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This Weekend

Friday

-1°



Saturday

-6°



Sunday

-1°



MARCH 6, 2025



Sports | 13



Wellesley firefighters battled an attic blaze at a farmhouse on Lichty Road, near Perth Line, on Monday evening. The fire was believed to have been caused by a chimney pipe from a woodburning stove. A family, including a baby, escaped, and no one was harmed. A total of 35 firefighters from three stations – Wellesley, Linwood and St. Clements – responded. The house is expected to be demolished, even though it was structurally sound, said Wellesley district fire chief Brendan Westmorland.

Julian Gavaghan

Harris re-elected in Kitchener-Conestoga

Results prompt opponents to revisit vote-splitting strategy

Julian Gavaghan
Observer Staff

WITH MIKE HARRIS BEING COMFORTABLY re-elected for a third term in Kitchener-Conestoga, the Conservative MPP and other candidates have suggested that his support and their opposition to the Wilmot land grab was not the galvanizing issue that challengers had hoped it would be.

Liberal Joe Gowing, who finished second with 12,031 votes, 4,915 fewer votes than the Tory's 16,946, said too much focus may have been given to the Region of Waterloo's controversial plan to buy 770 acres

of prime farmland and reportedly ready it for a new Toyota factory.

He said he believes that his NDP opponent, Jodi Szimanski, paid the biggest price for being painted by voters as representing a "single-issue party" and focusing so much on preventing the project.

In the end, she got 7,551 votes in the February 27 election, which meant her party fell to third place in the riding, having finished second in two previous trips to the polls.

Harris improved his own vote by 1.5 per cent, only slightly less than the 2.14-per-cent swing his party enjoyed across

Ontario, with Premier Doug Ford's focus on protecting workers from American tariff pain resonating enough with voters to deliver him a third term in office.

And, while province-wide the NDP finished second and remained the official opposition at Queen's Park, despite a 5.19-percentage-point dip in support, the party performed much worse in Kitchener-Conestoga, where it suffered a 10.4-per-cent swing against it.

"It didn't help that the NDP kept bringing their leader, Marit Stiles, back to the riding, and the land

→ ELECTION 6

Woolwich wants rural strategy for speed limits as residents push back

Steve Kannon
Observer Staff

THERE'S NO ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL APPROACH TO setting speed limits in school zones, with rural areas requiring a different approach than what the Region of Waterloo aims for in urban spaces, Woolwich councillors argue.

Meeting this week, they called on their regional

counterparts to come up with a separate rural strategy. They also called for a review of current speed limits and the use of cameras on Lobsinger Line and Northfield Drive.

That move was somewhat welcomed by residents calling for changes on a stretch of Lobsinger Line in front of King Alfred Academy, where the speed limit was recently dropped

to 40 km/h and an automated speed enforcement camera was introduced.

Repeating a message brought last week to Wellesley council, a group of residents said the changes have made the road less safe. They also decried the lack of public consultation and transparency, indicating the move was a solution in search of a problem.

"Let's call this what it is – it's a cash-grab," said St. Clements resident Randy Spruyt, adding the region has yet to provide any actual data to back up its safety claims.

Heidelberg resident Cheryl Nyusa said dropping the speed limit from the longstanding 80 km/h to 40 km/h in the school zone has led to drivers "aggressively passing" as

some others slow down to the new posted speed, leading to incidents of road rage.

She recommended a more moderate speed reduction and the removal of the camera, with perhaps a concession to having it operational only during school hours. The use of flashing lights during those times – a practice used elsewhere

– would be an improvement.

The latter was an idea reflected in Woolwich's plans to have the region look into the matter, with a council motion that "supports investigating the installation of flashing lights in school zones that operate during school hours instead of active speed cameras."

→ WOOLWICH 4



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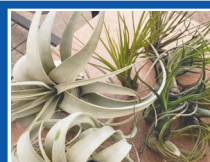
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Region workers strike

A strike by members of CUPE Local 1656 has closed Waterloo Region's landfill sites. Officials are advising travellers to give themselves an extra hour at the airport in Breslau, the site of picketing workers. The region says it's not expecting any flight delays at this point.

From the archives

Fresh from a decision to repair the Glasgow Street bridge at a cost of \$335,000 Woolwich is now looking for more than \$6.8 million to repair or replace bridges and culverts over the next decade, according to a new study. Of the 48 structures inspected, 9 were deemed to be of high priority, 9 judged medium and 16 low; 14 were seen as requiring no action.
From the Mar. 6, 2010 edition of The Observer

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Andrea Eymann
Observer Staff

GIVEN THIS FROSTY WINTER, IT really came as no surprise that sap was in short supply at the first-tap ceremony February 28 that unofficially launched the season for the Waterloo Wellington Chapter of the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association. Kitchener's Michelle Stelter was grinning ear to ear as she drilled into the chosen tree at Synder Acres in Breslau with a cordless Milwaukee drill rather than an old-fashioned hand crank. Then, using a bright green hammer, she knocked in the spile, with the help of syrup guru Cody Snyder, and then attached the bucket that remained empty in the minus-11-degree weather. She won the honour, having thrown her hat into the ring after becoming interested in producing some syrup for a large sugar maple in her yard. "I thought this was a great thing to come to and be introduced to the craft,"

she told The Observer of what ultimately brought her out to the event. "I just love the idea of being able to take maple syrup from a tree, and I wanted to be involved in the process." While last year's mild weather brought an early start to the maple-syrup season, this year has been a more traditional winter. The conditions have the making of a good year, says Kevin Snyder, president of the Waterloo-Wellington branch of the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association (OMSPA). He noted that some producers have already tapped, and others are waiting as the weather warms up again. "We need that favourable conditions of weather to get our sap to flow," he explained. "We like a plus-five and minus-five weather pattern," he added of the ideal daytime and over-night temperature swings. Typically, the season lasts four to five weeks. As he told those gathered at last week's event, his stan-



Waterloo-Wellington chapter of the Ontario Maple Syrup Producer Associations got the season rolling with a ceremonial first-tap on Feb. 28 at Snyder Acres in Breslau. Top, MPP Mike Harris (fourth from left) and MP Tim Louis (middle) surrounded by the Elmira Maple Syrup Festival committee, with chair Matt Jessop on the right. Bottom left: Jessica and Andrew Sallans of Maple Tap Farm in New Dundee were named the producer of the year. Bottom right: Michelle Stelter volunteered to tap the first tree. **Andrea Eymann**

dard answer when asked how the season will be is to ask him again in six weeks. "All farmers are optimistic; they plant seeds in the fields every year, with anticipation that they always get a crop... because farming is sort of a gamble," he explained, noting that the unknowns of farming apply to maple syrup. "But we always get something out of these trees." Among those in attendance was Kitchener-Conestoga MP Tim Louis, who noted the importance of Canadian agriculture and supporting local producers given the current trade situation with the U.S. MPP Mike Harris, who was re-elected just the day before, said he was happy to be back at a community event tied to the maple syrup season. "I know my family and I always look forward to the festival every year," Harris said, pointing to the Elmira Maple Syrup Festival that this year takes place on April 5.
→ FIRST TAP 5

MP Tim Louis backs Mark Carney in race for new Liberal leader

Julian Gavaghan
Observer Staff

KITCHENER-CONESTOGA MP TIM LOUIS REVEALED he is supporting Mark Carney to be the next prime minister in anticipation of the Liberal leadership election ending on Sunday. Louis said the ex-central banker, who is the odds-on poll favourite and ahead of former finance minister Chrystia

Freeland in the contest, was the best person for the job because of his ideas and experience. "It was a thoughtful decision. We have a lot of strong candidates, and I had good conversations with most of them," he told The Observer. "And, at the end, I think that Mark Carney's got his experience as the former governor of both the Bank of Canada and the Bank of England, combined with his ideas, and also the

fact that he's worked with Conservatives." Louis noted that Carney's appointment as a central banker by both Tory governments in Canada and Britain meant that he could be a unity figure to rally support during a trade war with the United States. "I think he brings the kind of experience that would make him an ideal candidate at this time, when we're going to need

someone to steer the economy," Louis said. Registered Liberals have until 3 p.m. on March 9 to cast their vote, with a new federal party leader expected to be announced later that day. Also standing are businessman and former MP Frank Baylis and Karina Gould, who is the current leader of the government in the House of Commons. While Carney is ahead in the polls, he is not

expected to be elected in the first round. The contest uses a ranked ballot system, where voters choose which runner they like in order of preference. The bottom-placed candidate is removed in each round until, adding up the second or possibly third or fourth preferences, one individual has more than 50 per cent support. Whoever wins and becomes Liberal leader

also would become the next prime minister of Canada, replacing Justin Trudeau who announced in January his plan to step down as leader. Louis insisted that his decision was not based on opinion polls, which indicate that Carney is most likely to win the leadership contest. In addition, polls suggest that Carney, despite not being an MP, which would be unusual
→ LEADERSHIP 5

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Woodland robotics team gearing up for competition

Andrea Eymann

Observer Staff

THE WOODLAND CHRISTIAN SECONDARY SCHOOL robotics team is busy building their robot for their first competition later this month.

The 40 members of the CyberCavs are busy with a 100-pound creation that is 42 inches tall.

The large number of students is split into different groups, from programming and mechanical to public relations, as they work away in portable classroom 155, where the programmers like to hang out, notes Grade 11 student Zack Scherer.

Scherer and Grade 10 student Noah Dykstra have been working on the mechanics of the bot.

Dykstra said he joined the group because his dad is a software programmer, but he likes engineering in general and seeing how things move.

For his part, Scherer

likes to build things.

"I like using my hands and putting stuff together and figuring out how things work – my family does a lot with cars," he said of what prompted him to join the CyberCavs.

As part of the mechanical team, the two students start with designing the bot, deciding what they want to specialize in, and then prototyping to see what works and what doesn't.

"We just go around, using those constraints to figure out what we want to do, and how's the best way we're going to do this," said Scherer, noting the bot's weight limit is 135 pounds.

This year, the droid must put something into a rectangle shape close to the ground to score points at upcoming competitions. The robot can also put tubing onto four different places to score points.

The team has been



Woodland Christian Secondary Schools' CyberCavs robotics team includes Grade 11 student Zack Scherer, teacher Jen Bryson and Grade 10 student Noah Dykstra. **Julian Gavaghan**

working on the robot since the start of January. They still have some adjustments to make, as they have had to consider how they are going to get the machine to grab items, for instance. They'll have to find a way for the bot

to grab a pipe from the outside, rather than, say, lifting it from the inside.

One feature from last year's robot is also at play this year: the ability to climb, which Dykstra notes is his favourite feature of the bot.

A 12-volt battery powers the machine, but they haven't tested how long the bot can run for this year.

However, the previous creation could run for eight to 10 minutes.

"At the start of the

season, when we're building the robot after we have everything machined out, it's a lot of work to make sure all the pieces are right and checking back with the CAD [program] and make sure this is where this goes and putting it together," Scherer explained, as they use a computer-aided design (CAD) software, where they can draw in three-dimensional space to ensure everything will go together before they build it.

He noted building the machine is akin to assembling a LEGO creation.

This season is more challenging, Scherer noted, requiring more effort if the school is to repeat its win at the provincial championship.

The CyberCavs will have their first competition at the University of Waterloo on March 21-22, with another in Windsor-Essex on March 28-29. The provincial championship is set for April 3-5.

WOOLWICH: Township looks for policy to recognize rural vs. urban roads; region expanding speed-camera scheme

→ FROM 1

The region, however, has plans to continue expanding its controversial camera program, eventually covering all 27 school zones in Woolwich, for instance.

Nyusa, however, struck a chord when she suggested that half of the money taken in by the speed cameras is being siphoned off by a U.S.-based contractor. Given the current animosity

of the Trump administration's tariff assaults and other bullying, that didn't sit well with councillors, who want clarification from the region.

Also on the agenda is looking at an approach that would look at dropping the speed limit to 60 km/h in rural school zones rather than a blanket 40 km/h that might be suitable in the urban areas, but not elsewhere.

For Spruyt, the uniform

application of a policy, especially with the use of revenue-generating cameras, casts suspicion on the region's motives.

"The region has 'voted' for a blanket solution the region will economically benefit from, in a material way, in perpetuity, at the expense of its residents. This is a clear conflict of interest," he said, noting the upper-tier government has been short on details and

transparency, including the impact of ticket revenue.

"Zero accident data was provided in these reports for Lobsinger Line in front of the King Alfred Academy school, yet changes are being implemented without evidence that a localized safety issue exists," he said of the lack of facts to support the region's plans, which he argued should be reversed.

Another resident, Gary Bensler, said the region has created a "troubling situation" that appears to be a "revenue-generating measure" more than being about safety. He added that a petition has garnered widespread support from the community, indicating clear opposition to the region's move.

