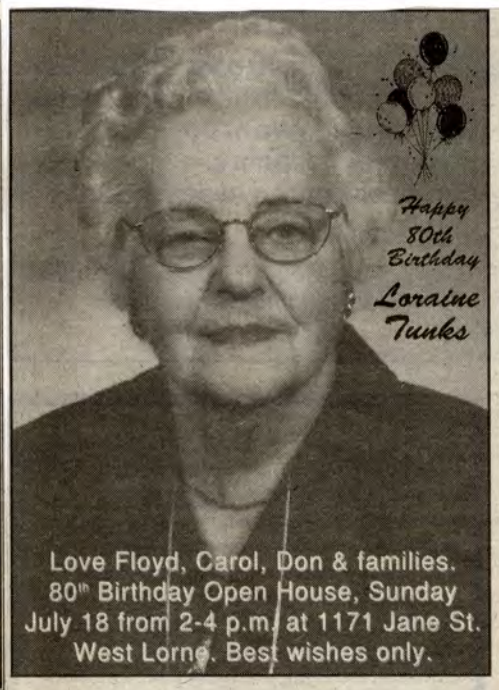
Duncan McIntyre, who was also a tailor, became Rodney's first postmaster. The mail was brought from Wardsville once a week, sometimes on foot, however it was mostly on horseback

SOCIAL 2004

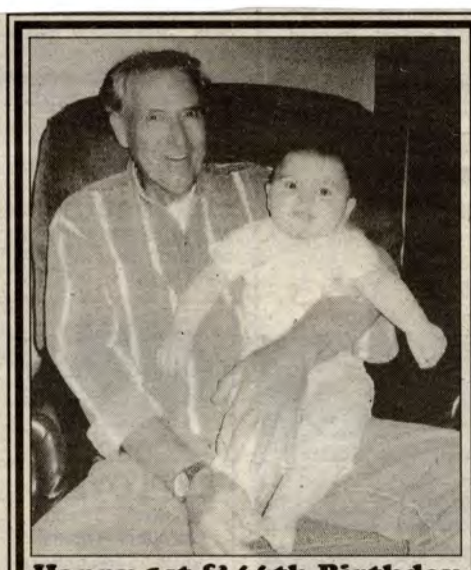


MINOGUE

Casey and Melissa are proud to announce the birth of their son, Ryan James on Wednesday, June 23, 2004 weighing 8lbs. Proud grandparents are Dave and Cathy Sloetjes of Dutton, Rick and Lynda Hernandez of Kitchener, Tammi Minogue and Don Wallis of Ingersoll.



Love Floyd, Carol, Don & families.
80th Birthday Open House, Sunday
July 18 from 2-4 p.m. at 1171 Jane St.
West Lorne. Best wishes only.



Happy 1st & 66th Birthday
Nolan & Ed Schnekenburger
July 13 & 17, 2004



Happy 30th Birthday
Richard ~ July 10th
Love Mom & Dad,
Monique & Ryan & Melissa



HAPPY 1st BIRTHDAY
EMMA NICOLLE FULMER
July 16th
Love from all your family



Happy 1st Birthday
Kalinda
Love Mommy and Daddy



RICHARD ~ THORNTON

Kelli, Dan and big sister Kalinda are pleased to announce the arrrival of Jesse Corbin on June 12, 2004. He weighed 7lbs 6 1/2 ozs and was 20 inches long. Thanks to the staff of London Health Sciences Centre.



TIMMERMANS

Steve and Karen Timmermans along with big sister Ashley are pleased to announce the arrival of their beautiful baby girl, Amy Elizabeth born on May 17, 2004 at 3:45pm weighing in at 8lbs. 13ozs. Proud grandparents are Helen & Peter Timmermans and Beryl & Derek Pickering.



SLAATS

Jeremy & Melissa are thrilled to announce the birth of their first child, *Ethan Kennedy Slaats*. Spoiling privileges go to Doug and Michele Kennedy & Harry and Joanne Slaats.



Wyatt Santos McKenzie

Rob and Elizabeth McKenzie are pleased to announce the birth of their son Wyatt Santos McKenzie on June 16, 2004, weighing 6 lbs. 9 oz. Proud grandparents are Laird and Sharon McKenzie of London and Jose and Ilda Santos of West Lorne.

WEDDING



Erika Jewell, daughter of Don & Carol Jewell, West Lorne, exchanged vows with Mark Southern, son of Bill & Betty Southern, Guelph on Saturday, September 25th, 2004. After honeymooning in Cayo Coco, Cuba, the happy couple are residing in Kitchener.

BIRTH



Barry & Erika Hogan thank God for the safe and much anticipated arrival of their son, *Barry John "Jack" Hogan*, born November 8th, 2004. 7 lbs. 6 ozs., 21.5 inches long. Thrilled grandparents are Brian & Joanna Simpson of Glencoe and Barry & Marcia Hogan of Sarnia. Great grandparents are Doug & Edna Simpson of Glencoe, Anna Kustermans of Parkhill and Ilene Johnston of Corunna. Jack also has 18 aunts and uncles with spoiling privileges. Our thanks to Dr. Pressey, Dr. Blunt and the fantastic nursing staff at Bluewater Health in Sarnia. Special thanks to all of our family and friends for their love and support during this wonderful experience.



Please join family in a double celebration of Ted & Evelyn Vandenberg's 25th Wedding Anniversary and Ted's 80th birthday. Open House Sat. November 20 at the West Lorne Legion ~ 2 to 5 p.m. Best wishes only, please.

SOCIAL 2004



HAPPY 5th ANNIVERSARY

May 1, 1999 "MOMMY & DADDY"
Vicky and Syd Heard
Love Derek and all your family
XO XO

The family of Philomene and Carl Pelcz wish to extend congratulations on the happy occasion of their 50th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY MAY 8, 1954

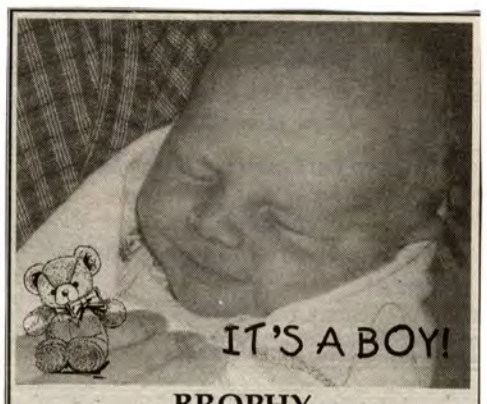


Congratulations and Best Wishes for today and always ..... with all our love, your children and grandchildren



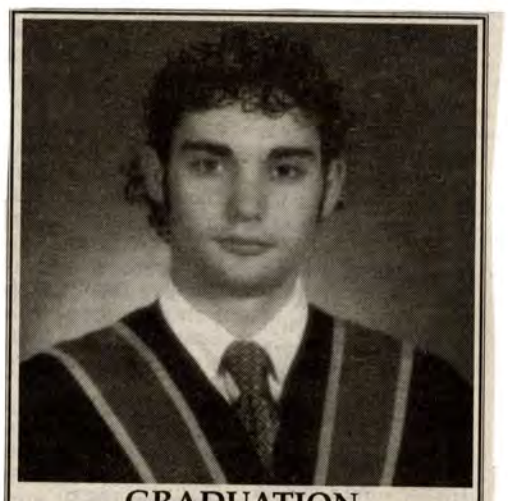
Golden Anniversary

Come help
Vera & Ross Taplin
celebrate their Golden
Wedding Anniversary at an
Open House on May 15, 2004
from 2 to 4pm at the
Highgate Legion.
Best wishes only.



BROPHY

Todd, Deanna and big sister Halle, are thrilled to announce the arrival of Kalan Roger, born at St. Joes London on Tuesday, Oct. 12, 2004 at 12:01 a.m., weighing 8lb, 12oz. Proud grandparents are Herb & Dianne Felder of Rodney, Barbara & Brian Dodds of Mississauga and Roger & Sue Brophy of Kingston. Great grandparents Laurena Hodder of Dutton and Conrad & Katie Felder of West Lorne.



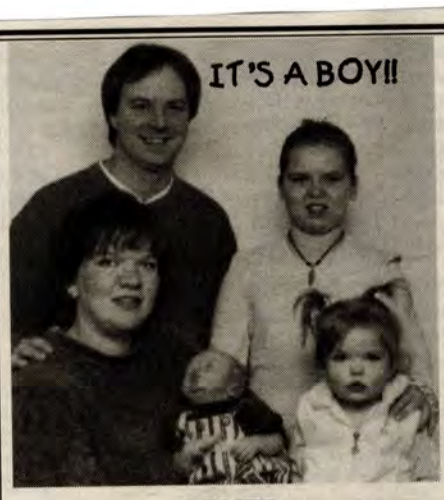
GRADUATION

Chris Vojin graduated from a 3-year Mechanical Engineering Technology course at Durham College, Oshawa, on June 18, 2004. Chris is the son of Pat & Janis Vojin, and is currently travelling in Australia.



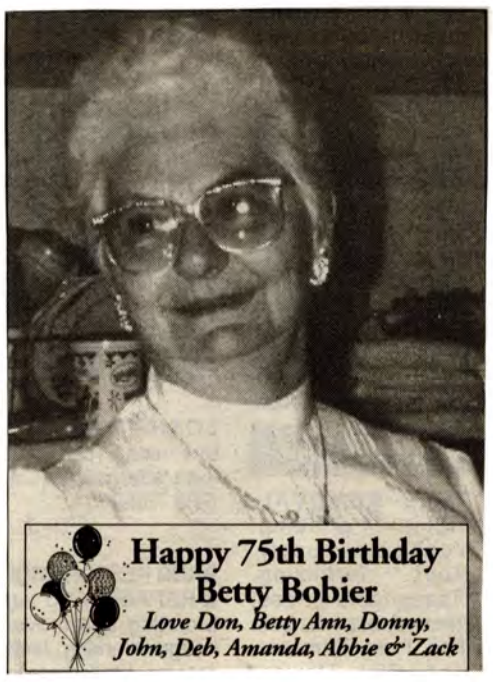
Happy 20th Anniversary
Karen & Brad
Conway
May 5, 2004

For all the years you've been together
your love for each other is still as strong as ever
WE LOVE YOU Mommy & Daddy... your kids
Andrew, Jeremy, Candice, Kelsey and Joshua



BOBIER

Deb and Don would like to announce the birth of their son *Zachary Robert Charles*. Born on January 26, 2004, weighing 8lbs 7oz. and 22 inches long. Baby brother for Amanda and Abigail. Proud grandparents are Don & Betty Ann Bobier and Chuck & Myrtle Joyce.



Happy 75th Birthday Betty Bobier

Love Don, Betty Ann, Donny, John, Deb, Amanda, Abbie & Zack

WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENT



Mike & Katrina Kalita

Rien & Helen Van Brenk, Gary & Audrey Jamieson, Gary & Linda Kalita are happy to announce the marriage of their children. The wedding took place Saturday, August 28th, 2004 at 4 p.m., an outdoor service on the Van Brenk Farm with Pastor Diane MacPherson officiating. Maid of honour - Trina Van Brenk (sister-in-law of the bride) brides maids were Lisa Van Brenk (sister-in-law of the bride), Teresa Small, Anna Good, Nicole Sloetjes, Kari Matos (friends of the bride). Jr. bridesmaids Emily Jamieson, Dakoto Kalita, (nieces of the groom). Best man - John Miller (friend of the groom), ushers Matt Jamieson, Chris Kalita, Tom Kalita (brothers of the groom), Aaron Good, Kirk Tobias, Adam Hoffman (friends of the groom), ring bearers Hunter Van Brenk & Finn Van Brenk (nephews of the bride). They will honeymoon in Australia. Katrina and Mike thank their families and friends for the love and sup-



FIRST BABY OF 2004

Addiena Margaret was born at 12:24 am on January 1, 2004 at Howard County General Hospital, MD. USA, making her the first born in Howard County in 2004. Her parents are Lisa and David Nicolaou of Elliot City. Addiena weighed 6lbs. 9ozs. and was 20 1/4 inches long at birth. Proud grandparents are Bruce and Violet Bragg and the late Margaret Anne Bragg.

Happy 40th Birthday Lawrence



Betcha thought we forgot!

Love from all your family and friends

50th Wedding Anniversary
Marie & Keith Kelly



The family invites you to an open house to celebrate on Saturday, October 23, 2004 from 2:00pm to 4:00pm at Calvary United Church, Rodney. Best wishes only please.

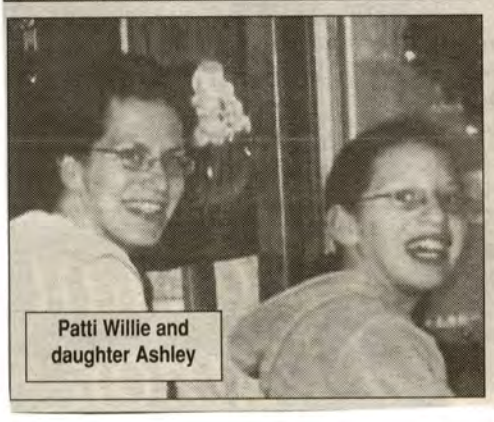
SOCIAL 2004

"You Look Just Like Your Mother"

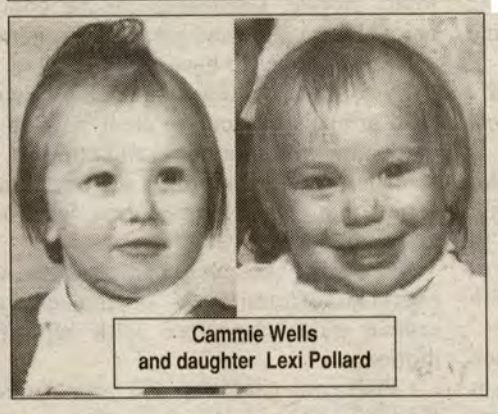

Kathy Mullin and daughter Dakota Kalita

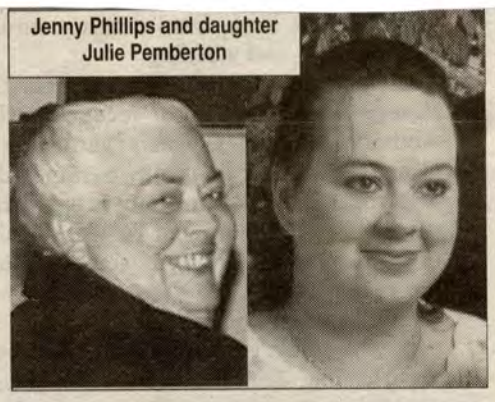

Judy McMillan and daughter Jill

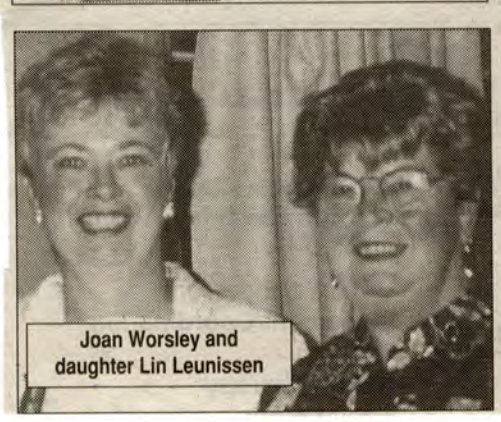

Margaret Gruenbauer and daughter Christine


Patti Willie and daughter Ashley


Lyn Lusse and daughter Trina


Cammie Wells and daughter Lexi Pollard


Jenny Phillips and daughter Julie Pemberton


Joan Worsley and daughter Lin Leunissen


Myrtle Joyce and daughter Deb Bobier

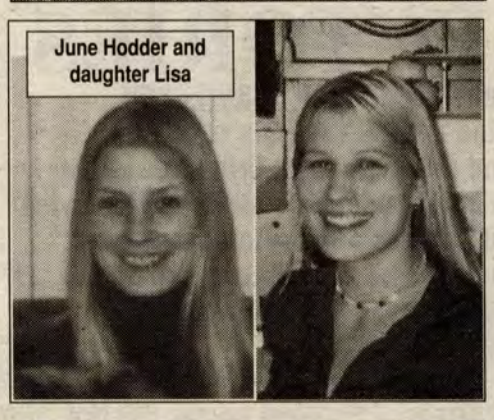

Patricia Tunks and daughter Courtney


Mona Moorby-Blain and daughter Taylor

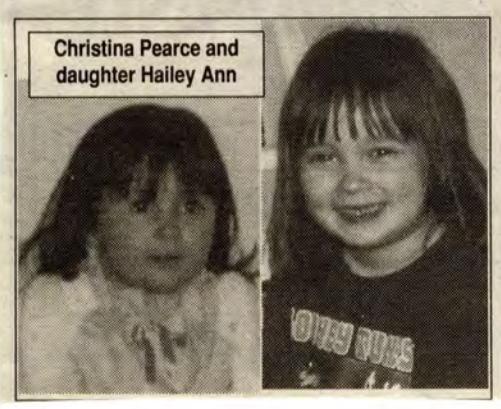

Linda Connolly and daughter Chloe


Ethel Williams and daughter Karen Carroll


Melanie Rose and daughters Katelyn and Allison


June Hodder and daughter Lisa


Olive (Betty) Johnston with daughter Anne Nogradi and granddaughter Julie Nogradi


Christina Pearce and daughter Hailey Ann


Gloria McLeod and daughter Laurie McKillop


Jordana McGill and daughter Angelica

SOCIAL NEWS 2004



Ruth and Henry Mooser, West Lorne and Moira, Greg and Tyler Miller, Glencoe are pleased to announce the engagement and upcoming marriage of Shaun and Nicole. The wedding will take place on September 4, 2004 at Riverside United Church in London.