The arguments found a sympathetic ear in council chambers Tuesday

night, with Coun. Nathan Cadeau agreeing with the idea of "rural solutions for rural roads."

He, too, had questions about who gets the money.

"I don't like blanket policies," added Coun. Bonnie Bryant.

Mayor Sandy Shantz, who also serves on regional council, said she would raise the issues discussed this week with regional staff.



Elmira firefighters, Lions plan dance for St. Patrick's Day

Julian Gavaghan

Observer Staff

ELMIRA FIREFIGHTERS AND LIONS CLUB members are set to jointly host another St. Patrick's Day dance in the hope of smashing last year's fundraising record of \$15,000.

The celebration of all things Irish, with green versions of Guinness and other beers on offer, will be held at the town's Lions Hall on March 15 at 8 p.m.

The event will also feature the blues-rock sound of Elmira native Tyler Fry's band, Mojo Minefield, playing live.

"We're also still going to have a DJ playing dance music as well, so it's going to be a bit of a mix, as it was great last year getting so many people dancing," said volunteer firefighter Taylor Clemmer.

Elmira Meat Market is donating cold cuts and sandwiches will be avail-

able for hungry revellers at the over-19 event.

"It's \$15 a ticket for live music and food. It's a pretty good deal for 15 bucks," Clemmer added.

The Elmira firefighters and Lions are dividing the proceeds equally between them.

Each group will then further split their shares in two, with the firefighters dividing their portion of the funds between Muscular Dystrophy

Firefighter and Lions members who are helping to organize the party: Josh Bauman, Taylor Clemmer, Chaise Ireland, Geoff Kelly, Chief Bryan Cook, Deputy Chief Joe Martin, Sandra James with guide dog Mojo, Art Wood, Deb Cserhalmi with Izzy, and Mark Brubacher.

Julian Gavaghan

Canada and their antique fire truck, which is often used to give rides to the town's schoolchildren and victorious sports teams.

The Elmira Lions are raising money for Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides and community outreach.

Tickets can be purchased from individual club members, firefighters and Elmira Meat Market.



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Researchers find cancer-treatment benefits from compound in avocados

Ethan Braund
LJI reporter

A NEW STUDY BY THE University of Guelph shows that a molecule found in avocados might protect against diseases such as leukemia.

Dr. Paul Spagnuolo, a professor in the Department of Food Science, found compound known as avocatin B contained in avocados could have many positive effects on slowing diseases like leukemia and obesity during a trial using mice.

“If you are a patient who has AML (acute myeloid leukemia), you undergo induction therapy and typically would respond well and go into what is called remission,” said Spagnuolo.

“But what ends up happening is that the majority of those patients who are in remission and are characterized as almost cancer-free. For AML patients, they typically relapse within two years, meaning that the disease comes back.”

When they go back in for treatment what happens to most patients do not respond as well to the

treatment and succumb to the disease. So, the goal is to delay the disease from returning in the first place. The standard way of doing this was through consolidation therapy, which is just additional chemotherapy drugs to delay a relapse.

During the trial, researchers treated mice with the standard induction treatment, but after the disease was essentially gone, researchers put to use the diet-related therapy instead of the traditional one.

Over several weeks, they fed these mice avocatin B, and examined its impact on stem cells. Stem cells in the bone marrow usually create healthy blood cells, but in diseased states like leukemia and obesity, that process is disturbed.

“We do a lot of work in this area of understanding molecules that come from food and how we could apply them as either preventative or treatments or modalities for various conditions,” said Spagnuolo.

The study looked at whether there would be a positive change in bone marrow cells due to an

avocado-rich diet, which has been a challenge for other pharmacological drugs or other interventions, said Spagnuolo.

The research showed for the first time that avocatin B did indeed slow leukemia relapse compared to the control diet. It also showed positive results during an obesity trial where there was a 58 percent recovery of healthy stem cells in the bone marrow. It also improved weight loss and restored sensitivity to insulin, which was a very positive sign, said Spagnuolo.

“We were astounded to find that the intervention improved what was happening in the bone marrow in both disease states.”

Spagnuolo and his lab have been working with avocatin B for a decade now, with the first research paper published in 2015. Originally, they worked with the molecule like any other drug, administering it intravenously, said Spagnuolo.

“And that is the reason why we were super excited about this, because we put it in the form of the diet, and it’s the first time we’ve

seen this dietary intervention with this bioactive have this type of effect, and it’s a dramatic effect in terms of its ability to sort of delay disease reoccurrence.”

One of the things that people should be aware of about this study is that it is not a replacement for traditional treatments.

“We’re not geared to try to replace existing therapy. We constantly get contacted by the public on how many avocados they should eat, and the first thing we say is to consult with your oncologist and your oncology team,” said Spagnuolo.

He notes that more research needs to be done to see if it will work over a longer timeframe and, subsequently, if it applies to humans as well.

“We move forward with cautious optimism with these types of things. We don’t want to give people false hopes in a lot of ways, but maybe...it is a good thing for people to know that there are armies of researchers like me and my team out there looking for the next thing that might be able to help,” said Spagnuolo.



Cody Synder in the sugar shack at Synder Acres Farm in Breslau. **Andrea Eymann**

FIRST TAP: Warmer weather will start the season in earnest

→ FROM 3

“It’s great to be able to support local producers, and we’re going to have a little bit of a fight on our hands over the next little while with the U.S. government and making sure that we’re still able to export our products to the U.S. at a fair rate,” he said.

The first-tap ceremony also included announcing the winner of the Elmira Maple Syrup Festival’s producer of the year, chosen at a tasting event last month. On hand were EMSF committee chair Matt Jessop and vice chair Marc McInerney, who named Maple Tap Farm from New Dundee as the victor for the second year in a row.

With the formalities dealt with, those in attendance moved on to enjoy a pancake breakfast that included turkey sausages.

Afterwards, there was time for a visit to the sugar shack, with Cody Snyder noting the operation was expecting to take delivery of a new tank that will hold

12,000 gallons, replacing one that holds just 3,700 gallons.

The larger holding tank will provide more continuous flow to the new reverse-osmosis machine, which separates the sugars from the water, that would empty the smaller tank in about two and half hours.

So, if they wanted to start boiling in the morning, they would have to get up at 4 a.m. to fill it and then re-fill it a couple of hours later. With the new tank, they can now turn it on at the end of the day and find the process finished the next morning, said Snyder.

From that initial process, the liquid heads off to the boiler, where it finally gets the maple taste from the caramelization as it is heated up to 700 degrees. When it officially goes from sap to syrup, it is seven degrees over the boiling point of water, which then gets filtered, ensuring a smooth and clear texture, before it finally gets bottled to be ready for pancakes.

LEADERSHIP: Polls have Carney as the most popular choice to take the helm

→ FROM 3

but not unprecedented if he became prime minister, is considered the most likely candidate to defeat Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre in a general election.

The likelihood of Carney’s victory in the Liberal leadership race has certainly spooked the Tories, which had looked like a shoo-in to win a nationwide vote if Trudeau ran again.

The Liberals, having been 21 points behind at the start of the year, have seen their support climb to the point that one poll last week suggested the party was actually ahead of the Conservatives for the first time since 2021.

“Two months ago, the Liberals were on the ropes, and many believed they were politically finished. Now they are resurgent,” Semra Sevi, an assistant professor of political science at the University of Toronto, said in a release.

Experts point to several factors for change in party fortunes.

Losing Trudeau, the

focal point for public criticism of the Liberals, has been chief among them.

The Conservatives have spent a lot of money on ads that attack the leadership race front runner as “Carbon Tax Carney” – but they don’t seem to be sticking.

Darrell Bricker, CEO of Ipsos Public Affairs, the firm that published the late-February poll showing the Liberals with their first lead in four years, said that many voters had sided with the Tories more to oust Trudeau than because they supported the party’s policies.

Carney is seen as a change candidate and the fact that he does not yet have a seat in the House of Commons, although he would be expected to run in a riding at the next election, due by October 20 at the latest, may actually be another positive for him.

Additionally, pollsters say that Conservative attempts to stick the carbon-tax label on Carney are having less impact than they might have had before.

That’s because, with U.S. president Donald Trump threatening Canada, the focus is more-than-ever on the here and now and not the last ten years.

Carney has been viewed as strong and composed in standing up to bullying by Trump.

The frontrunner this week looked to further that patriotic appeal by announcing that he was in the process of renouncing his British and Irish citizenships.

He obtained the former in the 1980s, through three grandparents born in Ireland, and the latter in 2018, which he qualified for after having been a UK resident for more than five years following his appointment as Governor of the Bank of England in 2012.

However, despite his attempt to prove himself as more of a Canadian citizen, by virtue of birth, his experience in dealing with the turmoil of Brexit and trade negotiations, following British voters’ decision to leave the European Union in 2016,

is seen by many as an unmatched experience that could be useful after Trump levied 25 per cent tariffs on most goods this week.

Beyond that, there is the air of a “new car smell” about Carney, said Bricker.

And, while Louis insisted that he didn’t look that closely at polls, he admitted he had been swept up in a sense of enthusiasm about the candidate.

“I think there is definitely some momentum, though, regardless of the numbers,” the MP said.

“I feel that there’s a renewed sense of optimism and excitement in the Liberal Party right now, and the leadership race is a big part of that.

“Anytime a party is going through that renewal, there’s an excitement and connection that’s just different.”

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Every day of Canadian Agriculture Safety Week features a theme

Ethan Braund
LJI reporter

AS MARCH BEGINS AND THE farming season edges closer, farmers are being urged to plan now for keeping things safe. Canadian Agriculture Safety Week (CASW) is set for March 10-16, underscoring the importance of safe practices, said Robin Anderson of the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA). “By celebrating farm safety and people doing what they can to keep everybody healthy and safe on the farm, it’s just showing those folks that we’re supportive of them, that Canadians are supportive of them as they do their work,” said Anderson. CASA was formed in 1993 to respond to issues of health and safety in agriculture. This year, Canadian Agriculture Safety Week will feature a different theme for each day. There’s Mental Health (March 16), Emergency Preparedness (March 18), Rail and Road Safety (March 19), Grain Safety (March 20), Women in Agriculture (March 21) and Health on the Farm (March 22). “Those are just slightly a departure from what we’ve done. This time, we’ve decided to take a real look and focus on each topic daily. We have a media kit and resources that focus on each of those topics, as we will also be doing an online forum about emergency preparedness and mental health on March 18,” said Anderson. Safety is paramount in all workplaces, but this is especially true in agriculture, he added. “Agriculture is interesting in industry, in that you live where you work, you play where you work, your

children grow up where you work. It is a very intimate workplace – you have friends who come over where you work and work within the community. “People are the biggest asset to any farming operation, so keeping people healthy, safe and well will improve farm receipts. It will ensure farms are sustainable for the future so they can pass those farms on to the next generation.” The hazards of farming are not lost on federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Lawrence MacAulay, who related his firsthand experiences to The Observer. “My wife Frances and I ran a seed potato and dairy operation for many years back home on Prince Edward Island. It was a 24-hour, 365-day-a-year job, often involving heavy machinery and other hazards, posing physical dangers to not only us, but our three young daughters, too. Each year, people living and working on farms – including children – are tragically injured, sometimes fatally – making awareness initiatives, like Canadian Agricultural Safety Week, so vitally important,” said MacAulay. Along with interacting with social media posts and taking part in activities, wearing the campaign ribbon is a great way to support agriculture safety, he said. “There’s no question that Canada’s farmers and farm communities are among our country’s greatest assets, and we will continue to support farmers and Canada’s entire agriculture and agri-food sector on all fronts to ensure a strong, sustainable, and safe future.” For more information, see www.casa-acsa.ca.

ELECTION: Farmland loss may not have been as big an issue as expected

→ FROM 1
grab was all she talked about as well,” said Gowing. “On top of her signs themselves, it said, ‘Protect the Farmland’ and that was their number-one issue going into the election. “They put all their money on it, but the gamble didn’t pay off.”