HOLBORN ~ PATON

Herb and Sandi Paton are proud to announce the forthcoming marriage of their son, Shawn Daniel to Kristina Lynn, daughter of Carman and Debbie Holborn. The wedding will take place Saturday, September 18, 2004 with an outdoor service given at the home of the groom's parents.

50th Wedding Anniversary



Angus & Gwen McLain

They will be celebrating and renewing their vows on Saturday, August 21, 2004 at 7pm at the Moose Lodge, 35 Charterhouse Cr., London

60th Wedding Anniversary



Earl & Marion Wright

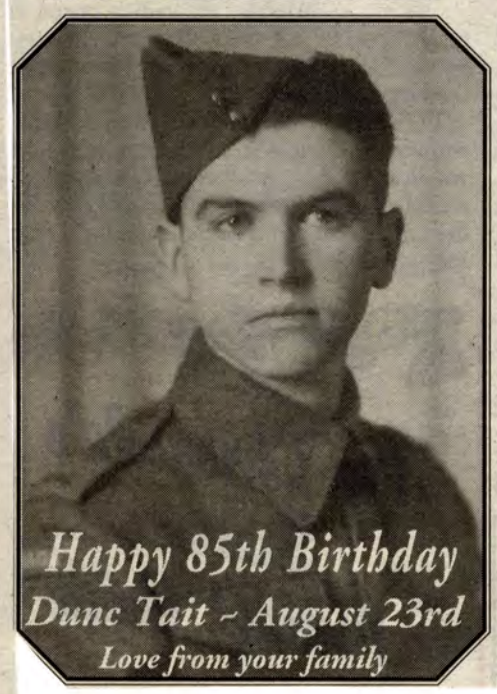
Please join us at 290 Furnival Road, Rodney on Saturday, August 28, 2004 from 2pm to 5pm for an anniversary celebration. Best wishes only please.



Carla Brown and Nolan Tweddle will be exchanging wedding vows on September 11, 2004 at Bear Creek Golf Club in Strathroy. The proud parents are Gary and Shirley Brown and Doug and Pat Tweddle.



On behalf of family and friends, congratulations are extended to Cynthia Lynn DeWild who graduated from the University of Waterloo on June 19, 2004 with her Honours Bachelor of Applied Science Degree (Environmental/Civil Engineering). Cynthia has accepted a research position with the University of Western Ontario and the National Research Council while working towards her Masters Degree of Medical Biophysics.



Happy 85th Birthday
Dunc Tait ~ August 23rd
Love from your family



Van Brenk ~ Kalita

Rien and Helen Van Brenk are proud to announce the the forthcoming marriage of their daughter, Katrina to Mike Kalita, son of Audrey & Gary Jamieson and Gary & Linda Kalita. The wedding will take place at 4pm on Saturday, August 28th, 2004 at the farm. An outdoor service will be given by minister Diane MacPerson followed by a reception.



80th BIRTHDAY OPEN HOUSE
For Beatrice Casey
Come celebrate with us
Sunday, April 25th at St. Mary's Hall,
West Lorne from 1pm to 3pm
BEST WISHES ONLY PLEASE
If you wish, donations to be made to the Caring Cupboard



Mr. & Mrs. Joe & Maria Oliveira and Mr. & Mrs. Ron & Barb Trudell are pleased to announce the marriage of their children, Aida and Mike. The wedding will take place at St. Mary's Catholic Church on June 26, 2004



The families of Catherine Hofmans and Scott Galbraith are pleased to announce their engagement and upcoming wedding on June 12th, 2004 at the home of Jerry & Bev Galbraith. The couple will reside in Kingston.



Don and Carol Jewell of West Lorne and Bill and Betty Southem of Guelph wish to announce the forthcoming marriage of their children, Erika and Mark on Saturday, September 24, 2004 at West Lorne United Church.



The newest little Pizza Maker in town at P.J.'s Pizza
'Leah Louise'
April 4, 2004 · 9lbs. 13ozs.
Congratulations Bruce & Kelly



Robert D. Tait, H.B.A., B.Ed.

Rob graduated from Queen's University, Kingston, ON. on June 3, 2004, receiving his Bachelor of Education degree. He attained his Honours Bachelor of Arts in History and Geography from the University of Guelph on June 10, 2003. His parents, Dunc and Annie Isobel and his sister Phyllis are very proud of his accomplishments and wish him a future filled with continued success as he continues striving towards his goals.



Mr. & Mrs. Albert Patterson of West Lorne, along with Mr. & Mrs. Wolfgang Fischer of Guelph, are pleased to announce the engagement of their children, Tim & Sabrina. Wedding to take place June 11, 2004 at Springfield Golf Course Guelph.

HAPPY ADS
"For Lasting Memories"



HAPPY 50th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY
Don & Dorothy Broom
Friends are invited to an Open House on July 31, 2004 at Rodney Calvary United Church from 2 to 4pm. Best Wishes Only!



HAPPY 29th ANNIVERSARY
Dawn & David Cadogan
Love Mom

Remember Dave...

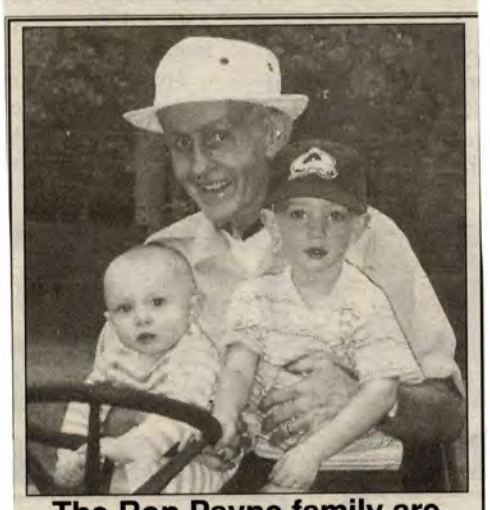


...When digital computing was counting on your fingers, high-speed access was the on-ramp to the 401 out of Dutton, surfing was something done on a board in the ocean, cables were something used to support bridges, video games were trying to make out the fuzzy images on a snowy black & white TV, a cell phone was your only call from jail, and an airbag was just someone who talked too much?

Your family respectfully extend their best birthday wishes to you. We also commemorate August 17, 2004 a "REAL" milestone.



Ron and Janet Ripley of West Lorne attended the graduation of their son, John Isaac, on June 18, 2004 at Osgoode Hall, Toronto. John graduated with L.L.B. in Law in the International Comparative & Trans National Curricular Streams. John was the recipient of the Caleb J. Hayhoe award & the Benjamin Laufer prize in International Law. John is now writing the bar admissions course at Osgoode Hall and will article with Blake Cassels & Graydon L.L.P., Toronto. We're so proud, congratulations John.



The Ron Payne family are thrilled to wish him a Happy 65th Birthday on July 17, 2004

Lots of hugs and kisses from the old woman, the kids and grand kids. We thank God you're here!



Renald & Marie Bégin are happy to announce the engagement and forthcoming marriage of their son Richard to Melissa Hounsell, daughter of Trevor Hounsell and Heather Kavanaugh. The wedding will take place on Saturday, September 4, 2004 at the residence of the bride's father.



MICHELLE DAWN CAMPBELL
daughter of Don and Helen Campbell of Wallacetown graduated from the The University of Waterloo with a Bachelor of Science Degree (Honours Kinesiology) (Speech Communications Option). Michelle has been accepted to the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College in Toronto starting in September. Michelle also earned Certification as a Personal Fitness Lifestyle Consultant.



Gary and Ann Smith proudly announce the graduation of their daughter Lisa from Queen's University with her Honours Bachelor of Arts (Distinction), June 4, 2004. Lisa also received the Medal in History and the Harris Memorial Prize in Naval & Military History. Lisa will be attending the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa in the fall. Congratulations Lisa! Love Mom, Dad & Rob



Margaret and Francis Knapp
request your presence at their celebration of 50 years together on August 21st, 2004 at the Royal Canadian Legion, Rodney. Open house from 7:30pm to 8:30pm, dance to follow. Best wishes only.





HAPPY 25th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY August 18th
Larry & Gwen Schneider
Congratulations Mom and Dad!
Love your children, Catherine, Andrew & Meghan

SOCIAL 2005

Happy 90th Birthday Frances McCallum

Feb. 18th



Best wishes from her family and friends. An OPEN HOUSE will be held Saturday, May 28th from 2-4 p.m. at the Crinan Community Centre, Dunborough Rd.

GRADUATE



Krista Huver received her Masters in History from the University of Western Ontario. She is the daughter of Brian & Joanna Simpson and daughter-in-law of Rudy and Els Huver. Congratulations from Stephen (husband), Luke, Matt & family.

GRADUATE

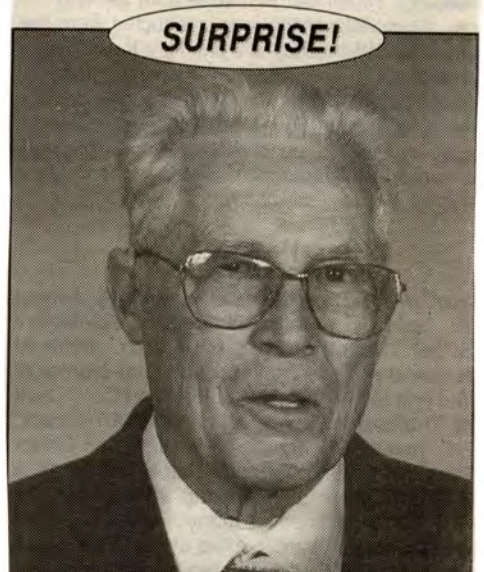


Sarah Simpson graduated from the University of Guelph with a degree in Honours Bachelor of Commerce Agribusiness. She was on the Dean's Honour List. She is the daughter of Brian & Joanna Simpson



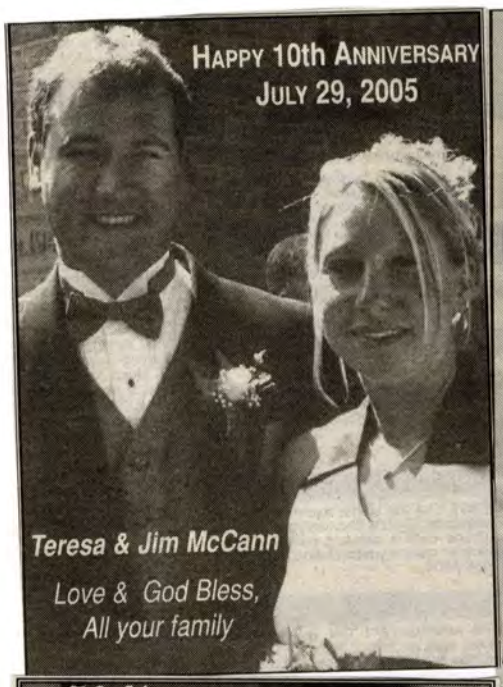
Rae & David are pleased to announce the graduation of their Mom, Ronna Hoglund, from the University of Western Ontario.
Ronna graduated June 17, 2005 with distinction from the Bachelor of Health Science Program, Honours Specialiation in Rural Health.
Ronna has accepted a position at Trios College in London teaching the Pharmacy Technician program.
Love & congratulations from all of her proud family!

SURPRISE!



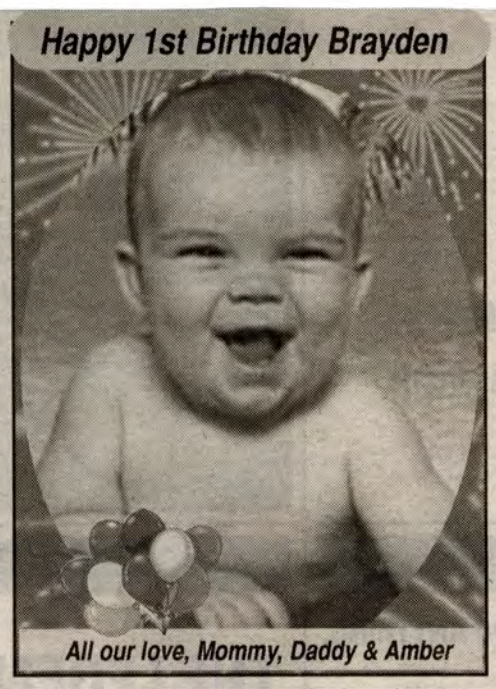
A "Surprise" Open House for Glenn Jones' 80th birthday on Sat. Sept. 10 in the pavillian at New Glasgow Park from 2 to 3:30 p.m.
Best wishes only!

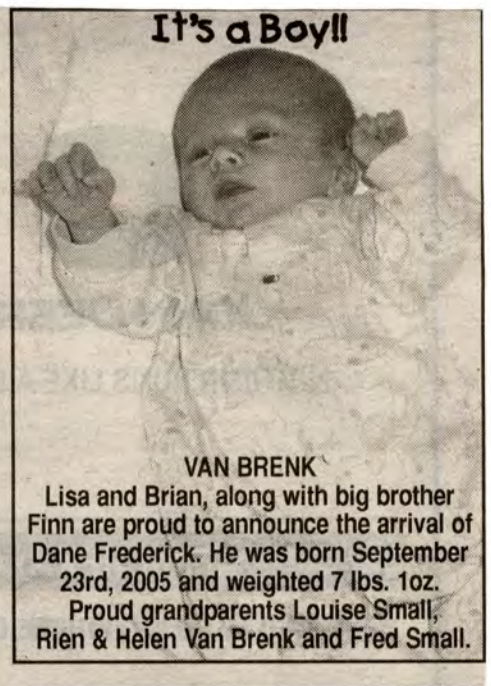
Social 2005





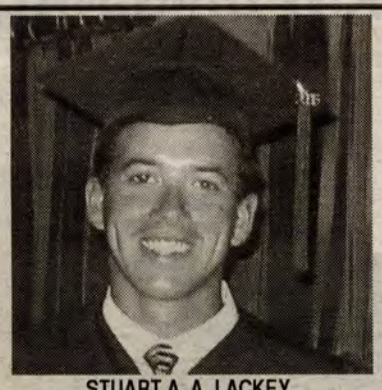
Bill & Irene Paskarak and Rick & Carol Falkins take great pleasure congratulating Dean & Sandy on their marriage September 17, 2005.
They had a beautiful outdoor wedding & honeymoon in Los Cabos Mexico.
P.S. Way to go Daddy & Sandy.
Love Isaiah





VAN BRENK
Lisa and Brian, along with big brother Finn are proud to announce the arrival of Dane Frederick. He was born September 23rd, 2005 and weighted 7 lbs. 1oz.
Proud grandparents Louise Small, Rien & Helen Van Brenk and Fred Small.





STUART A. A. LACKEY
Stuart Andrew Auckland Lackey, received a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Northwood University, West Palm Beach, Florida, graduating with honours on May 18, 2005. Stuart was awarded a Diploma of Business Administration - Automotive Marketing from Georgian College, Barrie on September 18, 2004. He is employed by the Coggin Automotive Group in Jacksonville, Florida. Stuart is the son of Ron and Margaret Lackey, Wallacetown and the grandson of Edith Auckland, Talbotville.



Lackey-Davies
Laura Catherine Lackey and Winston Justin Davies were united in marriage on November 15, 2004 in Barrow, Alaska. they celebrated with family and friends on July 16, 2005 at the home of Laura's parents, Ron and Margaret Lackey, Wallacetown.
Laura is the granddaughter of Edith Auckland, Talbotville. Winston is the son of Winston and Renate Davies, Wrangell, Alaska.
Laura and Winston reside in Barrow where they are employed at Hopson Middle School.



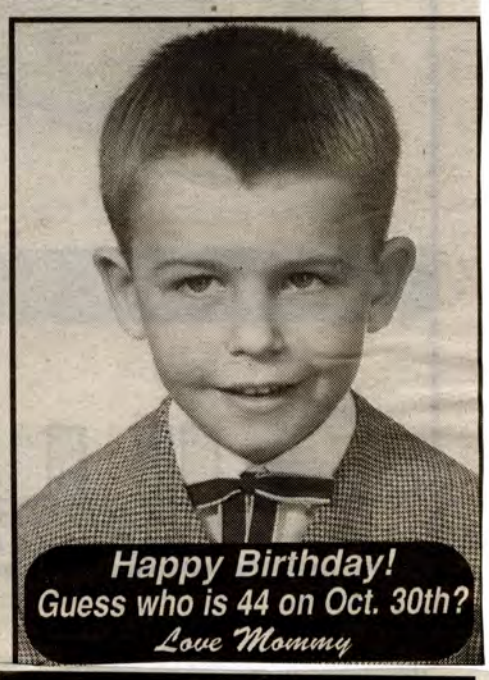




LEAH LOUISE KINDORNAY
Upon completion of a Nice France exchange program, Leah has graduated from the University of Guelph with a Bachelor of Arts, Honours, majoring in French. Leah is currently continuing her studies at the University of Westeron Ontario in the Bachelor of Education program.
Congratulations & best wishes.
Love Mom, Lambert, Dad, Carolyn & families



HEATHER ELAINE KINDORNAY
Heather graduated from the University of Guelph with a Bachelor of Science Honours majoring in animal biology. Heather has accepted a position with Agri Brands Purina Canada Inc. in Woodstock, as an animal feed formulator.
We are very proud of you and wish you well in future endeavours.
Love,
Mom, Lambert, Dad, Carolyn & families









Krista Mooser, daughter of Ruth & Henry, graduated in June with an Honours B.A. in sociology. She remains at University of Western Ontario studying law.
Congratulations, we are proud of you!
Love, Mom, Dad, Shaun, Nicole & Tyler



SOCIAL 2005

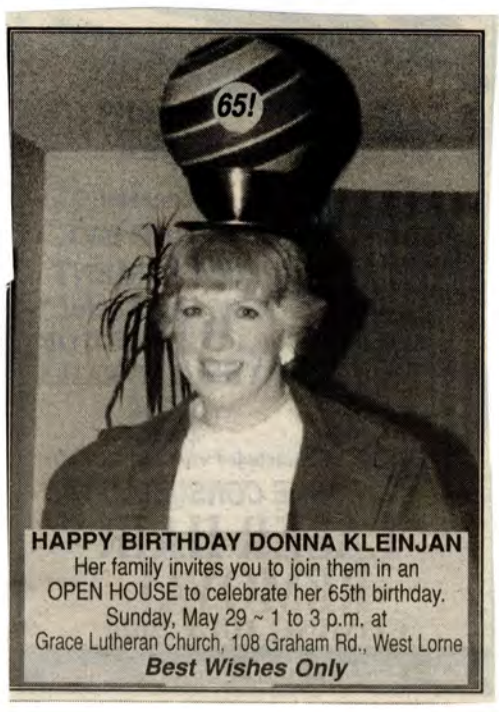


Bob & Beth McLandress are thrilled to announce the marriage of their daughter April to Brian Dyck, son of Sally Dyck and David & Linda Dyck. The wedding will take place on June 11, 2005.

HAPPY 80th BIRTHDAY



HANS GARTNER
May 26th
Love & best wishes from all your family



HAPPY BIRTHDAY DONNA KLEINJAN
Her family invites you to join them in an OPEN HOUSE to celebrate her 65th birthday.
Sunday, May 29 ~ 1 to 3 p.m. at
Grace Lutheran Church, 108 Graham Rd., West Lorne
Best Wishes Only



WELCOME
to the 2005 NEW ARRIVALS

It's a Girl!



Isabella McGall
June 26, 2005
daughter of Jon & Brandi McGall

It's a Girl!



Jacklyn Paige Parnell
November 3, 2005
Daughter of Robert & Stephanie

It's a Boy!



Seth Carlin Griegoschewski
August 14, 2005
Son of Lisa Hodder & Bryan

It's a Girl!



Daveigh Brenna Fletcher
March 7, 2005
Daughter of Brent & Natalie

It's a Girl!



Riley Machado Cipu
July 27, 2005
Daughter of Stacy & Dave

It's a Girl!



Jessica Genevive Howse
November 7, 2005
Daughter of Monica & Joel

It's a Girl!



Lauren Faith Versteeg
October 7, 2005
Daughter of Laura (Ripley) & Tom

It's a Boy!



Austin Jeremiah McGill
November 29, 2005
Son of Jeremy & Danielle

It's a Boy!



Andrew Booth
May 11, 2005
Son of Dan & Karen Booth

It's a Girl!



Rianna Marie Baran
February 20, 2005
Daughter of Dimitrius & Vanessa (Paine)

It's a Girl!



Tori Ann McGill
May 9, 2005
Daughter of Jerry & Chantel

It's a Boy!



Hudson Ewing
July 4, 2005
Son of Heather & Chad

It's a Girl!



Kaya Selina O'Connor
December 25, 2005
Daughter of Michael Vail & Jessica O'Connor

Thomas & Jordana McGill



As of December 24th, 2005, we are delighted to announce the marriage of Thomas McGill and Jordana Keskeny. Participants of the wedding ceremony included Father Konieczny, organist Margaret Knapp, photographer Bonnie McGill and cameraman Shane Keskeny. The wedding party consisted of maid of honour Danielle Keskeny, best man Tim McGill, ring bearer Tommy McGill and flower girl Jelica McGill. Proud parents of the couple are Woodrow and Amanda McGill and Chris and Tracy Keskeny. Pleasantly surprised grandparents are Marvin Howse, Betty Keskeny and Len and Donna Shipley. Flowers in memory of Genevieve Howse, Woodrow McGill Sr., Violet McGill, Leslie Keskeny and Norris Frank were arranged by Dutton Flowers. Thank you to everyone who came together at St. Mary's Church to make this a memorable day!

It's a Boy!



Bryson Cole Palmer
April 25, 2005
Son of Darlene & Jason

It's a Boy!



Cale Stafford
April 16, 2005
Son of Andrew & Melissa

It's a Girl!



Gabrielle Regan Davey
January 31, 2005
Daughter of Paul & Karen

It's a Girl!



Elizabeth Joan Jamieson
January 13, 2005
Daughter of Matt & Heather

Social 2005

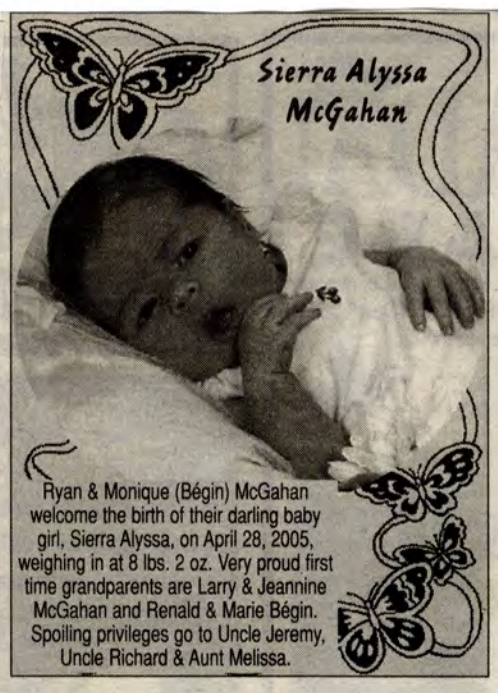


Samantha McGill is pleased to announce the safe arrival of her sister Tori Ann, born May 9, 2005 Proud parents Jerry & Chantel

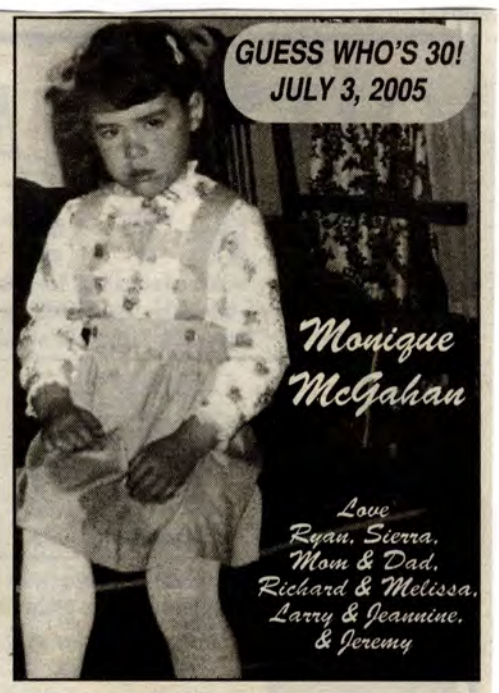


Tiffany Barber

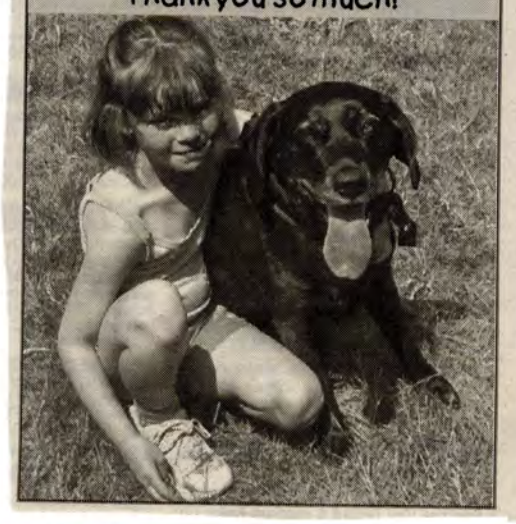
Tiffany, daughter of Jim & Denise Barber, Wallacetown, graduated on Saturday, June 18, 2005 from Carleton University with her BA Arts Honours in Criminology and Criminal Justice. Her concentration was in Law with a minor in History. Tiffany has decided she still wants to learn more about the law and has enrolled in a 2-year Law course at Fanshawe College in September



Ryan & Monique (Bégin) McGahan welcome the birth of their darling baby girl, Sierra Alyssa, on April 28, 2005, weighing in at 8 lbs. 2 oz. Very proud first time grandparents are Larry & Jeannine McGahan and Renald & Marie Bégin. Spoiling privileges go to Uncle Jeremy, Uncle Richard & Aunt Melissa.



Abbie and Beauty would like to thank the people who sponsored them in the 5km walk. With your help Abbie placed 3rd for her age group. Thank you so much!



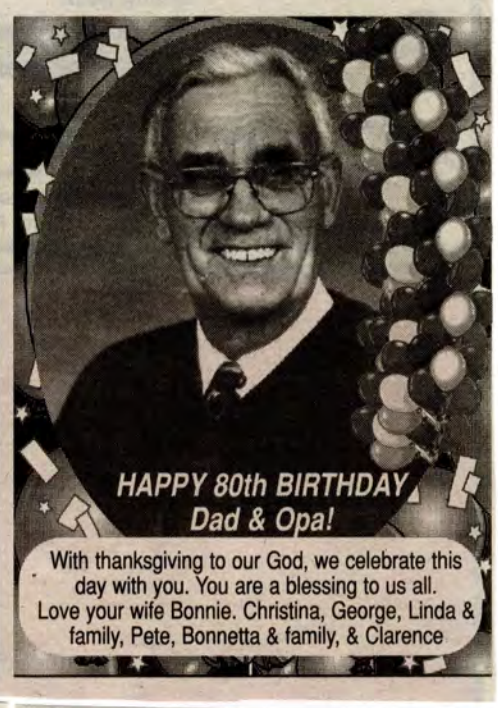


GRADUATE



MARCY FORD

Tom & Lynda Ford of Kintyre are pleased to announce the graduation of their daughter Marcy from the University of Guelph with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering. Marcy graduated June 16 from the Environmental Engineering (Co-op) Program with distinction. She is currently employed as a Junior Engineer with Dillon Consulting in London. Congratulations Marcy!



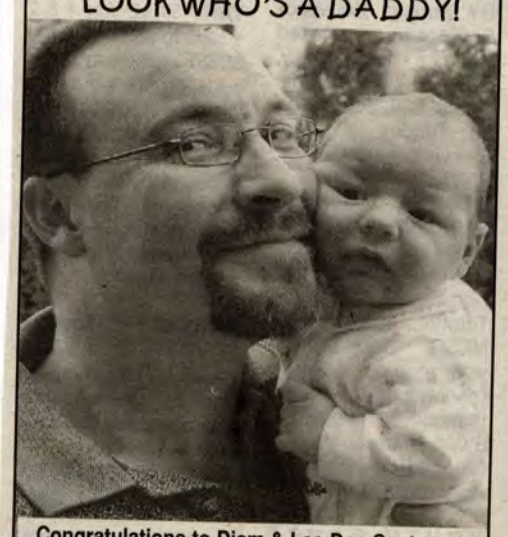
With thanksgiving to our God, we celebrate this day with you. You are a blessing to us all. Love your wife Bonnie. Christina, George, Linda & family, Pete, Bonnetta & family, & Clarence



Kerry Lynne Kulak, daughter of Linda and granddaughter of Sophia and Earl Howse, graduated from the University of Western Ontarion on the Dean's Honour List, on June 15, 2005 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering. Kerry completed a 16-month Engineering Internship between her 3rd and 4th year of university at Litens Automotive in Woodbridge, Ontario which resulted in Kerry being offered full-time employment as their Continual Improvement Coordinator effective April 25, 2005.

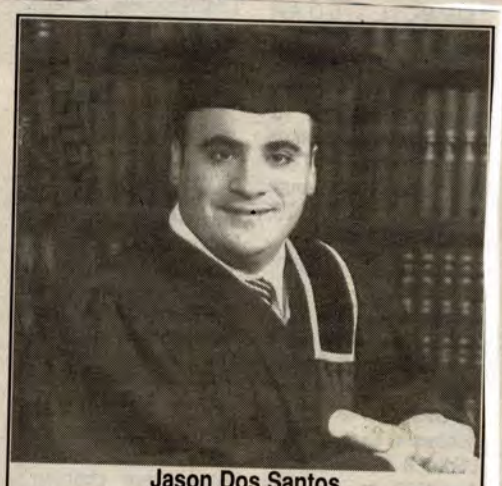
Congratulations! Love Mom, Nana & Pa

LOOK WHO'S A DADDY!



Congratulations to Diam & Lee Dos Santos on the birth of their first child Adam, who was born April 15, 2005 in Waterdown.

Love & best wishes from the Dos Santos family



Jason Dos Santos

Congratulations to Jason, son of Lourdes and George Dos Santos of West Lorne who graduated from the Industrial Engineer Program at Mohawk College of Applied Arts & Tech. in Hamilton on June 2, 2005. Jason is now employed as program engineer at Dresden Industries.

Best wishes from your family



Leanne Carroll, daughter of Alan and Karen Carroll, graduated from U.W.O. with an Honours B.A. in Art History & Criticism. She received three medals, including the Governor General's Silver Medal for the highest academic standing in an honours program at U.W.O. She will be starting her Master's Degree at U.W.O in September.

50th Anniversary

Jim & Marilyn Jamieson



October 1st is a special date
So come and help us celebrate
50 years of married life
50 years as husband and wife.
Open House from 2-4
at the Legion in West Lorne
So bring along a smile,
Only Best Wishes will do,
We'll take some time to reminisce
And make new memories too!



Congratulations Jennifer Arvai on graduating from UWO, with your Bachelor of Education! Congratulations also on your teaching position with Fern Hill Private School in Oakville. Dad, Shaun, Terry, Your Aunts, Uncles, Cousins & Grandma & Grandpa Arvai wish you all the best in your new career and future endeavours.