Gowing personally benefited from a positive swing of 12 per cent to the Liberals in the riding, which is double what the party gained Ontario-wide. The proportion of Kitchener-Conestoga voters who backed the Liberals rose from 17.5 in 2022 to 29.5 per cent last week. Gowing said a big reason for that was because his party campaigned on a much wider platform than his NDP opponent. He said it became apparent during the campaign that voters in Woolwich and Wellesley townships were much less interested in the fight for farmland than those in Wilmot. Yet, when the NDP leader came to Elmira six days before the election and was asked by The Observer whether the issue was really one that sufficiently connected with the voters in a town a 30-minute drive from New Hamburg and other settlements in Wilmot, Stiles insisted it did and that they could “flip the seat from blue to orange” because of it. Following the result, Szimanski conceded in a separate interview that the land-grab issue may have been a “hard thing to understand” for some voters, but that she had also seen a lot of opposition in every part of the riding. She did not regret being so vocal an opponent and said she would continue the battle after returning to her job as a University of Waterloo communications officer, adding: “I am not giving up on the fight for farmland.” Harris, who was “unavailable for an interview,” according to his election assistant, Emily

↓ Candidate	↓ Party	↓ Votes
Mike Harris Jr.	Progressive Conservative	16,946
Joe Gowing	Liberal	12,031
Jodi Szimanski	New Democratic	7,551
Brayden Wagenaar	Green	2,227
Jim Karahalios	New Blue	1,152
Patrick Doucette	Ontario	890

McLaughlin, appeared to suggest in a later statement that voters were more focused on the economy and, because of that, they chose not to punish his backing of the region’s industrial plans and, actually, may have been supportive of the scheme. The Observer had asked his team whether the result showed that there was less opposition to the land assembly than opponents had previously suggested. “The outcome shows us that folks support what we are doing locally and trust this government to lead us through these uncertain times,” Harris said in an emailed statement. “After knocking on over 15,000 doors and speaking with voters through the campaign, we know that their top concerns are protecting the economy, ensuring there are good-paying jobs in our region, and making life more affordable. During the campaign, Harris, the son of former Ontario Premier Mike Harris Sr., who had attended an election night party at Kitchener’s St. Louis Bar & Grill, had repeatedly stressed that he supported the land assembly because lack of economic opportunity had forced him to move from North Bay to Kitchener. Harris said he didn’t want any of the region’s residents to have to make the same choice. Whether or not the land grab was ever a big enough issue to unseat him, there was a lot of confusion among opponents over who was the best alternative candidate to vote for. Szimanski said that during the campaign she had believed her party was closer to toppling the Tory

than the result would later show. She said this belief appeared to have been backed up when Cooperate for Canada, an organization that urges centre-left parties to work together, called for voters in the riding to back the NDP in order to have the best chance of defeating Harris. The group based that assessment on interviews with Szimanski, Gowing and Green Party candidate Brayden Wagenaar, as well as other data. That prompted Wagenaar to call on his supporters to support the NDP a week before ballot boxes opened. However, opinion polls, including a Mainstreet Research one from February 19 that came within two points of predicting the result, had shown that Gowing was comfortably in second place. So Gowing called for the NDP and Green candidate to back him instead. It led to a bitter row that culminated with Gowing’s car being vandalized following a public debate on February 20, with graffiti on his window spelling out the previous election results and telling the Liberal to “stand aside.” In 2018, when Gowing ran for the first time, and in 2022, when he didn’t, the Liberals had finished third and, in fact, the NDP had come closer to the Tory tally on both occasions than the most recent runner up. Although Szimanzki said she had believed local polling was not good enough, Gowing said it was a huge mistake for her party to ignore the data. “They were focused on the last two elections and, unfortunately, it’s hard to

drive forward when you’re looking backward,” Gowing told The Observer. He was particularly frustrated because the combined votes of the Liberals and NDP – both centre-left parties opposed to what the region calls the “land assembly” – would have beaten Harris if they had gone to a single candidate instead of being split among two. Adding 2,227 ballots cast for the Green Party’s Wagenaar, who also opposed the plan and shared similar views on several other issues, the total for the three parties amounted to 21,809 votes, 4,863 more than the Tory. “I don’t like to use this term, but I told you so,” Gowing said of how he was vindicated by his previous pleas for backing. Szimanski believes the polls, however, did have an impact on persuading people to vote for the Liberals, who she also claims had also benefited from being more organized. “I think it scared a lot of people, and then they thought they were strategically voting,” she said. Both the New Democrat and Liberal candidates said they were saddened that so many long-time Tory voters had stuck with Harris, despite claiming to have heard repeated complaints about not being able to communicate with the MPP. “There were some people I talked to on the doorstep who said, ‘I don’t like Doug Ford, I don’t like Mike Harris Jr., but I have no choice. I’ve always voted Conservative,’” said Szimanski. Gowing was even more critical. “There’s farmers that are potentially losing their farmland that still voted for Mike,” he said. “They just couldn’t bear it in their bones, because they are generations of Conservatives and their forefathers would be upset. “Well, I’m sure their forefathers would be more upset if they lost the farm.”



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↓ POLICE REPORT

Police campaign urges Canadians to recognize, reject and report fraud

Joining other police services during Fraud Prevention Month, the OPP Anti-Rackets Branch and Serious Fraud Office have launched a new campaign, “The Masks of Fraud.”

This year’s campaign reveals the deceptive techniques used to commit fraud in today’s digital age. It aims to equip Canadians with the information, tools and strategies they need to recognize, reject and report fraud, the OPP said in a release.

In 2024, the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre

(CAFC) received fraud reports totalling \$642 million in victim losses, surpassing the previous record of \$578 million in 2023. Cyber-enabled fraud accounted for 75 per cent of reported losses, reflecting the increasing sophistication of online crime. Law enforcement agencies, including the OPP and CAFC, are strengthening partnerships with the private sector to combat these evolving threats through prevention, detection and enforcement.

While many incidents

go unreported, the OPP and CAFC continue to encourage individuals and businesses to report fraud. Reporting helps identify crime patterns, support investigations and prevent others from falling victim.

According to the CAFC, the five most common frauds impacting Canadians were:

- Investment fraud represented \$310 million in reported losses in 2024. Ontario victims reported losing more than \$102.7 million.

- Spear phishing fraud (Business Email Compromise) represented \$67.2 million in reported losses in 2024. Ontario victims reported losing more than \$39.5 million.
- Romance fraud represented \$58.4 million in reported losses in 2024. Ontario victims reported losing more than \$19 million.
- Job scam represented \$47.1 million in reported

losses in 2024. Ontario victims reported losing more than \$14.8 million.

- Extortion fraud represented \$21 million in reported losses in 2024. Ontario victims reported losing more than \$6.8 million.

“Fraud is constantly evolving, and our collective response must evolve with it. By working with partners in law enforcement, industry and the community, we are strengthen-

ing fraud prevention, supporting victims and holding those responsible accountable. Fraud Prevention Month is an opportunity for everyone to learn how to recognize the signs of fraud and take action to protect themselves and others,” said OPP Detective Superintendent Mike Bickerton in a release.

If you suspect fraud or have been a victim, report it to your local police and the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at 1-888-495-8501, or online via the Fraud Reporting System.

FEBRUARY 26

7:32 PM | Waterloo Regional Police responded to a two-vehicle collision on Ament Line in Wellesley. One person sustained minor physical injuries.

FEBRUARY 27

6:30 AM | Wellington County OPP, alongside local emergency services, responded to a two-vehicle collision on Wellington Road 17, just outside of Alma. Both drivers, one of whom was ejected from the vehicle, suffered serious injuries and were transported to a trauma centre. The investigation is ongoing by the West Region OPP Traffic Collision Investigation (TCI)

Team. Anyone who may have witnessed the collision, or has information, such as dashcam footage, that could assist with this ongoing investigation is asked to contact the Wellington OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

8:25 AM | Police responded to a two-vehicle collision on Line 86 in Wellesley Township. There were no reports of any physical injuries.

10:15 AM | Emergency services responded to the scene of single-vehicle collision on Arthur Street, south of the roundabout at Sawmill Road. Police that the driver of the vehicle left the roadway, entered the ditch, with the vehicle subsequently rolling over

on its roof. The driver, a 28-year-old Kitchener man, was transported to an out-of-region hospital with serious injuries. The investigation is ongoing, and charges are anticipated. Anyone who may have witnessed the collision or may have information or video footage is asked to call WRPS’ Traffic Services Unit at 519-570-9777, extension 8856. To provide anonymous information, please call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or submit online at www.waterloocrimestoppers.com.

FEBRUARY 28

6:45 AM | A 28-year-old Waterloo resident was pronounced dead

at the scene as a result of a three-vehicle collision on Wellington Road 51, near Ariss. The collision involved two pickup trucks and a sedan. The deceased was one of the drivers. There were no other injuries. The cause of the collision is still under investigation. Anyone with information or dash camera footage is being asked to contact the OPP at 1-888-310-1122. Should you wish to remain anonymous, you can contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or submit a tip on-line at www.csgw.tips.

MARCH 2

4:55 PM | Waterloo Regional Police responded to a two-vehicle

collision in the area of Manser Road and William Hastings Line in Wellesley. There were no reports of any serious physical injuries. One driver was charged under the Highway Traffic Act.

MARCH 3

7:40 PM | Police responded to a report of a pedestrian struck by a vehicle in the area of Airport Road and Fountain Street North. The pedestrian was part of a planned protest in the area at the time of the incident. The driver of the vehicle struck the pedestrian as they were proceeding past the protestors. There were no reports of any physical injuries. The driver was stopped

by police and arrested for ‘dangerous driving.’

MARCH 4

6:00 AM | Members of Waterloo Regional Police’s Police Liaison Team (PLT) were in attendance at a labour dispute at the Region of Waterloo International Airport. While the PLT was present, a driver and picketers engaged in a brief interaction in which one of the picketers was struck by a vehicle. The involved vehicle then proceeded past picketers at a high rate of speed. The driver, a 28-year-old male from Dundas, was arrested and charged with ‘stunt driving.’ No injuries were reported. The investigation remains ongoing.



Emergency services responded to a single-vehicle collision on Arthur Street, south of the roundabout near St. Jacobs, mid-morning on Feb. 27. A 28-year-old Kitchener man was transported to an out-of-region hospital with serious injuries. **Andrea Eymann**

OFA webinar series looks at hiring students in the ag. sector

Ethan Braund

LJI reporter

A NEW SERIES OF WEBINARS aims to help prospective employers through the process of hiring students in the agriculture sector.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is conducting the webinars targeting agriculture employers, covering the likes of human resources and safety considerations when hiring students.

“Hiring students and youth on the farm is a great opportunity for farmers to tap into a labour source, but also a great opportunity for youth to get job experience,” said OFA policy analyst Peter Sykanda.

The process comes with different challenges than hiring an older employee

who has experience on the job and knows their rights.

Keeping all workers safe, particularly youth entering the agricultural field, has always been a high priority of the OFA, Skyanda told The Observer.

“That’s why we wanted to prioritize this for our Lunch-and-Learn series of webinars, knowing that youth and new workers coming to the farm present different challenges,” said Skyanda.

“Safety is paramount. Ensuring that workers of any age are safe is a high priority for us at the OFA, particularly for young and new workers in the agriculture sector.”

To that end, the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) is taking part in the series, along with

the Canadian Agriculture Safety Association (CASA).

Also covered is the HR side of hiring students, including legal requirements, contracts, role definitions, onboarding, and available wage subsidies like Growing Opportunities. CASA also spoke during the session about the many safety considerations when hiring students.

This week’s webinar was directed at employers, helping them to better understand their role regarding an internal responsibility system, said Skyanda. But the next one in the series will look to help youth understand their role.

“It’ll be on the other side of that equation for new young workers and their parents who are looking to

Opinion

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Verbatim

"He attacks his closest friends and neighbours who stood shoulder-to-shoulder with them in wars and other crises. And who does he cozy up to? Putin. You've got to be kidding me."

Ontario Premier Doug Ford says Donald Trump is cozying up to Russia, while punishing longtime allies such as Canada.

The Monitor

A 25% U.S. tariff on Canadian imports, coupled with equivalent retaliatory duties imposed by Ottawa on American goods, could increase the price of new vehicles in Canada by an average of \$5,000 to \$6,000. In the U.S., prices there are likely to climb by an average of US\$2,600 (around \$3,760) per vehicle.

J.D. Power

OBSERVER EDITORIAL

Ford wins early election, now it's all about Trump

Doug Ford's Progressive Conservatives came out of last week's election with a third majority government, losing three seats from 2022 but garnering 43 per cent of the vote, their highest total after the 40.8 per cent last time around and 40.5 in 2018.

The Liberals made some gains, to 14 from eight seats to regain party status, though they still remain in the wilderness to which they were banished in 2018. Their gain was the NDP's loss, as the party won just 27 seats and 18.6 per cent of the vote, down from 31 seats in 2022 and 40 in 2018, when they took 40 per cent of the votes.

Ford's early election call was cynical, banking on his popularity over the response to a bullying Donald Trump and coming ahead of any embarrassing revelations and investigations on the horizon.

The call for four years to match the term of Trump's presidency – at least in theory – was the singular message of the campaign, such as it was. It seems to have worked, as, if nothing else, Ford picked up a rare third majority.

With Trump having this week failed to waffle on plans for tariffs, Ford now has to deliver.