Love Your Arvai Family





Stephen and Krista (Simpson) Huver thank God for the safe arrival of John-Paul Joseph Simpson Huver, a brother for Luke and Matt. He was born at 10:21 am on Tuesday, May 17, 2005, weighing in at 7 lbs 11 oz, and measuring 20.5 inches long. Proud grandparents are Rudy and Els Huver and Brian and Joanna Simpson, all of West Lorne. Great-grandparents are Doug and Edna Simpson of Glencoe and Anna Kustermans of Parkhill. Special thanks to Dr. Buma and the OB staff at Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital and to family and friends for their prayers, love and support.

SOCIAL 2005



Happy 18th Birthday, Corey



Samantha McGill is pleased to announce the safe arrival of her sister Lori Ann, born May 9, 2005 Proud parents Jerry & Chantel



Kristine L. Bittermann received her Law Degree from Osgoode Hall Law School, Toronto on Friday, June 17th, 2005. Kristine received three awards and graduated in the top eight percent. She will be articling with the Ministry of Natural Resources, Toronto beginning in September.

Congratulations Kristine, Love Mom & Dad



LYNN AUCKLAND

In October, 2004, Lynn graduated from U.W.O. with a B.A. in Kinesiology. On June 14, 2005, Lynn also received her B. Ed. in Phys. Ed. and English from Althouse College (U.W.O.) Congratulations!

Love Dad & Mom



GLENN & ALBERTA JONES

Wed 55 Years

June 17th



Ed & Chris Donovan are pleased to announce the coming marriage of their son Joseph to Krista Seed, daughter of Deb Seed of West Lorne and Wayne Seed of Lambeth.



LANI GILKES

Lani, daughter of the late Robert Gilkes and Doris Gilkes, graduated on Saturday, June 18, 2005 from Carleton University with her B.A. Honours in Criminology and Criminal Justice. Lani will be attending Fanshawe College in September to further her studies. Best wishes from your family.



July 8, 1995

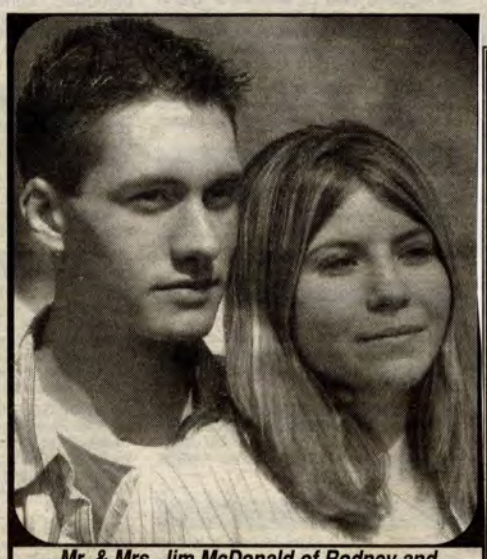
Lillian & Doug

You set a goal to be in Paris, France on your 10th Anniversary and you did it! So proud of you and love you both so much. *Love Mom & Dad*



Katie Cormier

Congratulations to Katie, daughter of Karen & Bill Goncalves of West Lorne, who graduated on June 2, 2005 from the Advertising and Communications Media program at Mohawk College of Applied Arts in Hamilton. Katie has taken a 6 month position at the Rim Rock Resort in Banff Alberta. Love and best wishes from all your family and friends.



Mr. & Mrs. Jim McDonald of Rodney and Mr. & Mrs. Ron Babcock of Aylmer are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their children Jenny and Matt. The wedding will take place on Saturday, July 2, 2005 in Rodney.



HAPPY 25TH ANNIVERSARY MOM & DAD

JULY 5, 2005

Love,
Melanie, Craig & Matthew



Happy Silver Wedding Anniversary

Bob & Elaine Gray

July 5, 1980 to July 5, 2005

A "Love Match"



50 Years

Joan & Keith Marr
Celebrating 50 years
1955 - July 16 - 2005
Love, Your Family



OPEN HOUSE

You are invited to a very special Open House Birthday Celebration for Mary Szanto Given by her family

St. Mary's Church Community Centre
Sunday July 24th 2pm to 4pm
Your best wishes & attendance will be a wonderful gift!



2 YEARS OLD JUNE 10th

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TYLER JACOB FENN

Love from Daddy, Grandma & Grandpa & Uncle Don



30 30

HAPPY 30TH
July 16

Where did the years go?
You are still our little _____.
Love you so much
Mom & Dad Joyce

SPORTS 2004

50th anniversary celebrated by skating club

By Scott Hilgendorff
The Chronicle

Celebrating its 50th anniversary, the West Elgin Skating Club is hosting a carnival that looks back on its 50 years through performances that look at the music and style of the past 50 years.

"Every year, we say the carnival is for them (the current skaters). Maybe selfishly this year, this carnival is for all of us who have had skates on," said Sharon Nielson, the club's carnival chairperson.

While some of the board and current coaches are past members of the club, others are coming back to attend the event and a special dinner being held between the two performances.

"Fifty years on the ice was not built without volunteers. It has taken a lot of people over the years," said Nielson.

The members have been rehearsing since January but plans for the event have been in the works since last year.

"Everyone is excited. We've limited the number of tickets and we've sold just over half," said Nielson, recommending people get tickets ahead from club members to avoid disappointment if they are sold out at the door this year.

With 130 skaters this year, Nielson said the club has always managed to maintain a strong membership.

"You're either a hockey family or a figure skating family," she said of the people living in the area.

The club started in 1954 but its first carnival may not have been until 1955. It's why the club's "Retro Mania" event celebrates 50 years on the ice.

Fifty years since it started, Nielson said they're having a lot of fun looking back.

"Probably my most fun decade to get ready was for the hippies," she said, adding putting a number together with children in poodle skirts was a lot of fun too.

"We enjoyed trying to get those numbers together," she said.

One of the highlights for this year's celebration comes with guest skater Jeffrey Buttle.

The Barrie skater is a Canadian silver and bronze medalist and the 2004 Four Continents Champion. In 2002 and this year, he was a bronze medalist in the Canadian Nationals and took silver in 2003.

The December 2002 issue of International Figure Skating magazine named Buttle as one of the top 10 most beautiful people in skating.

"He's a pretty awesome guy and this is a big deal for us," said Nielson. "For him to even consider coming to West Lorne, we're thrilled."

She said he's a positive role model, especially for the boys in the club.

"We have a few male skaters we want to encourage," said Nielson, adding Buttle's presence will be an encouragement to all the members through is sportsmanship and own positive attitudes.

The event takes place March 6 with afternoon and evening performances.

SPORTS 2004

The Chronicle

Atoms start hockey season plenty of many wins

The beginning of the season for the Atom Travel team has been very successful with wins over Thamesford (4-3), Ilderton (4-2), Strathroy (5-4), Glencoe (6-3), Belmont (7-1), Glencoe (3-2), Alvinston (5-0), South Huron (5-2) and a tie against Belmont, leaving the team with a record of eight wins, five loses and one tie.

This past week the team continued to add to the win column.

On Tuesday the team traveled to Forest where they won 3-0. Goals were scored by Jacob Dymock, Michael Verboom, and Tyler Hull. On Saturday the team was on the road again to Mt Brydges where they found another win 4-1. Michael Verboom scored a hat trick and Jason Alves added one goal. On Sunday the team played at home against Parkhill, winning 7-0. Jason Alves had a hat trick, with Michael Verboom scoring twice and from Michael Brennan and Bryan Johnston each scoring one goal.

The goals wouldn't have come easy without the help of teamates, Cody Parker, Tyson Ford, Kyle Barber and Kurtis Gosnell for their outstanding play that assisted in putting the puck in the net.

The boys are playing well as a team but special mention goes out to Nolan Collard for his exceptional play between the pipes.

This weekend the team is off to a tournament in Blenheim and hope for the best of luck.

Lakers move practice time to London



Jeffrified

by Jeff Kempenaar

Here are some tidbits I've been chewing on over coffee this past week.

Word on the street of Dutton is Flying J truck stops is looking at building at Hwy. 401 and Currie Rd.

The land was purchased by a father and son partnership from Toronto. Currently, the Dhillons are completing a truck stop in Toronto. Ken Loveland, Dutton-Dunwich administrator, said he hasn't heard if it will be a Flying J.

He said it could be next year or years down the road before any construction begins. Last Loveland heard was the Dhillons were looking at making deals with gas providers and restaurateurs.

Also, Thamesville Credit Union purchased the parcel of land across Main Street from the fire department in Dutton to open a new branch. Construction should this fall.

Post office break-ins in Rodney and Wardsville Oct. 6 and 7 turned out to be part of 53 post office break-ins by a Hamilton gang, the police believe.

About 53 other post offices have been hit across the province. The crime group has been stealing stamps and pre-stamped envelopes and selling them at reduced prices at convenience stores.

The West Lorne Lakers hockey team has moved its Monday night practices to London after struggling to get the team out for 10 p.m.

Team management was hoping for more openings at 9 p.m. but Minor Hockey, (the West Lorne arena's biggest client), has kept the ice busy with three midget teams this year.

About $2,600 of ice time has been taken to London.

Murray's Video Variety in Dutton is collecting winter coats until this Saturday before bringing them to Wilson Dry Cleaning in St. Thomas that will distribute them to a St. Stephens Church. The coats, mitts and toques go to needy children and adults that don't have the proper clothing for the coming winter.

The Daffodil Society is beginning its big push to collect food for low-income earners in the community that may not have enough money for food after buying gifts for family members.

The publisher of a new newspaper presented her ad rate sheet at the Dutton and Dunwich Chamber of Commerce meeting Oct. 25.

It's custom to announce new businesses in the area, so I extend a welcome to the Horizon.



CLOSE ENCOUNTERS...

Aliens, hippies and rock stars took to the ice at the West Elgin Skating Club's 50th anniversary carnival. The two Saturday performances were sold out at the West Lorne Arena where skaters from the past and present gathered to put together the special anniversary performance. The event featured numbers representing the music and style of the past 50 years. For more photos, see Page 10.

Chronicle photo

SPORTS





Rishi Sharma, above, and Stefan Agaba, right, both of Aldborough Public School were at St. Mary's School in West Lorne Friday for the Knights of Columbus Free Throw Competition. Students move on to district, regional and national competitions.

Chronicle photo

Free throw competition unfolds

The 6495 West Elgin chapter of the Knights of Columbus hosted a free throw competition Friday at St. Mary's School.

Local winners include:

Emily Varga - 10 yr girl - Aldborough School

Kyle Oliveira - 10 yr boy - St. Mary's School

Rebekah Brayton - 11 yr girl - St. Mary's School

Rishi Sharma - 11 yr boy - Aldborough School

Brodi Jewell - 12 yr girl - WESES

Allan Percival - 12 yr boy - WESES

Alanah Sutton - 13 yr girl - WESES -

Nadia Kelman (runner up) St. Mary's.

Justin Hwang - 13 yr boy - St. Mary's School

Kim Kriter - 14 yr girl - WESES

Robert Nute - 14 yr boy - WESES

Kelman will move on to St. Anne's in Blenheim Blenheim District Jan. 31 in Sutton's place who cannot attend. The rest of the winners also advance to the district round.

The Chronicle — March 11, 2004

West Elgin Skating Club celebrates 50th anniversary



Paul Dieker, front left, and Steven Minnema, front right, as Elvises were among the performers at the West Elgin Skating Club's 50th anniversary carnival celebrations held at the West Lorne Arena on Saturday. Two performances were sold out of "Retro Mania" which took a look at the music and styles of the past 50 years. A highlight of the carnival was medalist Jeffrey Buttle, who performed during both shows.

Chronicle photos



Hailey Slaats gives her solo performance.



Skating as hippies are Khloe Beer, left, Mary Jane Miller, Breyanne Serle and Payton Snobelen.



Many musical eras were represented at "Retro Mania".



Paxton Knott, left, Samantha Reimens, Samantha Fletcher, Aleah Jabara, Ryann Fink, Alyssa Paiva and Travis Morley perform in a number to The Pink Panther.



Chase Guindon is an elephant Beanie Babie



Skating as "Jessie" from A Toy Story is Kylie Beer.



Beanie Babies MacKenzie Fink, Nolan McLarty, Mallory Hooghiem and Alexis Degraw take to the ice.

December 2, 2004

Lakers beaten by Thamesford

The West Lorne Lakers lost 8-4 to the Thamesford Trojans at home in game action on Nov. 27.

Travis Reddy, Jordan Dufton, Matt Bartoch and Brady Campbell scored for the Lakers in the team's fifth loss in a row.

The Lakers suffered a heartbreaking 6-5 loss at the hands of the Exeter Hawks in West Lorne in game action Nov. 24.

With 6 seconds remaining in the game, Exeter took control of the puck, mustered one shot at Laker's goaltender Blake Wladyka and banged in the rebound with two seconds on the clock to win the game.

Coaching staff say the team was heartbroken and deserved a point from the game.

Shots were 52 for Exeter to 38 for West Lorne.

Brady Campbell scored two goals and Jordan Dufton, Dave Marshall and Luke Hopkins each scored for the Lakers.

Lakers continue to have troubles putting the puck in the net after losing 3-1 to the Thamesford Trojans in Junior D hockey action Nov.17.

The Lakers fired 37 shots at the Trojans goaltender but Justin Rowles could muster the only goal.

Rowles banged in a rebound off a point shot from Travis Reddy who deked around a Trojan forward to take the initial shot.

Blake Wladyka made 45 saves playing in goal for the Lakers.

The Lakers were home to Belmont Dec. 1, after press time.

The team's next home game is Dec. 4 at 7:15 p.m. versus the Lucan Irish.



RODNEY SOCCER U 11

SUBMITTED

Front row: Emily Varga, Cassie Bergey, Sabrina Fletcher, Anna Kelly, Codi VanderGulik, Justin Roose, Kylie Beer, Josh McGahan, Jessie Bergey, Haley West, Mary Jane Miller. Back row: Anne Nogradi (Coach), Brian Kelly, Matthew Ritchie, Sheldon Downie, Abbey Fleming, David Morley, Randy Ossel, Rebie West, Victora Parker, Jacob Peters, Cal Nogradi, Dana Varga (coach).



SUBMITTED

Front row: Nolan Collard, goaltender. Second row: Jason Alves, Kyle Barber, Michael Brennan, Bryan Johnston, Kurtis Gosnell Third row: Cody Parker, Michael Verboom, Jacob Dymock, Tyson Ford, Tyler Hull. Fourth row: Jon Collard (Trainer), George Gosnell (Head Coach), Mike Hull (Assistant Trainer), Susan Hull (Manager) missing John Verboom (Assistant Coach)

West Lorne Atom's win local tournament

The West Lorne Atom Travel team won the local Black & Gold Tournament held Nov 12-14 in West Lorne. The team played three games to capture the championship in undefeated style. Their first opponent was Norwich who they defeated 7-0. Michael Verboom got a hat trick, Jason Alves had two goals, Jacob Dymock and Kurtis Gosnell had the other goals. Next the boys had to play Port Stanley, one of their toughest competitors and the game lived up to its expectation. West Lorne won the game 3-2 with only 20 seconds left in the game on a goal by Cody Parker. Other teammates that contributed to the score were Michael Verboom and Jason Alves. The boys advanced to the finals with their 2-0 record where they had to play Port Stanley again. West Lorne was victorious once again over Port Stanley 4-3. Goals were scored by Tyler Hull, Michael Brennan, who had two, and Michael Verboom. The entire team had a fantastic weekend, playing great defense, putting the puck in the net when needed and keeping the puck out of their net. The coaching staff said, "Great job boys! Keep up the hard work."

Azevedo to play against world

West Lorne's Justin Azevedo was selected to play on the Ontario men's under-17 hockey team at the 2005 World Hockey Challenge.

Azevedo has been playing centre ice for the Kitchener Rangers in the Ontario Hockey League this year and has five goals, seven assists for 12 points.

The 22-player team will compete in 10-team tournament in Lethbridge Alta. from Dec. 28 to Jan. 4.

Team Ontario will play in a conference with U.S.A, Slovakia, Germany and Team West.

Azevedo, 16-years-old began his hockey career within the West Lorne Hockey Association.

He was drafted 14th overall by the Rangers for the current season.