Removing American products from the LCBO and ripping up a \$100-million contract for satellite internet with Starlink, a company controlled by Elon Musk are a good start. Ford is also musing about cutting off the electricity supply to the U.S. and withholding nickel supplies, and is calling on Saskatchewan to do the same with the likes of potash and uranium.

"We need to make sure America feels the pain," Ford said at a press conference as the tariffs took effect Tuesday.

The sentiment is right, but there will be pain on both sides. The impact to the Canadian economy will be widespread and costly. Likewise, any government supports that emerge if Trump's follies continue will be an even larger burden down the line at a time when deficits and debts should be tackled instead.

Back on the job for just a matter of weeks, Trump has wrought havoc to not only the economy and democratic ideals of his own country, but to the world at large. He's shown contempt for the law, fundamental rights, the post-war order largely orchestrated by the U.S. itself and even basic human decency.

Clearly, he has no regard for rational governance, being more inclined to appease and support Russian dictator Vladimir Putin than America's longstanding allies and partners.

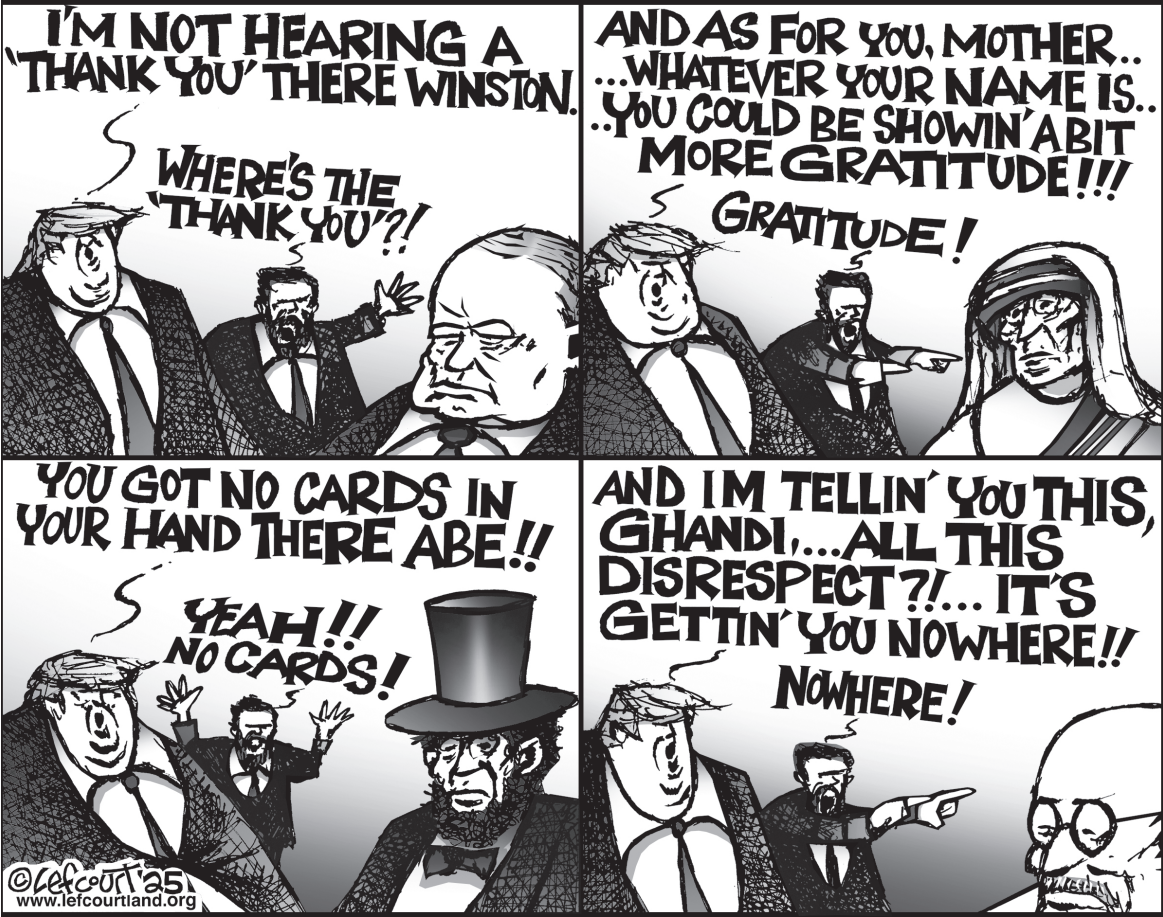
Trump has always been a would-be authoritarian. From the very start of his first term, he's praised and courted dictators. It's a list led by Putin, to whom Trump has repeatedly kowtowed. Then there's his love affair with North Korean dictator Kim Jung Un. He made overtures to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who's been eroding Turkey's democracy as he sets the stage for a dictatorship.

After losing to Joe Biden, Trump continued to court dictators, praising the likes of Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orbán and Argentinian president Javier Milei, the former's authoritarian playbook very much a part of Trump's current game plan and the latter the inspiration for DOGE and Musk's propensity for wielding a chainsaw.

Trump was certainly channelling Russian propaganda in his now notorious meeting last week with Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky, a stark reminder of Trump's transactional mindset and his bullying nature.

Historical friendships and allegiances mean nothing to an administration intent on breaking things and profiting from the chaos that ensues, from crypto scams to the extortion the entire world sees on display.

It's in that environment that politicians on this side of the border have to function, trying to find footing on ground every bit as unstable as the man who occupies the Oval Office.



ANALYSIS OF CURRENT WORLD EVENTS

The late, great alliance that was NATO

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) retired to its sickbed as soon as Donald Trump won the presidential election last November. It finally died last week in the White House, when Trump and Vice-President JD Vance launched a vicious attack on Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky before the massed cameras of the American media.

Vance, who began the assault, never conceals his contempt for Ukraine. As he said in 2022, "I don't really care what happens to Ukraine one way or the other." But the attack seemed scripted and Trump joined in right away; there are grounds to suspect that it was a pre-planned ambush.

At any rate the confrontation ended with Zelensky and his team being told to leave the White House, and the sound of doors being metaphorically slammed shut resounded all across Europe. In fact, the doors had already been closing quietly for some time, as various Western leaders concluded that the United States is no longer really an ally.

As Germany's freshly elected Chancellor, Friedrich Merz, put it, one of his chief goals is to "strengthen Europe as quickly as possible, so that we achieve



GWYNNE DYER
Global Outlook
on World Affairs

independence from the U.S.." He has realized that Trump is probably closer to Russian dictator Vladimir Putin than he is to the leader of any NATO country in Europe. Or to Canada either, for that matter.

Most of those leaders were in London on Sunday to welcome Zelensky back from his ordeal in Washington, and even King Charles III came out to greet The Man Who Stood Up To Trump. It was an unscheduled summit with no Americans present, and the real topic was whether Europe could be defended from Russia without American support.

Of course it can, at least in principle. The population of the European NATO countries (not counting the United States, Canada or Turkey) is 480 million; Russia has only 144 million people. NATO Europe's GDP is \$21 trillion, compared to only \$2 trillion for Russia. That should be enough.

NATO military forces in Europe outnumber Russian forces about two-to-one. The three million NATO troops in Europe serve in 29 different armies, so they may be less effective per person than 1.5

million Russian troops concentrated in a single army, but on the other hand most of the Russians are fully employed in trying to conquer Ukraine.

However, NATO Europe has many gaps in its capabilities due to the fact that there was a division of labour within the alliance. Some of the technically more demanding tasks, like manned and unmanned intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft, were largely outsourced to the United States long ago.

There are plenty of European fighter jets, for example, but far fewer of the tankers that would extend their range. Similarly, NATO Europe depends heavily on the United States for radar detection and jamming aircraft and for navigation and surveillance satellites. However, these gaps can be filled in a few years if the European countries are willing to spend the money.

What will be harder for post-NATO European countries to replace is the American nuclear deterrent. France and the United Kingdom have a couple of hundred nuclear warheads each, but they are under exclusive national control.

If the European NATO countries have really decided to build a new alliance that doesn't rely on the whims of

→DYER 28

The CBC is broken, but does it deserve to be defunded?

Doug Firby
Guest Column

The CBC/Radio-Canada has become a political football this election cycle, with Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre promising to “defund” it if he gains power in the upcoming federal election.

Once again, the leader of the Opposition finds that playing to his MAGA-lite freedom fighters puts him offside with the moderate Canadians whose support he needs. For all his claims of listening to ordinary Canadians, he seems tone-deaf about Canada’s national broadcaster.

Many of us get exasperated with the CBC’s Toronto-centric perspective, perceived liberal bias, and at times preachy tone. But we don’t see its destruction as a solution—we just want it to be better.

Polling shows strong support for the CBC in some form. A survey of 2,055 adults conducted for McGill University’s Centre for Media, Technology and Democracy found that 78 per cent of Canadians want CBC/Radio-Canada to continue—if it addresses major criticisms. The top four, ranked in order, are:

- unreliable funding
- advertising
- biased reporting, and
- telling people what to think.

Supporters see it as a vital tool in shaping Canadian cultural identity, made more urgent by U.S. President Donald Trump’s threats to annex our country. When asked whether a public broadcaster like CBC/Radio-Canada is still essential in the digital age, eight in 10 respondents to the McGill survey said it was either equally or more important than before.

Critics, however, argue that it serves as a propaganda tool for elite

Liberal interests. Poilievre – whose party is leading in the polls – receives wild cheers from partisan audiences when he vows to defund the CBC.

But as deep as the divide is, there’s one uncomfortable truth most people agree on – the CBC needs to address deep-rooted dysfunction that undermines its ability to fulfill its mandate.

The CBC is a troubled puppy. And nothing short of sustained soul-searching will restore its health.

Why do conservative Canadians feel such acrimony toward the CBC? Mostly because they don’t feel they get a fair shake. Reporters are sworn to objectivity, but sometimes it seems like they’re just going through the motions, paying lip

service to perspectives from the right. After all, the Poilievre set is not their tribe. (And here I thought the only tribe reporters belonged to was the Truth Tribe.)

The CBC is also captive to political correctness. This is why it demoted senior reporter Wendy Mesley for repeating in a private meeting at The Corp the provocative title of a book by Pierre Vallières, a leader of the Front de libération du Québec. (Offensive because the title included the N-word.)

It also failed to replace some of its charming curmudgeons, including the late Rex Murphy, whose right-of-centre views clashed with the network’s leadership.

The news department, which helps fill the void left by collapsing newspapers and local commercial TV and radio, does things

that leave me baffled. The National, its flagship nightly newscast, is branded as a “show” – as if it’s there to entertain rather than inform. The night of the crash at Ronald Reagan National Airport in Washington, D.C., it devoted almost the entire hour to having Paul Hunter speculate from across the Potomac River on the fate of the passengers (who were obviously dead). One can only assume the outpouring of grief was amplified by the fact that CBC reporters use the airport regularly.

Meanwhile, CBC’s local television newscasts remain puzzling, typically drawing the lowest ratings in competitive Canadian markets. In Calgary, for example, the CBC’s daily television broadcast reaches just 20,000 people on average.

But there are positives, too, notably in the growth

of its digital audience. And its entertainment division has produced some winning programs. Nothing compares to Jonny Harris’s Still Standing. North of North, the comedy set in Iqaluit, is groundbreaking, and Allan Hawco’s Saint-Pierre is a police procedural with an authentic Canadian twist.

So, the CBC’s record as a bastion of Canadian culture is mixed. There’s little evidence it deserves a massive funding boost. But there’s also no strong argument for doing away with it.

CBC/Radio-Canada was budgeted to receive \$1.38 billion in 2024-25 but claims it is chronically underfunded. In December, it announced 600 job cuts. (Politicians rightly question why, if funding is so tight, it paid out \$18.4 million in bonuses in 2023-24.) Meanwhile,

the incumbent Liberal government is considering a proposal from Canadian Heritage Minister Pascale St-Onge to double The Corp’s funding – if the party manages to hold onto power in the next federal election, expected in late spring. Given the Liberals’ precarious grip on power, that’s a long shot.

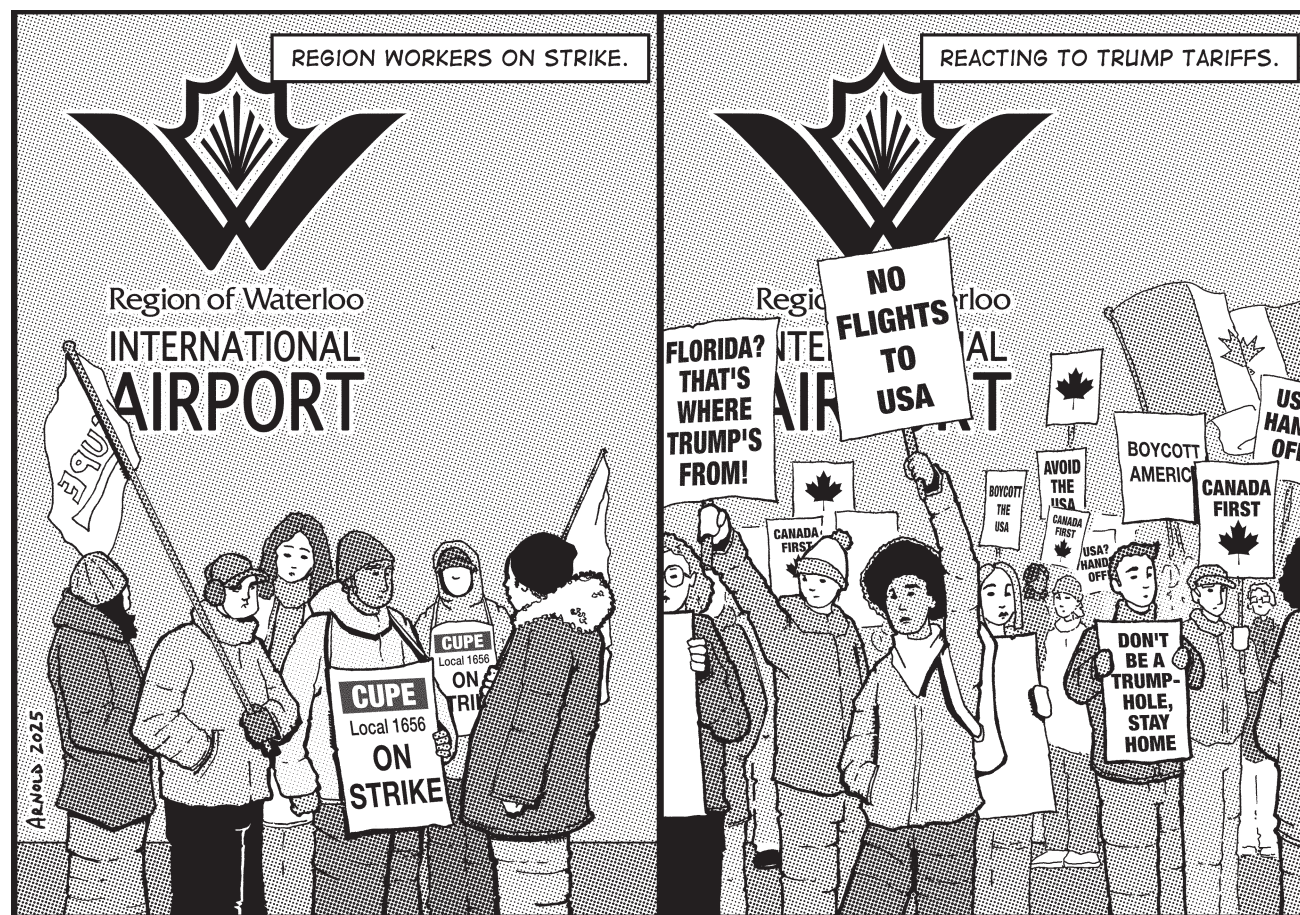
Before increasing CBC funding, any government must explore how the broadcaster can improve. Can it appeal to all Canadians, regardless of political stripe? Who are the faceless bureaucrats in Toronto making the calls? Based on what I see, some of them need to go.

Let’s put the cards on the table. The U.S. media juggernaut is so powerful that no Canadian media company stands a chance without some government support. The collapse of private news media proves the point. Don’t believe those who claim they’d do better if only the CBC were gone – advertisers just aren’t interested in super-hour news anymore.

Success shouldn’t mean getting a job in Hollywood. It should mean creating a space where great stars can thrive at home. Quebec has done it – thanks to the French language as a cultural barrier. The rest of Canada could do it, too.

But not with the CBC as it is. If it wants to regain relevance, it must understand what ordinary people are all about. Only then might it deserve the cash it so desperately seeks.

↓ Doug Firby is an award-winning editorial writer with more than four decades of experience working for newspapers, magazines and online publications in Ontario and western Canada. Previously, he served as editorial page editor at the Calgary Herald.



Thanks to Trump's tariffs, people here have a much better reason to shut down any flights to the U.S.

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Erin Kelly
Canadian Agricultural Safety Association

A black and white photograph of a young man with a beard, smiling broadly. He is wearing a dark plaid shirt over a white t-shirt. He holds a white folder or clipboard under his left arm and gives a thumbs-up with his right hand. He stands in a field of tall grass or crops. In the background, a tractor is visible, and the scene is set against a backdrop of rolling hills under a bright sky.

Erin Kelly
Canadian Agricultural Safety Association



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Safety while sharing the road – it goes both ways

WHETHER TRAVELLING BY CAR, MOTORCYCLE, or tractor, we all have a responsibility when it comes to road safety.

However, too often, there are reports of traffic incidents involving motor vehicles and farm equipment. Sadly, these many of these incidents have serious consequences for both drivers and equipment operators. According to Canadian Agricultural Injury Reporting data, traffic collisions accounted for approximately 5% of all agriculture-related fatalities from 2011 to 2020.

Here are some tips to help ensure everyone's safety while on the road:

Motorists

- Tractors and other farm equipment travel significantly slower than typical traffic, meaning a motor vehicle driving at the speed limit can close the distance on farm machinery much faster than anticipated. Always reduce your speed when approaching any farm equipment.
- Keep in mind that spring planting and

fall harvest seasons are when more agricultural equipment is travelling on public roads, especially in rural areas.

- Always keep a distance behind farm machinery, which provides a better view to determine when it's safe to pass and helps the equipment operator see you.
- Although it may be frustrating when behind a slow-moving vehicle, it's important to only pass when it's safe to do so.
- Be aware that some farm equipment is very wide and may take up more than one lane.
- Tractors and other farm vehicles often make wide left turns. If you see a tractor veer to the right, there is a good chance it is about to turn left – this is NOT a signal for motorists to pass!

Farm Equipment Operators

- Whenever possi-

ble, use side roads rather than highways due to the size and slower speeds of farm machinery. Take the time to plan your route before hitting the road.

- Ensure your equipment it outfitted with reflective materials and a slow-moving vehicle (SMV) sign that is in good condition and visible.
- Before going out on any road, check that all lights, beacons, and turn signals are clean and working properly.
- Double-check that all loads are secure and that your equipment won't leave debris on the road or send any projectiles toward motorists.
- Understand the width and height of your equipment and adjust mirrors accordingly. This will help ensure safe travel and clearance from potential obstacles like road signs, overhead wires, and bridges.

→ ROADS 12

PPE: Simply shrinking items isn't effective, says expert

→ FROM 10

PPE, and when asked to what extent their PPE hampered them at work, 85 per cent of respondents reported being significantly hampered.

To make do, many women make DIY adjustments to their PPE, even using duct tape to shorten fall-arrest gear, which can lead to other safety risks.

"Women are often trying to fix one problem with PPE but potentially causing another," explains Teague. "One of the important things to note is that if you're altering certain PPE, like a harness, then you are voiding the certification of that equipment. So, by altering that PPE, you are compromising the integrity of it."

While Teague says there are multiple reasons for the ongoing problem, one key contributing factor is many PPE manufacturers taking PPE for men and simply making it smaller, sometimes making it pink, and labelling it as PPE for women. Hence, "pink it and shrink it." However, since women are not merely scaled-down versions of men, this causes problems with fit and comfort.

Not helping matters is that, as the CSA Group

report notes, Canada collects a limited amount of anthropometric data (information on body sizes and shapes), which creates an information gap for designers and manufacturers of PPE for women.

"Many manufacturers are essentially shrinking PPE to fit women, but women have very different bodies compared to men; we have breasts, our shoulders are generally narrower, and our hips are generally wider," Teague says.

"Women want to be taken seriously and so shrinking PPE, making it pink and saying it's for women is not the answer. When you want to be taken seriously and there are already things that make it difficult, then that overlarge pink PPE is just one other hurdle. If the PPE doesn't fit right, it can affect their ability to do a task. It can be demoralizing for women."

The lack of readily available, proper fitting PPE for women will not be resolved overnight. So how can women find suitable PPE that's comfortable without being altered? Ensuring PPE is tried on with other safety equipment and apparel to make sure they fit together,

simulating tasks while trying on PPE to determine the fit, and asking other women in the same field where they purchase their PPE can all go a long way to help.

But it's also important not to overlook the value of women advocating for more PPE specifically designed to fit them.

"We all have a role to play with this, and that includes government and manufacturers. Women workers can also advocate for PPE that fits and demonstrate why and how it doesn't fit. Of course, they need a safe place to do this, so having employers that recognize the importance of this issue and support the worker is also important," Teague explains.

"PPE is the last line of defence when it comes to workplace protection so it's important that it fits well. Because if that fails, there's nothing else to protect you."

↓ The Canadian Agricultural Safety Association is a national, non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health and safety of farmers, their families and agricultural workers. CASA is funded in part by the Government of Canada under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal, provincial and territorial initiative. For more information, visit www.casa-acsa.ca.



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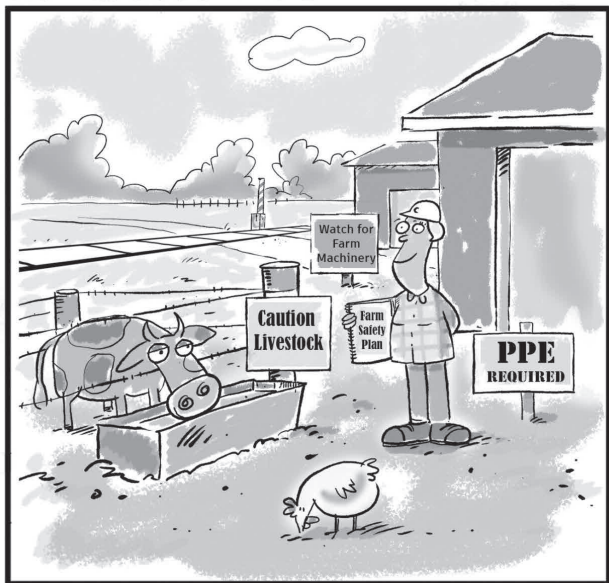
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by gord.coulthart



Safety isn't just a priority around here - it's a lifestyle

ROADS: Everyone has a role to play in making sure people get home safely

→ FROM 11

■ When transporting oversized loads or operating on high-speed roadways, it's best practice to use a pilot vehicle whenever possible. (NOTE: Some provinces have specific requirements regarding pilot vehicles, while others do not. Be sure to check your provincial highway traffic legislation to confirm requirements in your area.)

Remember: We all share the same public roads, which means we all have a role to play in making sure everyone gets home safely.

For more farm health and safety tips, please visit agsafetyweek.ca.

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TOOLKITS: Industry needs to be proactive to ensure farmers get support

→ FROM 10

"We know that farmers are experiencing poor mental health outcomes compared to the general population in Canada. We know that agriculture has unique stressors and some of those stressors are around these catastrophic events, including extreme weather events that are happening more frequently, that can really ratchet up stress on a farm and for a farm family," Hagen explains, adding that CCAW also recently launched the National Farmer Wellness Network crisis line to provide farmers with access to farm-tailored mental health support.

"There is always going to be something causing stress and challenges, so making sure we have these types of supports in place for farmers to seek appropriate care is key."

In addition to a core component that outlines how to support farmers during an agricultural crisis, a unique aspect of the toolkits is information for crisis liaisons to know more about specific farming events. The toolkits, which are geared towards groups creating emergency preparedness programs or plans,

currently highlight avian influenza, African swine fever, and porcine epidemic diarrhea. The toolkits are described as living templates that will evolve to include other agricultural threats and crises.

"The beauty of crisis liaison toolkit is that a group, whether it's a commodity group or a community group, can identify who the best-suited person for that role might be in that area or in that crisis, and this type of training could be utilized to make sure that person is ready," explains Hagen. "Who a crisis liaison depends on who might be the right person in that moment. I think that's one of the really great things about this approach because it can evolve based on who is available and what farmers need in that moment."

The background information for crisis liaisons and other individuals or groups could make a tremendous difference in supporting farmers' mental health during a crisis. As Hagen explains, for farmers to get on board with receiving support, they want the people helping them to understand the unique

traits of agriculture.

"That is something that came through in our previous research time and time again; that having someone who has a baseline knowledge of agriculture is key in order to have farm credibility and for a farmer to trust them in those moments of need. Without that knowledge, it's harder for them to be able to serve farmers."

Hagen points out that the crux of ensuring farmers get the support they need when they need it comes down to being proactive as an industry, which is why awareness about emergency preparedness, including mental health, is crucial.