Girls Peewee hockey team beat Strathroy

The West Lorne Comets were beaten in St. Mary's 5-1 in girl's peewee hockey action Nov. 27.

Comet's lone goal came from Bailey McKillop.

The Comets peewee also lost against Glencoe in game action on Nov. 20.

Glencoe shut out the Comets by a score of 9-0.

The Comets beat Strathroy 3-1 in game action Nov. 6. Goals scored for the Comets were by Bailey McKillop and Jessica Small scored twice.

The team has been juggling its lines and hopes to put a better effort together for the next game Sat. Dec. 4 at 2 p.m. against Mt. Brydges.

Peewees win in Mitchell

This past weekend the West Lorne Comets Peewee hockey team entered the 49th Annual Mitchell Minor Hockey Tournament and captured first place. The boys played 5 games in two days and fought right to the bitter end in sudden death overtime versus Dorchester. During the tournament West Lorne scored a total of 19 goals and only allowed six. This was due to excellent back checking, defense, and of course goaltending from Tyler Russell. The team improved their level of play with every new game and rose to the occasion.

West Lorne won their first game 7-1 against Port Dover, lost the second game 2-1 in a tight game against Dorchester, and won their third game 6-1 against Lucan. This put the team in second place in our division through the round robin and meant we had to play the first place team in the semi-final from the opposing division. Our boys managed to beat Ilderton in the semi-final 2-0. The game was extremely physical and was hard on the team. The boys anxiously waited to see who we were up against in the final. Dorchester won their semi-final game and the boys were pumped.

In the final the boys came out firing on all cylinders, and dominated the first period of play. The Dorchester goalie was not letting anything through until early in the second period when Robert Johnston received a great pass from Luke Gosnell and Jake Campbell. Dorchester responded quickly by tying the game 13 seconds later. With less than six minutes left in the second period Robert Johnston again received an excellent pass from Jake Campbell and Chris Clark to take a 2-1 lead. Again, Dorchester pressed hard and was able to score with 48 seconds left in the second. During the third period it was a sea-saw battle by each team, both having several opportunities but only be denied by the awesome goal tending being performed at each end of the rink. At the end of regulation time West Lorne and Dorchester were tied 2-2.

In overtime, the tournament play is a five minute, sudden death, four on four during the first overtime period. Both teams came out hard, quickly getting chances. West Lorne seized an opportunity to go in on a break away to score. A tripping call was also made on the play against Dorchester.This meant West Lorne has a man advantage. Our boys gained control of the puck, Evan Timmermans saw an opening to take the puck deep in to the Dorchester end. From behind Dorchester's net Timmermans came out, turned and fired high on the goalie and scored giving the West Lorne Comets the win.

Even though the boys won, the weekend did not go without an incident early in the semi-final game against Ilderton. Wil Manneke was fighting hard for the puck in the corner of Ilderton's zone when the two Ilderton players, trying to gain possession of the puck, fell on top of Wil. Wil had to be taken off the ice on a stretcher and taken to the hospital in Stratford for a leg injury which later was confirmed to be broken. Our boys had to regain composure and from there on in we were playing for Wil. West Lorne went on to win that game and then beat Dorchester. Wil's hockey stick was with the team on the bench for the final game against Dorchester and can be seen in the team picture taken at the end of the Tournament held by Tyler Russell. From the entire team, players and coaches, we dedicate this win for you Wil. Get well soon Wil, we are going to miss you.

Novice Gold improving

The West Lorne Novice Gold hockey team lost a close game to Bothwell in game action Nov. 5.

The final score was 7-4 for Bothwell.

Brandon De Cook had a hat trick and Racheal Frizell added the fourth goal for the team.

The team had lost to Bothwell in a close game on Oct. 29.

The final score was 4-3 for Bothwell.

This was one of the best games the team has played this year, coaches said.

Brandon De Cook tied the game at four but the referee later called the goal back.

De Cook scored one goal and Cal Horvat added two goals.

The coaching staff said the teamwork has been fantastic.

SPORTS 2004

Lakers officially coming

It's official. The Port Stanley Lakers are now known as the West Lorne Lakers and come September, the team will be bringing junior hockey to West Lorne.

"We're now officially down there and we're quite excited," said team owner Wayne Bedford of Fingal.

The announcement comes following the Ontario Hockey Association's final approval of the move, ending a 15-year history for the team in Port Stanley and beginning an exciting new chapter in West Lorne.

The family-run Junior D team will see Lyle Bedford remaining as assistant coach and general manager and Kyle McVey, a former Laker and Junior A St. Thomas Star, will be coming as head coach.

Bedford continues to seek local representation on the team from volunteer support to local players who will have a chance at some positions on the team with only some of the former Port Stanley team signed for this coming season.

"We want the community to come out to the tryouts," said Bedford. He will be announcing tryout dates later this season but will be filling two goalie spots and forward and defence positions with some local talent.

Bedford said West Elgin and the area has made it easy for the team to make the move.

"I think it's really good for our community," said John Frizzel, president of West Elgin Minor Hockey.

With a well-run arena and hockey-supportive community, he thinks the Junior D team is a great fit.

He said there are a lot of local fans who follow junior hockey and having the Lakers here will bring some exciting games to the arena.

He also said having a junior team here will give the kids a chance to carry on their hockey careers past the age of 17.

"I think it will be good hockey. It's entertainment for all ages," he said.

He also expects the minor hockey association will be able to work closely with the team.

The Chronicle

Lakers win first game of season

Luke Hopkins scored two goals for the West Lorne Lakers in a loss against the Exeter hawks in Zurich on Oct. 2.

The Hawks jumped out to an early 2-0 lead in the first period.

With the Lakers short-handed, Hopkins beat one defender at the blueline and snapped a wrist shot to the far corner of the net to make the score 2-1.

His second goal came in the third period against the defending Junior Development champions, the Hawks.

In the team's previous game, Brandon Palmer started in goal for the Lakers at the brand new arena in Zurich.

Goals came quick and plentiful for the West Lorne Lakers Sept. 29 as they beat North Middlesex 11-7, Sept. 29.

By the end of the first period, the home team Lakers were winning 7-0 with Ryan Carey in net.

The large, early lead proved to be the difference as they held a 10-3 lead after two periods.

Captain Paul Bray led the way with a hat trick and one assist. Local player Greg Arvai has been on a three game scoring streak, netting two goals with two assists.

Ben Schnekenburger, Luke Hopkins, Dave Marshall, Jordan Dufton, Matt Willis and Trevor Vanderberg each scored for the Lakers.

Mount Brydges were in West Lorne Oct. 6, after press time. The Lakers have two road games in Lucan Oct. 13 and Mitchell Oct. 15. The next home game is against Lambeth Oct. 20.

The team's record is 1-3-1, with three points.

Skaters win gold



Chris Van Raay of the West Elgin Skating Club and Kaitlyn Lambert of the Glencoe Skating Club are gold medal skaters.

Chronicle photo

Chris Van Raay (West Elgin Skating Club) and Kaitlyn Lambert (Glencoe Skating Club) won gold medals in the pre-juvenile compulsory dance competition at the Ottawa Spring Festival on April 18.

After winning a gold in Grimsby and a bronze in Mooretown they placed on the Western Ontario Development team which made them eligible to go to Ottawa.

A gold in Wallaceburg qualified them for the Ontario qualifiers in Chatham where they received silver and became members of the Western Ontario Provincial team. At the all-Ontario's they placed 4th in their dance.

Their coaches, Patsy McGill (West Elgin Skating Club), Kelly Lambert (Glencoe Skating Club) and Greg Knight (Glencoe Skating Club) helped lead the group to success.



TRICOUNTY HONOURS...

The West Lorne Comets Novice Local Gold team finished its season with a win in the semi-final game and a hard-fought win against the West Lorne Novice Local Black team to take the TriCounty Hockey League championship. The team includes Gregory VanDerveen, Kent Vandenberg, Jason Timmermans, Steven Reimans, Scott Barfett, Stephen Carter, Courtney VanDyk, Carter Blake, Justin Delgado, Noah Redman and Dustin VanHee.

Submitted photo



The West Lorne Atom Travel team were the Shamrock League "B" Division Champions this season. The team includes: back, left, Mike Rivard (assistant coach), Jeff Russel (coach), Jon Collard (trainer), middle row, left, Mike Verboom, Jake Dymock, Zachary Dymock, Robert Johnston, Tyler Hull, front, left, Tyson Ford, Darian Hamm, Luke Gosnell, Jason Alves, Kyle Barber, Matt Vanceeder, on ice in front, left, Goalies Nolan Collard and Tyler Russell.

Submitted photo

SPORTS 2004

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RIDGETOWN CHRISTMAS CLASSIC CHAMPS...

The West Lorne Gold Novice hockety team won the Ridgetown Christmas Classic tournament held during the Christmas break with four-straight wins. The team includes (not in order) Gregory VanDerVeen, Scott Barfett, Noah Redman, Justin Delgado, Steven Riemans, Dustin VanHee, Carter Blake, Courtney VanDyk, Jason Timmermans, Stephen Carter and Kent VanDenberg. Coaching staff includes Ted Vandenberg, Gerben VanDerVeen, Dianne VanDyk, Jim Redman and Scott Carter.

Submitted photo

Novice travel team wins Silver Stick regional tourney

TOURNAMENTS

Two of our boy's teams participated in tournaments the weekend of Dec. 12th.

The Darrell Dick Excavating Atom Travel team travelled to Blenheim and played some great hockey. .

They opened the tournament with a tie against Kingsville 4-4 and followed with a tough 4-2 loss to Dresden.

In their final game, a 3-0 deficit to Glencoe didn't get our boys down as they fought back to end the game in a 3-3 tie.

Coach Jeff Russell is impressed with the constant improvement of his team and looks forward to continual leadership from Zachary Dymock, Robert Johnston and Luke Gosnell and strong goaltending from Ty Russell and Nolan Collard.

The Herm's Sport Exchange Novice Travel team were in Parkhill for their Silver Stick regional tournament.

Our boys and girl played solid hockey, defeating Port Stanley 12-0, London 10-0, Ilderton 9-3, Lucan 4-0 and Glencoe 8-1 to win the championship.

The team now travels to St. Clair Shores, Michigan Jan. 30 for the North American Silver Stick finals.

If you wish to assist the team in their fundraising efforts for their trip to Michigan, please drop off your donated beer bottle empties at the following drop off spots Jan. 10 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - Cindy's Country Cuts (Rodney), West Lorne Arena or Dutton Building Products-Pro Hardware.

GIRLS HOCKEY

This year West Lorne has two exciting girls hockey teams and we invite you to drop by the arena for a game.

Our junior girls team , ages nine to 12, are coached by John Verboom and they continue to have fun as they develop their skills.

The junior girls regular home games are Saturdays at 2 p.m.

Our intermediate girls team, ages 13 to 18, are coached by Brandon Hein and they continue to improve their play against some tough competition.

The intermediate girls play their home games Wednesday at 8 p.m.

Novice travel team dominates season

The West Lome Novice Travel Team won its last regular season game in Glencoe Sunday afternoon with a strong 8-2 victory.

This team of incredible eight-year olds has won all 22 of its regular season games.

In fact, this team is 39-0-0 having also won six exhibition games and 11 tournament games in three tournaments they entered.

This is quite a feat, considering this team has to play teams from larger centres such as Dorchester, Lambeth, St. Thomas and St. Mary's in the Shamrock league.

The team had an impressive total of 204 goals scored and only 43 goals scored against them in the regular season games. Their totals for all 39 games played since late September are 339 goals "for" and 72 goals "against".

The team won a tournament in Norwich in October, West Lorne's Black and Gold Tournament in November and most recently, have won the chance to go to the International SilverStick finals in St. Clair Shores, Michigan by winning the regional SilverStick tournament in Parkhill in December.

The members of the Novice travel team are; Troy Winger (goalie), Andrew Barfett, Mackenzie Dick, Ryan Frizzell, Kurtis Gosnell, Matthew Hooghiem, Bowie Horvat, Bryan Johnston, Scott Payne, Gina Toth, David Vergeer. Stephen Carter is an affiliated player from the local league team who has played up with the travel team for almost all their games and Gregory Vanderveen has been a solid back-up goalie for the team in tournament games.

Six were experienced travel players from last year and the remaining players are first-time travel hockey players.

The Novice travel team as begins OMHA playdowns and league playoffs now while preparing for the Michigan International SilverStick finals at the end of the month.



SUPPORTING THE CARNIVAL...

Kiwanis Club of Rodney Treasurer Ron Downie presents a cheque for $300 to Deb Slaats of the West Elgin Skating Club, going toward the club's March 6 carnival. It's the club's 50th anniversary skating carnival.

Chronicle photo

SPORTS 2005



Spike JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Sherri Ford spikes past an East Elgin Secondary School defender in seniors girl's volleyball action Monday at West Elgin Secondary School. The Wildcats beat the Eagles in three sets to remain undefeated. The Wildcats have yet to lose a set with two games remaining against which could determine the team's seeding going into playoffs.



Lawnbowlers hold championships JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Jim West of Dutton and Donna Rose of Mitchell measure from the jack to determine points in the final match of the Merchants and Manufacturers Tournament held at the West Lorne Lawnbowling Club Sept. 7. The final tournament of the year at the club, the Albert Lashbrook trophy was won by a team from Sarnia with Ed and Edna Braithwaite and Lorna Haggett. The trophy was given by June Moore, daughter of Albert Lashbrook.



Rodney U-6 have a blast this year SUBMITTED

Not just the coaches, and the players but parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters were involved in making the Rodney U-6 soccer team have lots of fun. The coaches were Dave Long and Greg Byers. The players were Cale Davis, Nolan McLarty, Cody Dasilva, Jesse Batton, Kyle Eastwood, Jack Verdel, Dawson Roodzant, Domink Siertsema, Tyler Byers, Jordan Garton, Erik Lyvang Rivard and Eric Larson.



West Lorne U-7 win at Cup Day JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

West Lorne U7 soccer team recently won the year-end tournament in West Lorne. After having a great season they defeated teams from Shedden and Wallacetown to win the gold medal. Pictured are; Front row; Cody Van Acker, Samantha Wilson, Josh Goos, John Dunn, Emma McDonagh, Jami Jensen, Michael Payne, Raine Hindley, Taylor Parish. Back Row; Jade Hindley, Sarah Dewit, Sean Ricker, Tyler Mooser, Paul Dieker, Brandon Grant. Coaches; Stephanie McCulloch, Dave Jensen, and Julie Oliveira.

Skating club sharpening up for season

West Elgin Skating Club's Board members and Professional Coaches have been busy preparing a fresh and exciting season for its skaters. WESC, which is now entering its 52nd season on the ice, is a member of Skate Canada and part of the Kent Region, which represents the Western Ontario section of Skate Canada.

Following Skate Canada's mission: "enabling every Canadian to participate in skating throughout their lifetime for fun, fitness and/or achievement", WESC offers programs for skaters of all ages: preschool to adult.

Beginning skaters enroll in the CanSkate Program. This is the Skate Canada nationally acclaimed learn-to-skate program focusing on fun and continuous movement. CanSkate skills are divided into stages in a group lesson format with a Professional Coach and Program Assistant. This session offers group instruction however limited private instruction is available. CanSkate is also a great program for hockey and ringette skaters to improve on stroking and other skating skills without equipment or sticks.

Our club professionals at WESC are Patsy McGill, Pam Parezanovic and Rene Bergey. Our Saturday morning Freelance professional is Kelly Lambert. CanSkate programs will run on a circuit system this season focusing on themes, games and incentives. Skills are taught by Club Professionals and then reinforced by Program Assistants. These assistants are usually Intermediate/Senior skaters with the club that volunteer their time to help and encourage our younger skaters to achieve their goals.

Skaters looking to advance in skills, freeskate or dance, enroll in the StarSkate Program. After working through the group lessons of stages 6-7, skaters spend time independently focusing on specific skills and supplementing practice with a private/semi-private lesson from a Professional Coach.

WESC is thrilled to be offering an Adult Skate Program this season. Former skaters looking to refresh skills, fitness and time to socialize with other adult skaters will enjoy the group time with Synchronize Skating Coach Lois Hathaway. If you'd like to be a part of this team or have any inquiries, please contact Trisha Fink (693-4220) for more information.

WESC is already planning for the 52nd annual carnival which will be held March 25, 2006. "Broadway" will be coming to life on the West Elgin arena ice. Along with the carnival this season, WESC will host "Futures-West". Open to skaters in the Bluewater, Kent and Sun Parlour Regions, this two day competition is a great opportunity for beginning skaters to be introduced to competition right on home ice as well as local business owners to attract new clients. Sharon Nielson, club president says, "Our club and the sport could not exist without the generous support of volunteers. It can be gratifying to get involved, particularly when one sees the faces of the young children alight with joy as they participate in their first carnival or competition. I wonder how many dreams of the stars of figure skating were born during home-club events like these?"

If you'd like to volunteer to be a part of these activities or to be a sponsor, contact Teri Knott (785-0673).

Come and be involved in a great team. WESC will be holding its first of two registrations at the West Lorne Complex on Aug. 23rd, 7-8 p.m. The second registration will be held at the arena on Sept. 8, 7-8:30 p.m. Skate swap and clothing/accessories will be available at both registrations.

For more information on any WESC programs, ice schedules or pricing call Sharon Nielson: 762-3066, Dianne Fratscher: 768-1803 or our web site: www.westelginskatingclub.com.



Skaters learn this summer SUBMITTED

WESC skaters participated in a one-week seminar earlier this summer at the Mariposa School of Skating in Barrie. Mariposa is known as one of the National training centres for our Canadian athletes. Posing for a picture with Canadian National Bronze medallist Ben Ferreira is Coach Pam Parezanovic with skaters (l-r)Shelby Nielson, Sabrina Griffin and Kylie Beer.

SHELBY NIELSON IS THE GRANDAUGHTER OF MARY LIEPMANN, A W.I. MEMBER

Lawnbowlers have fantastic night

Aug. 9 proved to be a sensational evening for a West Lorne Lawn Bowling Tournament, sponsored by Butch's Small Engine Repair from Dutton.

Three games of 10 ends were very competitive and the adrenaline was very high in the teams competing from Aylmer, Ridgetown, Freelton and West Lorne.

Scrumptious desserts prepared and server by Jean Vanseader, were enjoyed by everyone after the first game.

The team of Ken Willson and Carrie Garrish produced a perfect end, scoring 8 points in the first round of the third game.

First prize went to the team of Al Emerson and Ada Ure from Ridgetown with three wins and a score of33 points.

Second place went to Andre and Locki Van Roessel from Aylmer with 3 wins and a score of 27 points.

Third place winners, tied in every sense of the word, were the teams of Ken Willson and Carrie Garrish, Hugh Mills and Rose Daniel, with 2 wins, 38 points, plus an aggregate of 8, with 17 ends each.

A consolation prize, sweet corn, donated by Jim West, went to the team of Ivan Daniel and Doug Small.

Super excitement is extended to all who would like to participate in the great sport of Lawn Bowling.

Come join us every Monday and Thursday evening at 7 p.m.

2005



Midget girls in tough JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Chelsea Dionne gives a little shoulder to a Strathroy Storm player in a midget girls hockey game in West Lorne Monday night. Krista Walker and Emily Dryfhout scored for the Comets but it wasn't enough to help Amanda Ford get the win in net. Strathroy won 4-2.



Takes the pass JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Courtney Van Dyk skates out of her own end during a 2-2 tie with Watford Nov. 26 in Girls Atom AE play. Steele Vandyk and Rachel Frizzell scored for the Comets.

Willcocks playing in national soccer final

Shelby Willcocks of West Lorne was on her way to Moncton Oct. 5 to play in the Girls/Boys U-14 Canadian Soccer Championships this weekend.

The Grade 9 West Elgin Secondary School student plays goal for the London Supernova.

Having started playing soccer in the West Lorne Minor Soccer League in the U-5, she decided to try goal a few years ago.

Spotted in a game in London, she was asked to come play for a competitive team, the Hurricanes.

Now with the Supernovas, she's had the chance to travel into the U.S. and across the province to play soccer.

Her team recently won the Ontario Championships in Oakville.

She also helped her team win the London Regional Soccer League.

"I'm really excited," she said.

Shelby, daughter of Sheri and Kevin boarded a plane, for the first time with her team to fly to Moncton for the weekend tournament.

The Supernovas are representing Ontario and are the top seeded U-14 team.

Shelby is hopeful for the teams chances but know it won't be easy, with tough teams from British Columbia and Quebec.

"I'm looking forward to the final game," she said. "We've all played really well to get here. If we play hard I think we'll do really well."



Shelby Willcocks

She'll continue to play hard when she returns home and sets soccer balls aside for hockey pucks as she joins the Junior A Devillettes in London.



Young local skaters learn tips from pros JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Six-time Canadian skating champion Jennifer Robinson signs autographs for skaters from as far away as Blenheim during a special development day hosted by the West Elgin Skating Club at the West Elgin Arena all day Oct. 5.

Skaters meet a star

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

All it took was a phone call and six time Canadian Champion Jennifer Robinson was teaching young figure skaters techniques at West Elgin Arena last week.

Robinson led on and off ice training sessions to help budding skaters with techniques and routines for warming up.

She was joined by skating coach and owner of the Mariposa School of Skating in Barrie, Michelle Leigh and veteran coach Paige Aistrop.

Skaters learned spins, jumps and performance techniques on and off the ice.

"If they can do a jump off the ice, there is no reason they couldn't do it on the ice. It's all about confidence," said Robinson.

Throughout the day she was signing autographs for the 70 skaters from Glencoe, western Elgin County and as far away as Blenheim.

"Some days you can learn just as much outside of the classroom as you can inside," said Sharon Neilson, an organizer of the event and the West Elgin Skating Club.

The event gave more skaters an opportunity to access professional coaches.

The coaches stressed, what is learned on the ice can be used in the outside world.

"Skating is really good for that," said Leigh. "They learn time management, respect for peers and coaches.

"These kids have so much energy and want to learn. Hopefully they can learn something they won't learn in school."

Leigh said in school, students learn the lesson then take the test. In skating it's reversed.

"In sports you learn how to deal with disappointment and how to rebound," she said.

Skaters also learned the importance of preparing to go on the ice.

Angie Cornwall, dietician at the West Elgin Community Health Centre taught the girls what foods can give them the energy to perform a five minute skate at their best.

Along with eating, warming up off the ice can help the skaters shake the rust of their blades.

Often, skaters are rushed after school to the rink and onto the ice.

Robinson encouraged the girls to do stretches and activities like skipping to prepare the body for rigorous skating.

"For young skaters that want to make it, they need to start with good habits," said Robinson.



Skating with pros

Professional skating coach Michelle Leigh helps Jamee Ellis with her spins.

Lakers without loss in season

Reversing last year's dismal start to the season, the West Lorne Lakers Junior D hockey team have started this season without a loss in its first seven games.

After the first seven games last year, the Lakers were 1-5-1 with 29 goals for and 44 goals against.

The team faced adversity and criticism for the slow start last year, especially when the playoff run was so successful, making it to the semi-finals.

The team has responded this year with 35 goals for and only 20 goals against.

The Lakers beat Lucan Monday night, 4-1 with Brandon Palmer making 31 saves.

Ryan Campbell of St. Thomas scored the first Lakers goal and added an assist on Mike Dufton's breakaway goal in the second period.

Rick Buncick and Justin Rowles had the other Lakers' goals.

On Saturday the Lakers romped the Belmont Bombers in a scoring frenzied 9-6 win in Belmont.

Jordan Dufton had five points with one goal.

Matt Willis had four points including three assists.

Ryan Roke scored twice and Mike Dufton, Mike Cameron, Mark Firth, Brady Campbell and Ryan Campbell adding the other goals.

West Lorne fired 67 shots on goal while Liam Nediger stopped 28 for the Lakers.

On Oct. 12 the Lakers won at home against the Exeter Hawks 7-5.

Ryan Roke had five points including two goals to lead the Lakers' to a comeback win.

Down 5-2 after the first period, the Lakers scored five goals in the third period.

Matt Willis had five points including the empty net goal at the end of the game.

Jordan Dufton had three points including a goal, Brady Campbell had four points and Billy Carter also scored for the Lakers.

The Lakers play four away games before returning home Oct. 31 to face the Lucan Irish at 8:15 p.m.



Lakers knock over Lucan JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Lakers' power forward Jordan Dufton skates away from two Lucan Irish players that attempted to knock him down in the second period Monday.

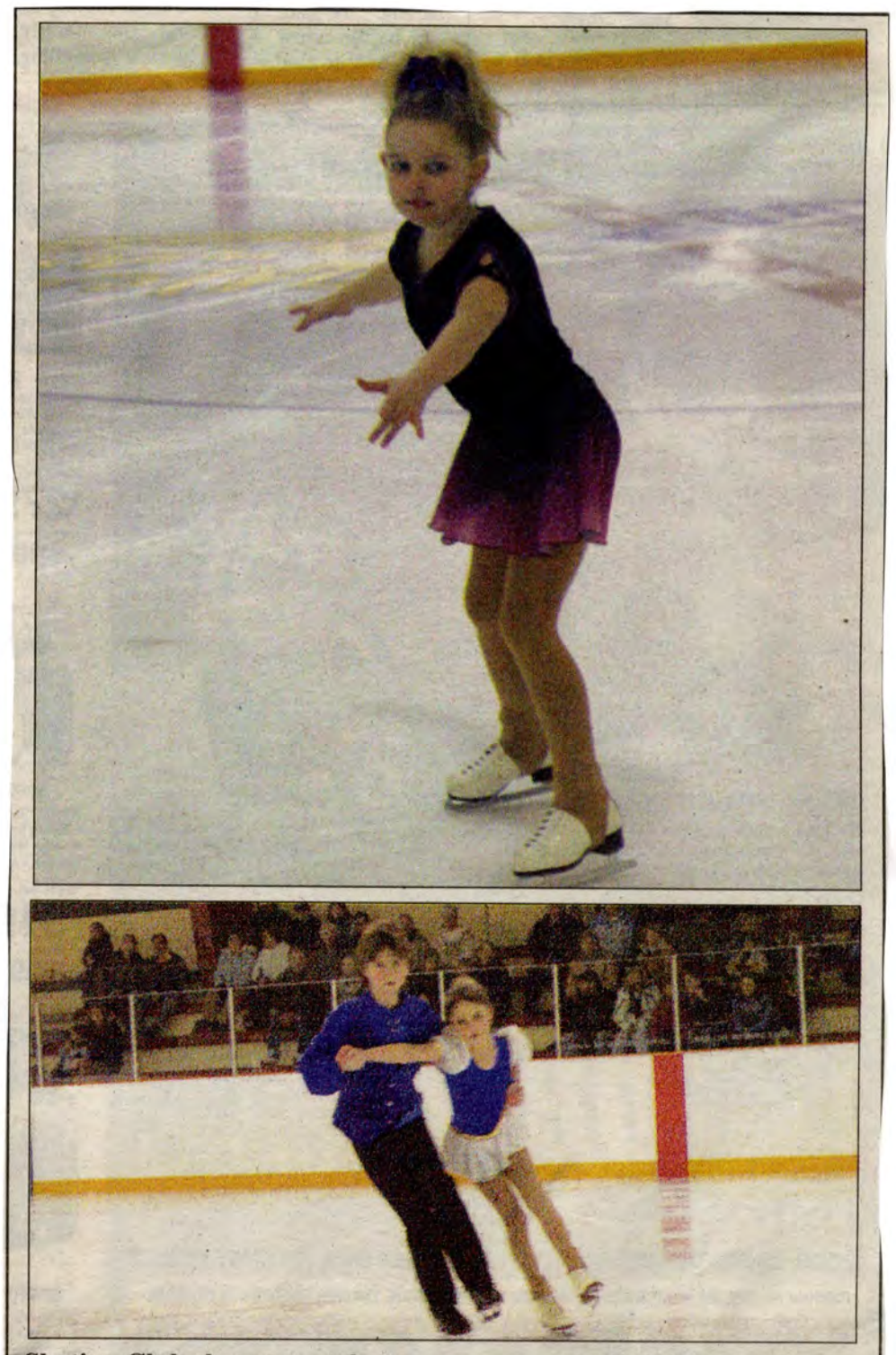
SPORTS 2005



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Skaters show grace on skates

Abbey Fleming performed her solo routine at the West Elgin Skating Club Showcase on Feb. 7



Skating Club showcases talents

JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

The West Elgin Skating Club held a Skaters' Showcase on Monday to show off the talents of the hard-working skaters. Payton Snobelen, above performed her solo routine in the second group and Kassie Bergey and Matthew Westelaken, below, performed one of two pairs routines.

Novice Gold

Back Row: Trainer/Manager Sidonia Woolley, Assistant Coach Steve De Cook, Assistant Coach Ed Van Dyk, Head Coach Terry Woolley
Middle row
Mac McKillop, Quinn Cooper, Jamieson Smith, Courtney Van Dyk, Jenna VerBoom, Brandon De Cook, Gere Van Dyk



Front row: William Woolley, Cassidy Van Dyk Rachel Frizzell, Cal Horvath and Cole Redmond Missing are Jodie Aldred and Eric De Louw.

Local skaters win gold at Fort Erie competition



SUBMITTED

West Elgin Skating Club dance pairs of Kelsey Fratscher and Matt Westelaken; right and Kaitlyn Lambert and Chris Van Raay, left, received gold medals at the Dennis Silverthorne Memorial Invitational (formerly Great Lakes), Jan. 13 and 14.

Coached by Patsy McGill, centre, and Kelly Lambert both pairs will be competing at the qualifiers for the all-Ontario's in Aylmer Feb. 17.

Runner competes in Chicago Marathon

Former Rodney resident Roberta Reardon (Miller) finished 16th out of 576 in her age class at the annual Chicago Marathon Oct. 9.

The 50-year-old high school teacher from London completed the 45 kilometer run at a time of 3 hours and 44 minutes.

She finished 6,437 out of more than 33,000 runners on the chilly day in the Windy City.

It was her first big marathon since the Boston marathon this past April.

She continues to train in preparation for the next Boston Marathon.

"Schnek" a top Canadian rider



Ben Schnekenburger won in Walton

With a little help from the rains, Ben Schnekenburger of the Rodney area won the 125 Junior A series event at a recent national motocross event in Walton.

Months of training payoff

Ben Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Schnekenburger hopes a win at a motocross event in Walton late last month will help him drive into the pros.

"Schnek" won the 125 Junior A series at the Canadian Motocross Racing Championships, beating the best amateur riders from across the country at the Walton TransCanada National Championship Aug. 16-21 .

Sitting in first after two races, the third race was cancelled because of rain and Schnekenburger reached the top of the podium.

In front of thousands of people he received his trophy.

"It felt great. I had been training for four months, getting my diet right and riding a lot," said the 18-year-old West Elgin youth.

Out of 42 drivers, Schnekenburger qualified 11th going into the race and wasn't expected to win.

"But I knew I could do it. I went there to win," he said.

He also finished 5th in a Grand Prix race with intermediate and pro drivers of all ages.

Now, he plans to move up a class into the intermediate series.

This includes an event at the RICO Colosseum in Toronto next month.

While he's planning to play for the West Lorne Lakers' Junior D hockey team this fall, he is also weighing his options to race in the U.S., to get training and move up to the pros.

Looking over the list of past 125 Junior A winners, all of the riders have gone pro, which means riding full-time, all over, and getting sponsors.

"I've played hockey for a long time but once I got my first bike, I fell in love with it."



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Peewees in tough

Daniel Alderton of the West Lorne PeeWee local team battles an opposing Wallaceburg player Friday night in regular season play. West Lorne won 4-2. Jason Ambrose scored twice in his first game ever. Jamie and John Williams also scored. David Given got the win in net for the team.

SPORTS 2005

Lakers move on to face Lucan

Second round begins, home game March 12

Next up, Lucan.

West Lorne Lakers opened the second round Yeck Conference Junior D semi-final series in Lucan March 9.

The regular season series was 2-2-1 between the Lakers and the first place Irish.

The Irish beat the Belmont Bombers in four straight games to advance to the second round, out scoring the Bombers 31-7.

The Lakers upset the second seed Lambeth Lancers in Game 7 of the quarter final Sunday night in Lambeth 4-3.

Brandon Palmer made 49 saves for the victory including in the final minutes as Lambeth pulled their goaltender for an extra attacker.

"Laker's hard work, discipline, timely goals and some outstanding goaltending from Brandon were the keys to victory over a very talented Lambeth team," said assistant coach Lyle Bedford.