"I do think that there is a strong urgency for emergency preparedness in a lot of commodity groups right now. For example, with African swine fever, we know that there is a lot of preparation for what could happen if it hits.

That is where a toolkit like this could be incorporated into an existing emergency preparedness plan and really be helpful," Hagen says.

"That's why we're working with groups to make sure the toolkits can be moulded to fit their

commodity or community, which is what is really unique and really important about these kits."

After years of research on farmers' mental well-being, Hagen says the overwhelmingly positive response to the toolkits is undoubtedly a testament to the work that has been done to build awareness around mental health and its importance in the agricultural industry. And that's a trend that Hagen hopes continues.

"What I really hope happens with these toolkits is that mental health doesn't just become an interventional thought for groups and for farmers. I really hope that by implementing plans and a crisis liaison, that we can have boots on the ground early. So that we aren't responding to a mental health crisis - we're preventing one."

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Titans extend streak to 3

March got off to a good start for the KW Titans, as they extended their winning streak to three games with a 119-109 win Saturday in London and a 113-99 victory over the Windsor Express Sunday on home court. The team is back in action Mar. 12 when they welcome the Sudbury Five to The Aud. Game time is 7 p.m.

www.kwtitans.com

GOJHL scoring race

With the Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League's regular season winding down, a pair of Sugar Kings find themselves on familiar ground atop the scoring race. Elmira's Joey Martin has 81 points (33 goals, 48 assists) in 46 games. Luke Della Croce sits in second with 74 points (38-36) in 47 games. The regular season wraps up this weekend.

Kings take two of three, prepare for last weekend of the regular season

Steve Kannon
Observer Staff

TWO OUTTA THREE AIN'T BAD, though not the ideal outcome for the Elmira Sugar Kings as they get set for the GOJHL playoffs.

Wins over Sarnia and KW, the team directly behind them, were followed by a loss to LaSalle, the team one spot ahead. The Kings remain in seventh spot with 54 points, just two points ahead of the Siskins with two games left in the regular season.

Elmira now can't catch the sixth-place LaSalle Vipers, who have clinched a playoff spot with 59 points.

There's very much a playoff feel to the games at this point in the season, said head coach Dane Horvat.

"That was the mindset. The message was 'This is

like the start of the playoffs for us, gentlemen, and you've got to step up her, bring your A game and play selfless hockey,'" he said. "They've got to find ways to help contribute to the team's success, and whether that's blocking a big shot or having a really good backcheck to prevent the goal or finishing your check, it all matters, and every little detail. This is what we've been working for towards all year long, so it was fun to see a lot of that come together, and the boys come together."

"Probably the peak of the weekend was Saturday's game. It was an eventful game – took a lot out of us, emotionally, physically, and so it was unfortunate that we kind of ran out of gas on Sunday, but the effort was there," the coach said of the busy stretch.

→ KINGS 15



Julie Schmidt, Jordan Schmidt, Lloyd Schmidt, Keenan Schmidt and Carly Longshaw at the starting line of the ConeStogo 5k and 1k races set for Saturday morning at 10 a.m. [Andrea Eymann](#)

Conestogo the scene of 5K and 1K runs on Saturday

Andrea Eymann
Observer Staff

STILL TOO EARLY FOR GOLFERS, it'll be runners out on Golf Course Road in Conestogo this weekend for the fourth annual ConeStogo 5k and 1k races.

Golf Course and Hunsberger roads will provide the route for some 175 participants expected out on Saturday morning.

"Trying to find a road that you can run on can be very difficult, but in that area, we got approval for it," explained organizer

Lloyd Schmidt of the choice of locations.

Such quiet roads make them a prime location for scheduling a run for the participants ranging in age from 2 to 82.

Schmidt, his wife Julie and their children, who organize the RunWaterloo

competitions, started the event four years ago in the village where they've lived for 23 years and raised six kids.

He notes that the Conestogo run has gradually grown since the first one.

→ CONESTOGO 14

Struggling just makes it worse

Like many fellows of my vintage, I consumed a steady diet of adventure movies about people trekking through jungles when I was younger. In almost every one of them, someone got swallowed by quicksand. Apparently, this is a routine occurrence in tropical climes, right up there with the tiger encounters, blow-gun-wielding natives, blood-thirsty leeches and

piranhas.

Quicksand is one of those things that every tropical area possesses, so putting a quicksand scene in movies like these was educational tool for budding outdoorsman like me.

Any young outdoorsman or woman observing these quicksand scenes would quickly surmise that if you stepped in quicksand, it was best to be in the



company of a friend or an intelligent, empathetic chimpanzee. Moreover, someone in the party needs to carry a rope, belt, sash on her impracticable safari dress, or have access to a long sturdy stick. And it helps to wear a hat that would float on top

and avoid villains who go "Muah,...ha...haa!" as they watch you sink.

Moreover, it's best to have a person in the party pass along the advice, "Don't struggle, it only makes it worse!"

All this prepared me for tropical quicksand encounters. But what it didn't do was prepare me for my own experience when walking my dog this morning.

Rosie was walking off-lead and decided to climb a high snowbank to answer nature's call. I'm not sure if she did this for the view or to assert dominance on those of us below.

It didn't really matter. What did matter is that I had to climb that mountain of snow with poop bag in hand to clean up after her. (OK, it wasn't for the view.)

I made my way up there

and was about to bend down to package the waste when I found myself sinking in our equivalent of quicksand – what I call quicksnow.

My immediate reaction was to look in the trees on the off chance that an intelligent, empathetic, chimp had escaped from a local zoo. But, it was not to be.

By the time this sunk in, I was knee-deep.

→ GALEA 14

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CONESTOGO: A family on the run close to home

→ FROM 13

"It's been slow. This race has been getting traction because we started post-Covid, and I think people are pretty hesitant about coming back to running groups, so every year, this event has been increasing in numbers."

For Schmidt, 63, organizing the competitions is all part of the fun, even if he means hours of setup on race day.

"It's just putting on an event for runners to enjoy," he said of the allure of planning and implementing the runs.

RunWaterloo organizes around 15 to 20 gatherings a year, with winter events being a little trickier. Given the cold, heated tents are required to keep participants warm. Then there's the snow and ice, with Schmidt having to ensure conditions are safe.

They may not get as many athletes competing in their winter races, but the ones they do need to wear light layers because they will warm up as they gallop along, said Schmidt,

who started running when he was a high school student in Preston.

"The problem with the winter running is you're cold at the start, but you're going to warm up," he explained. "If you have too much on, it can cause a problem."

That's not news to one of the 5K participants, Nate Walsh, who took up running in elementary school in Stratford. Now 32 and living in Kitchener, he signed up to hit some new goals for 2025, and this event was a good way to set a benchmark for himself.

He ran 17:47 in a 5k in Waterloo in September, so he hopes to beat his personal record.

In 2022, the time to beat was set by Jeremy Coughler with 14:30 in the overall male category.

For Walsh, racing was something he could continue in his adult life after team sports became less workable.

"It's just a really good adult activity to stay competitive and keep some fitness goals in

mind," said Walsh, noting that he started racing coming out of Covid in 2023.

"I suppose you could just run outside anytime, but being in a crowd of runners and having people cheer you on gives a little bit more motivation, and it kind of helps you run a little bit faster," he added.

He notes that jogging is a very good activity for fitness that is easy and doesn't require very much equipment.

"As long as you can get over excuses that you tell yourself and can get off the couch, it's pretty easy to do after that," said Walsh, noting that he tends to go for a jog about five times a week, with times ranging between 30 minutes to two hours.

The Cone5togo competition fires the gun at 10 a.m., starting the 5k on March 8; athletes can still register up to the day before, but registration closes on race day. More information can be found online at www.runwaterloo.com/cone5togo.

Jacks getting ready for Norwich in second round of PJHL playoffs

Julian Gavaghan

Observer Staff

WELLESLEY APPLE-JACKS HEAD COACH

DEREK Lebold has called on fans to turn up in force to watch his resurgent team "do something special" in round two of the playoffs beginning this Friday.

The Jacks travel to Norwich for the start of a seven-game series with the impressive Merchants.

But, while Wellesley may not have fared as well in the PJHL South Doherty Division's regular season as their opponents, Lebold believes his side's more recent form should give fans hope.

"We've got the offensive guys to do it. Now, we can beat anybody in this division," he said.

Lebold added: "This is a fantastic hockey club. I don't really care about what the regular season says about us. I really don't.

"This is a team that's gaining momentum at the right time and has the opportunity to do something special.

"The players are all aligned in our approach to what we need to do to have success.

"And I'm more than confident that, like I said all year, it's not just conjecture.

"I truly believe that this team has the ability to do something really special. I think it's important that the community comes out and supports them."

Having cemented his forward lines with key additions in January, pace and aggression are the key strengths that will help his team in the Doherty Division semifinal, Lebold noted.

There was evidence of both in the four-game sweep of the Dorchester Dolphins in round one, a demolition in which the Jacks scored 19 goals.

Lebold believes the

forward line of Keenan McGrath, Eric Lacey and Evan Silveira is the one that troubles opponents the most.

"We call that our pace-car line. They set the tone for the game," explained the coach.

"Their tireless work ethic really brings up our bench. Everybody gets excited when that line goes out there, and it's really fun to see."

He said four-season veteran Lacey, 21, had been "really good for us consistently over the past two months" and that the 6' 3" Heidelberg native had finally "found the right chemistry with that line, which has helped him a lot."

To that end, Keenan McGrath, 18, who arrived mid-season with his brother Langdon, 17, had been a revelation.

Wellesley's "depth line" of rookies Hudson Parker and Luke Schofield, with veteran Owen Troyer, also have the potential to devastate defences, Lebold said.

"Hudson's 17 years old, but he scored two big goals the other night in that game three, and he's really started to find his own as a competitor at this level of hockey, too," the coach explained.

He said Schofield, who is the same age and scored a hat trick in his Wellesley debut, also had a habit of "rising to the occasion."

While rookies provide notes of excitement, it has been the return of the 2023's Schmaltz Cup Final hero Connor Doerbecker who has generated the most buzz among fans.

The 20-year-old Wellesley village native complements experienced new arrival Boden White and veteran Jake L'Heureux in a line that scored eight goals in the first playoff round.

"He's got the best shot in the Doherty Division, in my opinion. But he uses it

effectively. It's a dangerous asset for him and for us as a group," said Lebold about Doerbecker.

The final forward line includes Dimitri Eleftheriadis, Stuart Sinclair and Kaelan McDougald.

But they're no slouches either and pose plenty of threat, with Eleftheriadis notably bagging the overtime winner in game four against Dorchester.

"I wouldn't call them our fourth line. We mix and match throughout the game. Actually, they've really impressed me, too," said Lebold.

"All three of them, quite frankly, have come on and scored some big goals in various points throughout the last series and during the regular season."

For a team that has had trouble with refs, it's fortunate then that they have the "best penalty killer in the league" in netminder Brandon Abbott, noted Lebold.

"We're confident of what he can do in those situations," the coach added.

Most notably, he prevented Dorchester from scoring while Wellesley had three players in the penalty box.

The team's burley defencemen, led in every respect by captain Austin Stemmler, have also helped keep the door shut when it counted - and provided goals too.

"I can't speak highly enough about the character of that young man," said Lebold, who described the Wellesley native as "the heartbeat of the team."

He is chiefly paired with Kian Harron, who was described by the coach as an offensively-inclined "beast" who "broke the camel's back with that fifth goal" in game three against Dorchester.

Wellesley next play at the Bill Gies Recreation Centre on Saturday, taking on Norwich at 7:30 p.m.

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GALEA: Sometimes it pays to monkey around

→ FROM 13

That's when a voice in my head said, "Don't struggle, it only makes it worse."

I wiggled a bit and sunk some more. This time I settled midway between my knees and belt buckle.

I looked at my dog and realized two things. One, that this might be the way that it ends. And two, ironically enough, this was one of the first time in recent memory that she wasn't

running around with a stick in her mouth.

I took comfort in the fact that I was wearing a hat, however.

I stood helplessly waiting for help before sinking over my head for good - but we live on a quiet street and it was 6 a.m.

So, I figured I might as well bag the dog droppings and leave the bag on the snow beside me as a marker for the rescue teams.

Perhaps Jenn might see it and say, "My goodness. That's our brand of dog poop bags! He can't be far."

But then, as luck would have it. I was able to lift a foot out of the quicksnow and onto a hard block of snow atop the mound. Then I begin the process of clumsily sliding down the hill, with dignity and dog poop bag in tact.

Today, I am pricing pet chimpanzees.