Drew Irvine scored the winning goal early in the third period when he grabbed a loose puck, worked his way past defenders and slid the puck under the goaltender.

Luke Hopkins one-timed a pass from Brady Campbell on the power play to put the Lakers up 3-2 in the second period.

Matt Bartoch and Matt Willis scored in the first period.

In Game 6, in West Lorne, the Lakers gave the Lancers hope of taking the series with a 6-4 loss.

Untimely penalties opened the door for two Lancer power-play goals.

The Lakers also gave up a shorthanded breakaway goal by ex-Laker captain Paul Bray and an empty net goal when Palmer was pulled before the Lakers could move the puck out of their own end.

Justin Rowles, Drew Irvine, Brady Campbell and Luke Hopkins scored in Game 6 in front of a large crowd at West Lorne arena.

Game 2 of the second round is in West Lorne on March 12 at 7:30 p.m. and Game 3 is in Lucan March 13 at 1:45 p.m. and Game 4 is in West Lorne March 15 at 8:15 p.m. Game 5 is March 16 in Lucan and Game 6 would be in West Lorne March 17.

Lakers lose to Lambeth

West Lorne Lakers fired 40 shots at the Lambeth Lancers net but couldn't score enough, losing 5-3 Jan. 17.

Jason Korman, Jeff Kimel and Ryan Roke tallied goals for the Lakers.

The Lakers also lost in a wild game, 9-7 in Mount Brydges Jan. 20 to fall to 10-22-2 on the season with six games remaining.

Still, the Lakers hold a five point grasp on the final playoff spot.

The Lakers next home game is Jan. 31 at 8:15 p.m. against Mitchell.

Bittersweet ending to Lakers season

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

An up and down first season ended last Sunday night with the West Lorne Lakers losing 5-1 in Game 7 of the Junior D semi-finals.

Overcoming a 3-1 series deficit the Lakers couldn't win in Game 7 sending the Mt. Brydges Bulldogs to the Junior D final versus the Hagersville Hawks.

The loss was bittersweet as the Lakers had upset the second place team, Lambeth in Game 7 of the first round and the first place team, Lucan in Game 7 of the second round.

"We're a little disappointed because we thought we could have made it to the finals," said team owner Wayne Bedford. "We can't be disappointed with their performance. The boys played hard. I'm proud of the whole team, coaches, trainers and the fans."

Having upset the two best teams and impressively winning Game 5 and 6 against Mt. Brydges, Laker's rookie coach Kyle McVey said the team was overconfident.

"I'm proud of the guys but we should have played desperate hockey," said McVey, 23-years-old. "It was a tough season with the challenge of moving the team but we played 21 more games than we thought we would."

The Lakers had a regular season record of 16-20-4 and had not been expected to make it past the first round of the playoffs.

"The whole team played well but (the Bulldogs) had more depth," said McVey. "I expected 100 per cent effort but we ran out of gas."

Please see Lakers, *page 13*



BONNIES PHOTOGRAPHY

Chris Van Raay of the West Elgin Skating Club and Kaitlyn Lambert of the Glencoe Skating Club tied for second in competition in Ottawa April 17.

Skaters get silver

Chris Van Raay of the West Elgin Skating Club and Kaitlyn Lambert of the Glencoe Skating Club tied for second place in Level 3 Dance competition at the Gloucester Spring Festival Inventational held April 17 in Ottawa.

After placing second in Mooretown, last fall, they were among the 35 chosen out of 85 applicants for the Skate Canada - Western Ontario Development team. Kaitlyn and Chris received a lot of support and knowledge from their coaches Patsy McGill, Kelly Lambert and Greg Knight.

These coaches contributed to their successful season of skating.

Novice gold finishes second

On Feb. 25, West Lorne Novice Gold won their fifth playoff game against West Lorne Black team. WLN Gold won 6 to 4. Then on March 4, WLN Gold held their sixth playoff game against the Dresden Maroons on home ice and West Lorne won 4 to 3. Then on March 5, we travelled to Belmont for an exhibition game, once again W.L.N. Gold came out the winners 6 to 2.

The kids played fast and hard. The team was still pumped from the win from the night before. WLN Gold held their seventh playoff game against Walpole and lost 8 to 3, but what a game.

The team came together and played hard till the bitter end. This did not stop them from going on. WLN Gold travelled to Glencoe for their final playoff game on March 12. Determined to win their last game the team turned up the heat right from the get go, and it paid off. We won 8 to 2. It was a complete effort by the whole team.

During the March Break we travelled to Belmont on March 17 for their annual Novice tournament their first game was against Belmont and we tied 3 to 3. It was a fast paced game and an excellent effort by the whole team. MVP for this game was Cassidy Van Dyk. In order to make it to the finals, the team had to win the next game with a shutout. They came out hard and laid it on South East London, walking away with a 6 to 0 victory.

MVP for this game was Rachel Frizzell. WLN Gold advanced to the final round for the "B" Division and played against Ingersoll. What a fast paced game and a hard played game.

The team came together once again and won the game 6 to 5. MVP for this game was Brandon De Cook; the three star players for this game were Cassidy Van Dyk, Cal Horvath and Cole Redmond.

Then Saturday March 19 we traveled to Bothwell for our playoff divisional games. With the team still pumped from Thursday's win, they beat Dresden 6-0. WLN Gold played hard and organized to take the win! W.L.N. Gold still pumped went to play for the title played against Walpole.

Walpole had not lost a game all year. Walpole was leading 3 to 0 in the first period, when WLN Gold decided it was time to turn on the heat. With 29 seconds left in the first period WL.N Gold scored its first goal. Going into our second period we scored two more goals tying it up 3 to 3. With one minute left in the third period West Lorne kept Walpole on the run, putting the pressure on. With only 32 seconds left in the third, Walpole scored their fourth goal, but still West Lorne played hard till the bitter end. Walpole won 4 to 3, but all our players should very proud of their efforts in all their games this year.

WLN Gold came in second in their division. The coaching staff are very proud of our team.

They all have come a long way since the beginning of the season. What a great season we had, keep up the great moves girls/guys. West Lorne Novice Gold you are a truly are an awesome team.



GLENN HOUGHTON/AGE DISPATCH

Lakers make hits and have a chance

Bulldogs forward Graham Scott is taken out by Lakers defenceman Travis Reddy during the first period of Game 1 in the conference final series in Mt. Brydges last week.



CONTRIBUTED

Bantam Local

The Bantam Local League team won the Tri-County House League Playoffs March 26 in Dresden. The team is, front row left to right: Matthew Schweitzer, Matt Burdett, Mike Parezanovic, Greg Speller-Captain, Andrew Baird - Goalie, Leigh Buchanan, Michael Johnston-Assistant Captain, Kyle Petric. Back row, standing left to right, Carl Everett, Rob Schnekenburger - Head Coach, Taylor Trudell, Ron Jenkins -Assistant Captain, Adam Sutton, Ty Schnekenburger, Matt Zoller, Tammy Everett - Trainer, Christine Johnston - Manager, Dave Ivanski - Assistant Coach, Al Zoller - Assistant Coach.



SCOTT HILGENDORFF/THE CHRONICLE

Skating Carnival sells out

The West Elgin Skating Club offered two sold out shows at the arena Saturday afternoon and evening. Featuring the theme "Animation World", skaters performed to songs from Disney films to Saturday morning cartoons. Above, skaters perform to Beauty and the Beast while bottom, left, Amy Oliveira is Snow White. A special tribute was made to Beth Evans, a long-time member of the club who died last year. Her parents came back from Florida to present Adam McKillop with the first of an annual Beth Evans Memorial Award. Pictured are dance pair Kaitlyn Lambert and Chris Van Raay who skated a tribute number to Beth. Beside them is Allister and Carolyn Cameron, Beth's parents, with Adam who received the award at the evening performance.

SPORTS 2005

Azevedo returns to Rangers

Jeff Kempenaar
Staff

Justin Azevedo, from West Lorne, returned to the Kitchener Rangers last Friday after playing for Team Ontario at the World Under 17 Challenge in Lethbridge Alberta.

Azevedo, 17-years-old, made his first appearance in an international tournament and helped his team get to the bronze medal game against a team from the Atlantic provinces.

He had two goals and four assists for the Ontario squad which finished fourth in the tournament.

His parents, Carlos and Liz of West Lorne made the trip to Lethbridge to watch Justin play against some of the best under-aged players in the world.

He has played 30 games for the Rangers and racked up six goals and 11 assists putting him 17th in rookie scoring.

Local fans can see Azevedo and the Rangers play in London Jan. 13 against the league leading Knights at 7 p.m. at the John Labatt Centre.



Shelby Neilson

Nielson to skate with the stars

Shelby Nielson is more excited than ever these days.

The West Elgin Skating Club skater will be lacing up to skate in the Parade of Champions when the National Figure Skating Championships come to the John Labatt Centre, in London next week. Nielson won the opportunity by lottery. Wyeth Consumer Healthcare Inc. (Centrum), puts this annual lottery together for Canada's young skaters. Each skater registered with Skate Canada Western Ontario Section between the ages of 4 to 16 was eligible to win the honour.

The Canadian Championships will be held Jan. 17-23. CTV and TSN will be broadcasting live coverage of the final events Thursday through Sunday. Nielson will be accompanying Skate Canada's Ambassadors and Pair Skaters Megan Wing and Aaron Lowe during the Parade of Champions which will follow the final medal ceremony on Sunday at 3 p.m. Nielson says she feels like she's won a million dollars. "I'm thrilled to have the chance to meet the skaters I watch each season. I'm especially excited to see Jeff Buttle again who skated for our 50th Anniversary last year." Nielson won't just be representing West Elgin, but all young skaters across Canada and is more than honoured to do so.

Shelby is the Granddaughter of W.I. member Mary Liepmann

Arvai top defencemen for second time in American College Hockey

West Lorne-native Shaun Arvai was honoured for the second time this season as top defensive player of the week in American College Hockey.

The Alabama-Huntsville hockey team was honoured for the fourth time in six weeks as junior player. Arvai helped anchor a defense corps that allowed six goals on 47 shots to visiting RIT, and led the Chargers to a pair of 4-3 non-conference wins, and the team's first winning non-conference record since joining the CHA.

Feb. 3, Arvai scored his second goal of the season cleaning up a rebound on a power play tally in the first period to give the Chargers a 2-0 lead. He later assisted on the game-winning marker mid-way through the third period to give the Chargers the 4-3 result.

Feb. 4, Arvai again set-up a game winner.

That weekend, Arvai was a +2. This is the second CHA Defensive Player of the Week award for Arvai. He was honoured on Nov. 14 after a four-assist performance against Niagara that tied a UAH record for assists in a period.

Wildcats tie Alumni with



Wildcats beat Alumni JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Greg Gangle is stopped on a penalty shot by Alumni goalie Johnny Thrust in the last two minutes of the first-ever Wildcats Alumni game at the West Lorne Arena on Jan. 7.

Lakers' Dufton gets top nod

West Lorne Lakers forward Jordan Dufton was named Ontario Hockey Association Junior Development player of the year at the 116th annual general meeting Saturday in St. Catherines.

The 20-year-old University of Western Ontario student received a $500 bursary award and trophy.

Dufton finished third in league scoring with 33 goals and 30 assists for 63 points in 38 games and only 10 penalty minutes. He was the Jr. D player of the month for January.

Dufton added another 12 goals and 10 assists during the Lakers playoff run to the Yeck Conference final. He was the Lakers MVP and Miller Ford player of the year.



Ladies' win in the rain JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Marilyn Goodhue of Fingal passes up the field during the Strikeforce, West Lorne women's soccer team game June 15. Nancy Arn and Kim Boughner scored for Strikeforce for a 2-1 win under rainy skies.



A-T Choppers coming to West Lorne SUBMITTED

A-T Choppers skating team will perform at the West Elgin Skating Club Carnival this Saturday. The team is, back, left to right:Joe Chetcuti, April Ricker, Jamie Pake, Dianne Vitias, Jim Hathaway, Michelle McMullen, Susan Joyes, Ara Bowles. Middle: the late Carrie Walter, Lisa Freeman, Natalie Bergeron, Irene Deveau, Julie Davey, Melanie Watters and Sara Shrubsall. Front: coach Lois Hathaway. Absent: Melinda Jones and Casey Rutter.

WESES wins first boys basketball medal

The West Elgin Sr. Elementary School Boys Basketball Team captured the bronze medal March 4 and 5 at the Thames Valley District School Board's AAA Boys Basketball Championships held in London.

Throughout the season, the WESES boys have worked hard on all aspects of their game to raise the level of play in order to compete against the perennial powers in basketball.

According to coach Dean McLenaghan, "The tenacious defence has been one of the keys to the team's success."

The other is the standout play of Grade 8 student Michael Godfrey. Averaging 15-20 points per game, contributing just as many rebounds, and working as part of a true team system, Godfrey has made a name for himself throughout the school board, and the success of the WESES Eagles has raised some eyebrows around the valley. "It has been an absolutely thrilling basketball season with unbelievable improvement by our thirteen players."

In regular season action, the Eagles finished with a 6-2 record, good enough for second place in the Southwest Region. In the playoffs, the WESES boys went up against the team from Southwold with the West Elgin guys winning handily by a score of 55-12. In the final, WESES would face their archrivals from Homedale.

The West Elgin boys came out strong as they held Homedale to only seven points in the first half. In the second half, Homedale came at the Eagles with everything they had, but in the end, WESES was victorious in a thriller, 29-27 to claim Southwest Regional Gold.

With the win, WESES would expect to be ranked fairly high in the TVDSB Finals.

However, the fifth place ranking out of the final eight was a little surprising. Undaunted, the West Elgin boys tipped off against the first ranked team from Westmount. Although our local guys played tough, they came away on the short end of the 38-26 score. In their second game, WESES was in a must win situation as the loser would be eliminated. Facing the same team from Davenport who West Elgin had lost to earlier in the year 52-26, WESES came out flying with their impenetrable defence. The Davenport coach remarked, "my team hasn't seen defence like that all year." The fifth seeded Eagles upset the third seeded Davenport team in a nail biter 27-25 as Michael Godfrey led the way with a team high 15 points.

It was on to the semi-finals and WESES was in tough against the second seed from Orchard Park. Once again the boys from West Elgin demonstrated a strong desire to win, but fell by a score of 37-28.

In the bronze medal final, WESES, for the fourth straight game, would face a team ranked higher - this time the fourth ranked Glen Cairn Huskies team from London. In a game where it was an entire team effort, WESES stunned the London team and tournament organizers, with a convincing 33-24 win as Godfrey scored 19 and Dylan Weselowski chipped in with nine and captured the title of "Third best basketball team in Thames Valley."

McLenaghan described the year as simply unbelievable. "I had some idea how good Godfrey was, but when we played the best teams in the valley over the weekend I really got to see his potential," said McLenaghan. "He dominated the opposition on the boards, he can bring the ball up the court if necessary, he'll take the outside shot, nail the free throws, and is, in my opinion, the best basketball player in Thames Valley in Grade 7 or 8."

Having said that, McLenaghan continued, "Basketball is a team game and the solid play of Milos Agbaba, Troy Cook, John-Gregory Drummelsmith, William Feere, Jonathan Godfrey, Mike Johnston, Drew Lebedz, Kelsey McConnell, Andrew McWilliam, Brendan Munn, Allan Percival, and Dylan Weselowski cannot be understated in this drive through the playoffs." Mr. Roos takes over coaching where, no doubt, they'll raise some more eyebrows. Who knows, maybe there will be an OFSAA trip for some of these guys down the road in basketball. I'll be cheering for them."

"This is a great group of boys'."

West Lorne Midget hockey team finishes winning season

The West Lorne Midget hockey team started their season with 12 skaters and two goalies.

The Comets had a few lucky breaks and won a few games along the way. On the first of December, the Comets traveled to Markdale (near Owen sound) which was a turning point in their season.

The boys played hard and won the confidence of each other.

After Christmas they played an exhibition game against a tough AE team from Bothwell which they won and the Comets never looked back. In league play, West Lorne did not lose a game after that and tied only one. The forwards; Sam Smith, Chuck Smith, Alvery Smith, ryan Brown, Steve Nagy, Matt McLandress, Tyler Reid and Sean Zimmerman all scored when needed. Our defence: Dave Ward, Adam Clark, Phil Oulette and Grant McMillian did a stand up job of keeping the puck out of our end. Goalies Derek VanHee and Patrick Whalen were awesome all season between the pipes coming up with saves that left the crowds on their fee cheering. Somewhere along the way, these individuals that started playing as a family. Working together as a team the Comets came up victorious against Mooretown in the Tri-County 'B' Division ending their season. The parents, grandparents and fans are proud of the boys for a season well done..