KINGS: Sitting in seventh, Elmira can solidify hold on that spot by taking three of the four points available this weekend

→ FROM 13

The schedule of three games in four days got rolling February 27 in Sarnia, where the Kings edged the Legionnaires 6-5.

The opening period turned out to be a seesaw battle after Elmira scored first just 47 seconds in courtesy of Joey Martin, with assists from Luke Della Croce and Alex Simioni.

Less than two minutes later, however, it was 1-1 when Jace McGrail scored for the home side. Sarnia then went ahead at 10:48 when Joshua Granowicz got one past netminder Jacob Gibbons.

Della Croce made it 2-2 at 16:36 with a power-play goal assisted by Martin and Brady Schwindt, but 12 seconds later the Legionnaires went up 3-2 thanks to Gage Brandon. That's how things would stand when the frame ended.

The second was Elmira's however. Della Croce, from Ryder Roberson and Martin, tied it at 3-3 with a goal at 1:49. The Kings went up by one thanks to goal from Isaac Lorentz at 9:06, with help from Schwindt and Brett Warri-

Della Croce completed a hat trick at 10:57, assisted by Martin and Ryan Forwell, to give Elmira a 5-3 lead. Less than two minutes later, it was Forwell's turn to score a goal that would prove to be the winner. Assists went to Liam Eveleigh and Della Croce.

Sarnia's Ty Therrien got one back at 13:13, and the period would end with the Kings up 6-4.

That set the stage for a tight third period, with Reed Straus coming in to replace Gibbons between the pipes. Sarnia got the lone goal of the frame – Jimmy Monks at 2:30 – and the Kings shut things down the rest of the way to post the 6-5 win.

Shots were 55-33 in favour of the Kings, who went 1-4 on the power play, while Sarnia was 0-2. Gibbons stopped 16 of 20 to pick up the win, with Straus stopping 12 of 13 after coming on in relief.

Back at home Saturday night, the Kings faced the KW Siskins, who had come into the weekend in eighth place, tied in points with Elmira.

"I think we were tied for points at that point in time. That game was phys-

ical. It had a little bit of everything," said Horvat. "The rink was packed. The atmosphere was just electric. I thought the guys rose to the occasion with some really big hits. There was a couple fights that were a result of some emotions kind of spilling over. It was a really fun hockey game."

The more than 1,400 people crammed into the Dan Snyder Memorial Arena for the match saw the Kings take a very early lead, as Della Croce needed just 11 seconds to get his team on the board. Assists went to Forwell and Eveleigh.

The home side went up 2-0 when Della Croce scored again at 13:55, this time with help from Simioni and Warrilow. That's how the score stood as the teams went back to their rooms for the first intermission.

The Siskins got on the board with the lone goal of the second period, with Drake Neal beating Gibbons at 11:54.

The resultant 2-1 score would stand until after the midway point of the third period, with Waterloo's Ryan Brenton getting the equalizer at 11:11.

Isaac Lorentz would prove to be the difference-maker, scoring at 16:23 to give the Kings the 3-2 lead that would be the final tally when the buzzer sounded. Assists went to Warrilow and Schwindt.

As with the Sarnia game, Elmira had a large shot advantage, this time 43-27. Gibbons stopped 25 to pick up the win. Neither side capitalized on the power play, the Kings going 0-6 and Waterloo 0-3.

After such an emotional and important game, it wasn't a big surprise that a quick turnaround for an afternoon game down Windsor found the Kings somewhat less energized for Sunday's game against the LaSalle Vipers, said Horvat. The result was a 5-3 loss.

Elmira would in fact never lead throughout 60 minutes of play.

The Vipers were on the board first, the opener coming from Bryce Belleau at 1:59. Jak Thiessen's goal at 8:56 made it 2-0 for the home team before Della Croce's league-leading 38th goal of the season, from Martin and Tanner McDonald, made it 2-1.

The Vipers, however, would get one more with

just 17 seconds left in the first to take a 3-1 lead into the intermission.

At 6:31 of the middle stanza, Julian Gignac gave LaSalle at 4-1 lead before a pair of shorthanded goals midway through the period got the Kings within one. The first came off the stick of Nate Gravelle, from Thomas Chant, at 9:56. Fifty-six seconds later, it was Jack Clarke, from Gravelle, to make it 4-3. But that was as close as things would get.

The only scoring in the third period came from LaSalle's Connor Chartrand, capping the 5-3 victory.

Elmira had a slight edge in shots, 35-34, while neither team could score with the man advantage, the Kings going 0-5 and the Vipers 0-6. Gibbons stopped 29 to take the loss.

The Kings (25-19-4) finish out the regular season this weekend, heading to St. Thomas Friday night to face the now-eliminated Stars

(12-32-3-1) before returning home Sunday afternoon to welcome the third-place Stratford Warriors (32-13-3). Game time is 2 p.m.

Horvat said the team has to be prepared to play this weekend, and certainly avoid looking past St. Thomas.

"They've been a handful for us this past year. They show up and they compete hard, they work hard. They play as a team. So we have to be ready for that. We can't let our guard down, even for a minute, because they find a way right to stick around and be involved in some good hockey, good competitive hockey games. We've got to make sure that our heads are screwed on right," he said of preparations for the season's penultimate game

"And then we're onto Sunday to finish up the regular season. We have Stratford at home – that's always a big rivalry. That'll be a good one as we finally prepare for the playoffs."

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SCAN ME



Elmira's Luke Della Croce scores his second goal of the opening period as the Sugar Kings went on to defeat the KW Siskins by a score of 3-2 Saturday night at the WMC. **Andrea Eymann**



The Kings' Nate Gravelle mixes it up with Waterloo's Devon Ferroni during Saturday's match.

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GRCA approves budget

The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) board last week approved a \$40-million budget for 2025. Participating municipalities will contribute about \$13.8 million in municipal apportionment, about 34% of the GRCA's total budget. The municipal apportionment is increasing by 3.5%.

Lower soil fees sought

Looking for a soil-receiving operation to help rehabilitate a former gravel pit at 1470 Cedar Spring Rd., XS Soil Solutions wants Woolwich to drop its fees to make the project viable. Councilors meeting this week were asked to lower fees to be more in line with other municipalities, dropping the projected cost to about \$60,000 rather than \$250,000 under current costing. A report is due back at a future meeting.

Trump's chaos hurts farmers everywhere

We know that U.S. President Donald Trump is out to hurt Canadians. That's predictable, given his disdain for our country and for our Prime Minister, along with his jealousy over our natural resources.

But his callousness and willingness to sacrifice Americans, including American farmers, is eye-opening, as he enacts his America First agenda.

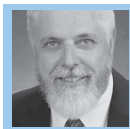
Besides the thousands of federal workers that he's kicking to the curb, he has likewise been stone cold towards farmers' concerns that his tariffs will affect them and U.S. consumers.

At press time, Trump was still considering whether he'd roll back the 25 per cent tariffs that he ordered against Canada at the start of the week.

But the damage has already been done to the economy, with the stock market dip that resulted from his tariff threat, and his blatant disregard for anyone affected, including U.S. farmers who warned him to back off.

You could expect the Canadian agricultural sector to roundly condemn the U.S. for the tariffs. Kyle Larkin, CEO of the Grain Growers of Canada, said Canadian family-run grain farms are already facing death by a thousand cuts through increased input costs, regulatory burdens and taxation.

"Uncertainty with our largest trading partner for grain and grain products, on top of ongoing instability with our second-largest trading partner, China,



OWEN ROBERTS
Food For Thought

could push many family farms to the brink," he says.

Trump couldn't care less about Canadian farmers. But as Larkin points out, Trump's also walking all over his own people.

"The U.S. relies on Canadian grain more than any other country," says Larkin. "The importation of \$17 billion worth of Canadian grain and grain products supports the U.S. in being able to meet [its] own domestic food security needs, while also supporting [its] agri-food sector in exporting products internationally for the best price possible."

He calls the 25 per cent tariff on Canadian grain and grain products "a 25 per cent tax on American consumers who purchase groceries every day."

Trump has said he was elected because Americans were angry about the high cost of groceries. His tariffs will make things worse. He doesn't care.

But U.S. farm groups do. And they're concerned about the Canadian market too, which Trump is trying to cripple.

For example, Dave Puglia, CEO of the Western Growers, which represents fresh produce farmers in California and elsewhere, says the looming threat of Trump tariffs has prompted some major Canadian grocery chains to cancel orders from American growers.

→ ROBERTS 23



Andrew Kelly last month bought the Foodland Store in Elmira.

Julian Gavaghan

New owner of Foodland store happy to land in Elmira

Having owned franchises in Brussels and Mount Forest, Andrew Kelly long had his sights set on this location

Julian Gavaghan

Observer Staff

"HOW ARE YOU DOING?" ANDREW Kelly asks a customer as the man stops to talk with him inside his Foodland store in Elmira.

The new owner, having purchased the franchise from Matt and Jamie Poirier a month ago, really enjoys moments like that. It's what he loves best about retail, he admitted.

"It's ever changing," Kelly told The Observer. "No day is the same.

And I love spending time on the floor, talking to customers and hearing how their days are going.

"Over time you see people go through so many things, like getting married, having a baby and watching those kids grow up.

"It's awesome. You build connections with new people every day.

"It's great to see regulars. I'm on a first-name basis with a few of them already."

Incredibly, despite Elmira's Foodland being

the "third and final store" he's owned, father-of-two Kelly is just 35 years old, although he's modest about this achievement and his ambition.

"Everyone's so focused on your age, but it's just a number, right?" he said during a 30-minute interview in his office, having apologized for the time limit because he had to leave a little earlier than usual in order to take one of his sons, who are aged six and nearly three, to a swimming lesson.

Kelly previously owned franchises of the same chain in Brussels and Mount Forest.

But living in Waterloo

and having friends in Elmira, the Wilfrid Laurier University graduate said the Elmira store, one of only two Foodlands in Waterloo Region, was always his dream.

"Ever since I got into this business, I knew that I was going to make a career of it. So, the goal was to own one of them. And the ultimate goal was always this one," he said.

Kelly added: "I've always liked Elmira. We may live up here at some point. But I've always had a soft spot for this store."

Aside from enjoying meeting the people of Elmira, and noting it has a

→ FOODLAND 28



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ECT holds auditions

The Elora Community Theatre is holding auditions later this month for its summer presentation of *The Secret Garden*. ECT is looking to fill 12 roles for youth (10-18 years of age), both male and female, as well as six roles for adults, ages 30-80. Auditions will be held at the group's workshop in Fergus on Mar. 22 (1-3 p.m.) and Mar. 23 (4-6 p.m.).

www.eloracommunitytheatre.org

Coming to the Princess

Amidst the chaos and destruction of the brutal Russian invasion of Ukraine, three artists work to defend their culture and their country. *Porcelain War* tells the story of the artists who chose to stay behind, armed with their art, their cameras and, for the first time in their lives, their guns. At the Princess original cinema Mar. 15, 16 and 20.

www.princesscinemas.com

Lucy MacNeil in KW for Folk Night concert

A member of the iconic Barra MacNeils, she's touring in support of her first solo album, *Angels Whisper*

Andrea Eymann

Observer Staff

A CAPE BRETON CELTIC MUSICIAN is embarking on a Canadian tour in support of her first solo album, including a stop in Kitchener on Saturday at the Registry Theatre.

Lucy MacNeil and her quartet are appearing as part of the Folk Night at the Registry series.

MacNeil, 56, has been performing with her siblings in The Barra MacNeils for 37 years. Now she is venturing off on her own following the release last year of her album, *Angels Whisper*.

"I'll be singing and playing, and it'll be more about me," MacNeil said about what her upcoming show will feature.

It will be different for her, "and sometimes not the most comfortable because when you're used to being a unit and off doing your own thing – you feel a little naked," she explained.

That said, during a tour in the Maritimes – her first concert series without all her siblings, Sheumas, Kyle, Stewart, Ryan and Boyd – she found that once she started singing, she felt very comfortable.

There's also the familiarity of the instruments that

she'll take on stage with her, the bodhrán, Celtic harp and fiddle. The latter came to her already named Harley – after Harley Davidson motorcycles, as it was thought to be as loud.

On stage, MacNeil will be joined by her band: her husband, Rob Durando, playing guitar and low whistle; her youngest brother, Boyd MacNeil, on the fiddle and the Ackland mandolin; and her long-time friend Lisa MacArthur on fiddle and vocals.

When she and Durando married in 2017, they produced a six-track to give to their wedding guests.

When the pandemic rolled around in 2020, they found themselves with more time on their hands and they started playing melodies at home. She started posting these home-recording sessions of her making tunes on her personal Facebook page, which she noticed many people enjoyed. This was the first spark that made her decide to venture off alone after almost four decades in the music industry.

When she recorded her first solo album, she got to make all the decisions, and "I kind of liked it," she said.