The coaches: Mike Clark, Jim Arvai, Steve Nagy and Mike Whalen praised this group of boys about being a team.



West Lorne Midget end season on a high SUBMITTED

Parents of the West Lorne Midget hockey team look forward to a being one big family next season and picking up where they left off - as winners.

WEST LORNE W. I. 2004

WEST LORNE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

2003-2004

FOR HOME AND COUNTRY

Meetings 1st Tuesday of the Month
7:30 PM
West Elgin Town Complex

MEMBERS

Nancy Baillie : 768-0468
Olive Chambers : 762-6022
MaryBelle Cook : 768-1222
Fran Graham : 768-1798
Marilyn Jamieson : 785-0822
Georgina Jensen : 768-1972
Leola Lawrence: 768-1526
Mary Liepmann : 768-1224
Mary Lippold : 768-1244
Twila McWilliam : 785-0788
Helen Mooser : 768-1122
Anita VanRaes : 768-181
Shirley Walker : 768-1095
Marybelle Watterworth : 768-1827

MEETINGS FOR 2004 - 2005

JANUARY 6 - " Travel"
Roll Call : My farthest trip from home.
Motto: Travel east, travel west, after all home is best.
Program: Leola Lawrence & Fran Graham

FEBRUARY - Winter Picnic

MARCH 2 - " Leadership & Development"
Roll Call : How to keep a family strong.
Motto: Change is what keeps us fresh.
Program: Anita VanRaes & MaryBelle Watterworth

APRIL 6 - Annual Meeting & Silent Auction
Roll Call : Name the best thing you have bought at a garage sale.
Motto: Your trash is someones treasures.
Program: Twila McWilliams & Marybelle Cook

MAY 4 - " Family & Consumer Affairs"
Roll Call : How to relieve tension
Motto: Laughter is the sustaniner of life and best of all physicians
Program : Shirley Walker & Olive Chambers

JUNE - Trip

Septem ber 7 : "Business & Industry"
Roll Call : If you could invent something, what would it be?
Motto: Talent is what you are blessed with. Skill is how you take care of the gift.
Program : Leola Lawrence & Mary Lippold

OCTOBER 5 - " Agriculture"
Roll Call : If you could spend the day in the country, how would you spend it?
Motto : The only thing that ever sat its way to success was a hen.
Program: Mary Liepmann & Gwen Mclain
MEET AT THE TOWN COMPLEX BY 6:30 PM.

NOVEMBER 2- "Health Issues"
Roll Call : How do you cope with stress?
Motto: A balanced diet is not a cookie in each hand.
Program : Helen Mooser & MaryBelle Watterworth

DECEMBER - Play in Dutton , Sunday Matinee
Pot Luck Christmas Supper at West Elgin Town Complex followed by
Secret Pal Gifts & Sing Song

January - Jean Bell spoke on life in Newfoundland
February - Winter picnic
March - donated to Beattie Haven for water
- Colin Kittmer for Spinal Cord Injury - "A Thon"
May - We entertained our "twin" Boyal W. I to a luncheon, played bingo + had a sing song.
- District Annual in Fingal + members to attend
15 - We hosted a coffee hour for the cancer canvassers
June - Pot luck lunch then watched the video Calander Girls.
Sept - Tom Lamb spoke on the new turbine at Erie.
Oct - Toured the Coyotte Ridge arena at Crinan
- Shannon Kindornay received the bursary presented by Gwen Mclain.
- We donated a Roast Beef Dinner for Ten at the Cancer Tea - Helen Mooser won the draw
Nov - Joy Scafe spoke on stress
- Mary Lippold laid wreath Nov. 11
Dec - W. E. S. S. band entertained

WEST LORNE W.I. 2005

2004-2005 Exectutives

Honorary President : MaryBelle Cook
President : Mary Liepmann
Vice President : Shirley Walker
Secretary : Anita VanRaes
Treasurer: Mary Lippold
Tweedsmuir History : Fran Graham
District Convenor: Shirley Walker
Olive Chambers (Alternate)
Elgin Museum : Shirley Walker

Pianst : Shirley Walker
Auditor : Leola Lawrence
Bob Walker
Program Co-Ordinators : Mary Liepmann, Mary Lippold, Shirely Walker,
Leola Lawrence, Anita VanRaes
P.R.O. : Anita VanRaes

JANUARY 4 - " Education" Rose Program
Roll Call : Tell a memory of school days.
Motto: If you think education is costly, try ignorance.
Program: Shirley Walker POT LUCK LUNCH AT NOON.

FEBRUARY - Winter Picnic

MARCH 1 - " Fire Preventiion"
Roll Call : Do you have a fire extinguisher in your home?
Motto: Home safety
Program: Fran Graham & Anna Okolisan

APRIL 5 - Annual Meeting & Auction
Roll Call : How to increase membership?
Motto: Don't sit on the fence.
Program: Anita VanRaes & Mary Liepmann

MAY 3 - " The Red Hat Society"
Roll Call : Name an important woman in the workd & her position (living or dead)
Motto: Todays child is tomorrow citizen.
Program : Olive Chambers & Shirley Walker

JUNE - Grand Bend Theatre & Supper at Aunt Gussie

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Mary Lippold : 768-1244
Gwen Mclain : 768-0787
Twila McWilliam : 785-0788
Helen Mooser : 768-1122
Anna Okolisan : 768-1215
Anita VanRaes : 768-1819
Shirley Walker : 768-1095
Marybelle Watterworth : 768-1827
Donna Dreiver
Myrtle Joyce
Nancy Kattner

FOR WOMEN'S INSTITUTE MEETINGS

MOTTO : " For Home and Country"

At the first Women's Institute Convention held in 1902 a request for a motto and bage resulted in the appointment of a committee to receive suggestions and make suitable selections. From the entries received, the motto " For Home and Country " suggested by Miss Laura Rose was chosen in 1902.

THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE GRACE

We thank Thee Father for Thy care,
Food, friends and kindliness we share;
May we forever mindful be
Of " Home and Country " and of Thee.

In 1950 the Women's Institute Grace, composed by Mrs. Clara Lintell Deakin of Ottawa area, was accepted by the Provincial Board. It is sung to the tune of " Old Hundred ".

April – Served coffee to Cancer Canvassers
May – We hosted the Red Hat Society.
– donated to Bobier Villa for hearing devices
– Shirley Walker, Anita VanRaes and daughters hosted tea room at Bobiers.
June – Lovely pot luck lunch at our presidents' Mary Liepmann's home.
Oct – Vicky Shelley spoke on children with special needs
– Gwen Mclain presented bursary to Jolene Peterred
– Cancer Tea at Elgin Manor.
Nov – We held a luncheon, our guest speaker was Scotty Bell, a World War II veteran.
Dec – We attended a play "Little House of Horrors" in Dutton then returned for our annual turkey dinner, bingo and sing song.

ELGIN DISTRICT W.I. 2004

ELGIN COUNTY DISTRICT WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

ELGIN COUNTY DISTRICT 7 YEARS
DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY MAY 12,2004
POT LUCK SUPPER 5.30
Registration 6.45
Fingal United Church

OFFICERS FOR ELGIN COUNTY DISTRICT W.I. 2003/2004

Past President.....	Madeleine Jenkins	644-1946
President.....	Mary Veenstra	631-5389
1st. Vice P.....	Pauline Lindsay	631-5247
2nd Vice P.....	Mary Ann Caughell	769-2239
Sec. Treas.....	Eleanor McMillan	762-2089
Education Co.....	Ann McLean	769-2884
Asst. Ed. Co.....	Orlie Vandenbrink	775-2487
PRO.....	Marion McKenzie	631-3647
Alt. Conv. Del	Madeleine Jenkins	644-1946
Area Conv. Del.....	Mary Veenstra	631-5389
Lobbying Con.....	Bonnie Graham	769-2417
Tweedsmuir.....	Helen VanBrenk	762-2768
Asst. Tweed.....	Sally McIntyre	762-3631
Scholarship.....	Jean Gooding	633-4881
Museum Rep.....	Luella Montieth	631-7073
Museum Rep.....	Joan Mansell	631-1623
Farm Safety.....	Mary Ann Caughell	769-2239
LAMP.....	Faye Thorn	782-4149
Financial Ex.....	Joanne Erickson	631-0433
Financial Ex.....	Joan Mansell	631-1623

Nominating Committee....
Shirley Walker.....768-1095
Orlie Vandenbrink.....775-2487
Audrey James.....773-3537
Pianist.....Shirley Walker

PAC MEMBER subdivision 18.....Ruth Axford....269-9974
4567 Elgin Road Mosley, Ont.-N0L 1V0

Registration: 6:45-7:00

Hostess Branches-Boxall & West Lorne
Each Branch is to bring* **$7.00 *for the Museum*
Strawberry Social-June 23, 2004 1:30-4:00
**If you are paying by cheque make it payable to CASH*
GIVE money to Eleanor McMillan at registration
**Each Branch is to bring Articles for the London Convention Area Craft Store-Pauline Lindsay*

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DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Please sit where designated.
7:00-**Welcome-Ode and Mary Stewart Collect**
Ratification of Branch District Directors-Ruth Axford
Minutes of 2003 District Annual as circulated
Treasurer's Report
Financial Examiner's Report
• Correspondence
Business
President's Address
In Memoriam…..Wallacetown
Reports:
Education Co-Ordinator
Public Relations Officer
Lobbying Convener
Farm Safety Representative
Elgin Pioneer Museum Rep.
Tweedsmuir History Curator
Lamp
Roll Call-2 people-One to present Pennies and get Receipt.
Other to give the number of members, how many are here today and **ONE** interesting thing the Branch did in the past year.

Museum, coffee break and bazaar-Dec. 4, 2004.
Clachan & Yarmouth Glenn

Light & Lively-Yarmouth Glenn

8 PM **Hymn Of All Nations**

This is my song, O God of all the Nations
A song of peace for lands afar and mine
This is my love, the country where my heart is
This is my hope, my dream, my shrine
But other hearts in other lands are beating
With hopes and dreams the same as mine.

My Country's skies are bluer than the ocean
And sunlight beams on clover leaf and pine
But other lands have sunlight, too, and clover
And skies are sometimes blue as mine,
Oh hear my song, then God of all the Nations
A song of peace for their land and mine.

Introduction of Guests-

FWIO PAC member subdivision 18 report-Ruth Axford
Election of Officers…….Eleanor Williams
Collection……Hostess Branches
• **New Business……..District Annual 2005**
Invitation- Wallacetown & Sparta
Courtesies……Mary Ann Caughall
Closing…..
O Canada

NOTE: POT LUCK SUPPER at 5.30 Please bring your own dishes and cutlery.

ELGIN DISTRICT W.I. 2005



JEFF KEMPENAAR/THE CHRONICLE

Women's Institute holds winter picnic

Helen McMillan of the Clachan Women's Institute gives a cup of coffee to Gwen McLain of the West Lorne Women's Institute at the winter picnic at Grace Anglican Hall in West Lorne Feb. 15.

LONDON AREA
WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

FOR HOME AND COUNTRY

91st ANNUAL CONVENTION

THEME:
"W.I. is Alive in 2005 !"

LOCATION:
Caradoc Community Centre
Lions Park Drive
Mount Brydges
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2005

MIDDLESEX EAST, MIDDLESEX NORTHWEST,
ELGIN COUNTY

PERTH SOUTH, HURON SOUTH, HURON WEST,
OXFORD DISTRICT

ELGIN DISTRICT W.I. 2005

PROGRAM FOR 2005
LONDON AREA CONVENTION
TUESDAY A.M. OCTOBER 4

CHAIR: Glenna Ladell

One branch delegate and two delegates from each district are asked to sit in the designated section and to report back to their members.
Associated Country Women of the World memberships are available in the morning and at noon.
Bring your name, address and membership number.
Federated News subscriptions are also available.
Pay by cheque only (separate cheques)
ACWW memberships ($40.00)
Federated news ($5.00)

8:45 a.m. Registration. Secretaries of the 7 Districts.
Reception: Lois Baker, Betty McIntyre, Jean Campbell
Coffee Hour: South Lobo

9:25 a.m. Time to Sing: Melbourne - Pianist: Betty McIntrye
Presentation of Flags: Past Presidents: F. Hyatt, E. Williams
Sing: O Canada
March In: 7 District Banners
Institute Ode
Mary Stewart Collect
Welcome: President Middlesex N W – Marg Harris
How to vote-
In Memoriam: Model
Acceptance of Minutes of 2004 Convention
Financial Report: Grace Campbell
Financial Examiners Report: Muriel McCallum
Correspondence
Roll Call: Responsibility of 7 District Presidents
Each president to give a 2-minute summary of happenings in her district in 2004-2005
President's Address: Glenna Ladell

CHAIR: Anne Innes
Light and Lively: Mount Brydges
F.W.I. O. President: Elsie Stephenson
Erland Lee Presentation:
Nomination of Area Voting Delegate and Alternate
Nomination of Provincial Board Director –Southern Region
Introduce Nominees
Collection: Kerwood
Report of Provincial Conference- Donna Willows
Comments on Displays: V.President – Middlesex N W - Joyce Morgan
Announcements: Anne Innes

12:00 p.m. Sing Institute Grace
Adjourn for lunch catered by Donna Patterson
Country Store: Napier, Ilderton

AFTERNOON SESSION
CHAIR: Eleanor Williams

1:30 p.m. Hymn of All Nations
Greetings from visiting Area Presidents:
Southwestern, Guelph. Grey-Bruce
F.Y.I. Sandra Pearson – VON - 100 Years of Service
Jim Poag – Poag Jewellers – Appraisals and Values of Your Jewellery
Lite and Lively: Mount Brydges
Presentation to Competition Entrants and Blue Hat Challenge
Reports: ALL PRINTED PLEASE READ
Convenor's: 2-Minute Reports
Advocacy Convenor: Eleanor Williams
Rose Coordinator: Mary Veenstra
Public Relations: Marlene Coulthard
Tweedsmuir Curator: Janet Gibson
Children's Hospital: Donna Willows
Western Fair Association: Katherine McNaughton
Quilts, Quills and Bears – Susan Christie
Break:
Time to Sing: Melbourne
Entertainment: Strathroy Community Christian School Chamber Choir

CHAIR: Glenna Ladell

Area Voting Delegates: Marlene Archer
Joan Mansell
Provincial Board Directors: Marian Austin
Glenna Ladell
Treasurer's Report of Convention: Grace Campbell
Election of Officers: Elsie Stephenson
New Business:
Invitation for Convention 2006 and Courtesies: Flora Rath
Announcements:
Head Table Guests: Ilene Chesterman

ELGIN DISTRICT W.I. 2005

BANQUET

CATERED BY DONNA PATTERSON

October 4, 2005

5:30 p.m.

PIPER: J.J. McLACHLAN

CHAIR: GLENNA LADELL

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE GRACE

TOAST TO THE QUEEN

TOAST TO THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

INTRODUCTION OF HEAD TABLE GUESTS: Ilene Chesterman

GREETINGS: Warden of Middlesex County – Tom McLaughlin

PRESENTATION OF THE DOROTHY FUTCHER SCHOLARSHIP:
Joan Mansell

PRESENTATION OF THE MARYN PARDY SCHOLARSHIP:
Marlene Archer

MAYOR OF STRATHROY AND CARADOC TOWNSHIP – Mel Veale

ENTERTAINMENT – Vocal Federation

PRESENTATIONS:

CLOSING CEREMONY: RETIRE FLAGS AND BANNERS

SING: ROYAL ANTHEM

2005 LONDON AREA CONVENTION DECLARED CLOSED

NOTES

Aggregate – $45.00 1st $10 - $15 all other

39 Quilts - sold 64 Show.

Bears - knit go to Third World.

Blue Hat - Prize Winner.

Ann McLean #5

Mary Veenstra #4

Jean Netherly #3

Marlene Archer #2

Ruth Wirth #1

Old barns -

New -

Wedding pictures

Schools

Bridges

Tues Aug 1st Coldstream

Hosp. - baby slippers.

Prayer shawl