MacNeil took some of the songs from the wedding EP and those posted online



Lucy MacNeil takes to the stage at The Registry Theatre on Saturday night. [Submitted](#)

and recorded them in Coxheath, Nova Scotia.

MacNeil dedicated the record to her mother, Jean, who had dementia at the time of recording it, and she died in January 2023 before her daughter's collection of songs came out in June 2024.

"She was really enjoying it; my mother was a musi-

cian herself," the fiddler noted.

She said her mother didn't perform professionally, but she played piano, fiddle and guitar, as she had a very good ear.

MacNeil captured a snippet of her mother singing to be added to the end of the record.

Even though her mom

never took lessons, she put her six children into lessons, and then they got to learn how to read music, but the mother taught them how to play by ear.

"It was the best of both worlds," said MacNeil, who started playing the fiddle at the age of eight.

Angels Whisper went on to be nominated for

2025 Canadian Folk Music Awards for Traditional Album, Traditional Singer and Emerging Artist of the Year, with winners to be announced in April.

What she likes most about the fiddle is that it can make people happy quickly but can also become very moving.

"When I was younger, I loved slow airs, I liked learning slow airs, and I liked Irish tunes – those are the things that I was drawn to," she said of the traditional Irish music marked by the absence of strict metre or structure that drew her to the stringed instrument.

With the new album, MacNeil says her favourite song is the namesake, *Angels Whisper*, based on a poem by Samuel Lover first published in 1835.

"It's very delicate, and I like how it turned out," MacNeil said, adding she didn't release it as a single but just in the album.

"It's a very visual story, and I enjoyed it," she noted, explaining it's about an angel looking after the fisherman who goes out to sea in a raging storm, as a mother is at home with a baby.

Lucy MacNeil will be at the Registry Theatre at 122 Frederick St. in Kitchener on March 8 at 8 p.m. You can find tickets online at www.lucymacneil.com/show or folknighlive.ca.

Wings draw 'em in to Linwood fundraiser

Julian Gavaghan

Observer Staff

MORE THAN 500 PEOPLE SHOWED up to the latest Linwood wings night and enjoyed eating 600 pounds of chicken as the community event marked its eighth year.

Organizer Shelley Brenner said the huge crowd was a testament to its success and noted that some food lovers come from as far away as Toronto to taste the "fresh and never frozen" wings.

Blaine Hergott, another founder of the four-times-a-year event, which has now raised more than \$50,000 for charity, said

the harsh winter had also encouraged large numbers of snowmobilers to attend the most recent event on February 21.

However, the main reason for success was the \$15-per-pound, special-recipe chicken wings they sell, he noted.

"I think if we sold spaghetti, we probably wouldn't get nearly as many people," added Hergott.

He said he never expected the night would be so popular when he helped launch the night with his brother-in-law, Brad Brenner.

Brenner's wife and Hergott's sister Shelley

said the evening took a lot of preparation.

"We prepared the wings the night before. We get them fresh and we flour them ourselves and then we have to cook them halfway.

"We deep fry them again to completely cook them on the night."

In addition they freshly cook fries and sell portions for \$3 at the events which are held monthly between November and February as a way to cheer people up during the winter.

The Linwood organizers have raised funds for a range of charities while also helping struggling families and individuals in their own community.



Nancy Hunter, Kara Lumgair, Trish Dunn, Tyler Gerber, Sarah Moser and Brianna Bowman prepare wings in the kitchen of Linwood Community Centre on Feb. 21. [Julian Gavaghan](#)



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CONTINUES
ON PAGE 19

↓ FAMILY ALBUM CONTINUES ON PAGE 19

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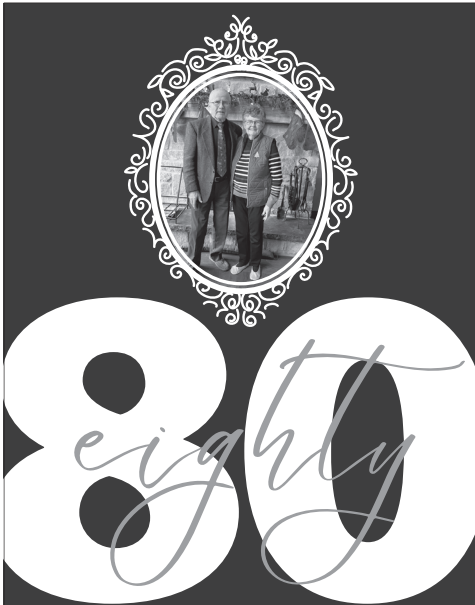
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Birthday



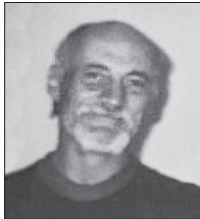
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Obituary



Ray, Terry Joseph

Passed away peacefully at Barnswallow Place, Elmira on Tuesday, March 4, 2025 at the age of 68 years. Father of Phillip. Brother of Gloria Orr, Doug (2015), Gary (Elaine), Darlene (Charlie) Koebel. Special uncle of many nieces, nephews and their families. Predeceased by his parents John and Virginia (Ertel) Ray. Terry was a man of many talents. He worked in a tire factory, steel factory, and also for Ontario Culvert. His heart and passion above all was the family farm where he loved spending time with his cattle, working the land and enjoying time spent with nature. A special thank you to the nursing staff at Barnswallow Place in the Pheasant Run wing, for their compassionate care of Terry during his stay. The family will receive their relatives and friends at the Dreisinger Funeral Home, 62 Arthur St. S., Elmira on Saturday, March 8, 2025 from 11 a.m. until the time of service at 12 p.m. in the funeral home chapel. Spring interment in St. Joseph's R.C. Cemetery, Macton. As expressions of sympathy, donations to St. Mary's Hospital Foundation would be appreciated and may be made through the funeral home.

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↓ FAMILY ALBUM

CONTINUES ON PAGE 23

In Memoriam



STEPHANIE ELISE KOEBEL
APRIL 10, 1986 – MARCH 7, 2023

Oh our beautiful girl, our hearts ache with constant sadness since we lost you so suddenly 2 years ago.

We truly understand your pain and heartbreak and the numbness that you felt after losing your beloved Zachary, your beautiful boy, we all feel it too and forever will.

We reminisce about your red lipstick, your endless purchases of shoes, and clothes.....your 'forgetting to cancel your 'hello fresh meals, your always forgetting to get gas, always running late, being a nighthawk, loving your naps during the day, forgetting always where you put your purse, your wallet, leaving empty boxes in the cupboard, leaving candy wrappers on the counter, We miss all that.....every day.

We talk forever about how amazingly kind and generous you were..... Always finding the perfect gifts and cards, always making the best desserts for all of our gatherings, how patient you were with your residents at work, how musically talented you were with your beautiful singing voice, playing the piano and your gift of writing and your heartfelt poetry. You were such a wonderful nurse and truly such an amazing mom, daughter, sister, auntie, partner and friend.

We miss your big booming voice, your smile, your beautiful eyes. We miss your phone calls, your text messages, your 'nurse' advice, your stories, going to plays and movies and dinners and walks with the dogs. We miss you at every table we are at, we miss you everywhere...always.

We hope and pray each day that you are with Zachary, holding your sweet angel boy, singing in the angel choir, dancing in the sky, twirling and spinning and snuggling.

We know that your dad is with you both, keeping you both safe in his arms until we meet again and can hold you ourselves and never let go.

We love you our sweet angel girl, always have, forever will. See you in our dreams. oxoxox

Mom, Mike, Shannon, Brad, Brooklyn and Hudson, your furbabies, Dexter and Delilah

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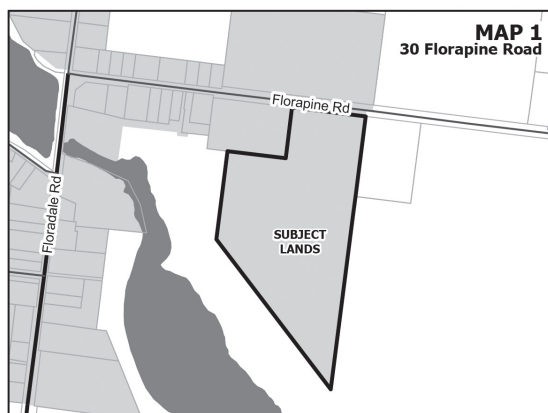
NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Regarding
Zone Change Application 2025-02
Floradale Parkview Non-Profit Manors Inc.
– 30 Florapine Road, Floradale

Please note this will be a hybrid meeting where you may attend virtually via a zoom meeting link or you may attend in person at the Township offices. Review the information below on how you can submit comments, view or participate in the meeting.

Take Notice that in accordance with the Planning Act, R.S.O., 1990, c.P.13, as amended, the Township of Woolwich has received a complete application for a proposed zoning amendment for lands owned by Floradale Parkview Non-Profit manors Inc. (see Map 1) more specifically described below. Please be advised that Notice of a Complete Application does not indicate whether the municipality is in support of, or in opposition to the proposal. That determination will be made at a later date.



The Township of Woolwich will hold a Public Meeting, under Section 34 of the Planning Act, to consider the following Zone Change application. No decisions will be made at this meeting; its purpose is to provide additional information to the public and agencies and to receive comments and information from them.

RBA Planning Consultants Ltd. on behalf of Floradale Parkview Non-Profit Manors Inc. has submitted a Zoning By-law Application for the property at 30 Florapine Road, Floradale. The 6.73 hectare (16.63 acre) property is irregularly shaped and currently contains a retirement residence with 41 units and 2 detached parking garages for 8 and 6 parking spaces, multiple sheds, a play structure and gardening opportunities. The property includes 2 dry stormwater management facilities, multiple parking areas, a large open area at the front of the property and a large open area at the rear of the property, where a portion is regulated by the Grand River Conservation Authority.

The property is designated within the Township Official Plan as Urban within the Settlement Area Boundary of Floradale and is zoned Residential R-1 with site-specific regulations in Section 16.145.

The applicant is proposing an additional 20 residential units in the form of 10 semi-detached dwellings. The dwellings would be primarily located between the exiting retirement residents and Florapine Road along lanes to access the dwellings. It is proposed that the existing and proposed units will be serviced with a communal water and sanitary treatment system that would expand upon the existing system.

To facilitate the additional 20 units, the applicant is proposing to amend the site specific regulations to include the provision of the additional dwellings. At this time, no requests are being made to modify the setback, parking or other zoning provisions.

The applicant has submitted the following studies in support of this application:

- Concept Plan (Concept Site Plan)
- Planning Justification Report
- Ministry of Environment – Environmental Compliance Application
- Ministry of Environment – Environmental Compliance Approval
- Municipal Responsibility Agreement regarding the sewage disposal system
- Climate Change Mitigation Measures
- Drinking Water System Engineering Evaluation Report
- Geotechnical Investigation
- Stormwater Management Report
- Groundwater and Surface Water Impact Assessment
- Sewage System Design Brief Application for ECA
- Water System Upgrades Report

MORE INFORMATION

Should you require a copy of this Notice in an alternative text please contact our office.

Additional information as noted above can be viewed by contacting Planning staff to **schedule an appointment** to view the documents at the Township Administration building located at 24 Church Street West, Elmira weekdays between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm. To schedule an appointment please call 519-669-6040 or email planning@woolwich.ca

APPEAL RIGHTS: TAKE NOTICE that if a specified person or public body (as defined in the Planning Act), or the registered owner of land to which the by-law would apply, would otherwise have an ability to appeal the decision of the Council of the Township of Woolwich to the Ontario Land Tribunal but the specified person, public body, or registered owner does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to the Township of Woolwich before the by-law is passed the specified person, public body, or registered owner is not entitled to appeal the decision. In other words, if an eligible specified person, public body, or landowner does not make an oral or written submission to Council before the by-law is passed, then they are ineligible to appeal the decision.

AND TAKE NOTICE that if a person or public body does not make oral submissions at the public meeting or make written submissions to the Township of Woolwich before the by-law is passed, the person or public body may not be added as a party to the hearing of an appeal before the Ontario Land Tribunal unless, in the opinion of the Tribunal, there are reasonable grounds to do so.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

You can view or participate in the Public Meeting as follows:

View the Public Meeting / Council meeting livestream on the Woolwich Township YouTube channel at the following link [@woolwichtownship9588](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwoolwichtownship9588);

Participate in the Public Meeting by registering with Council/Committee Facilitator on or before **1:00 pm on Wednesday March 26, 2025**.

To register please:

- visit www.woolwich.ca/learn-about/council/council-meetings for more information on Attending a Council Meeting in person, speaking before Council and to register through the online delegation request form; or
- email councilmeetings@woolwich.ca or phone 519-669-6004.

When registering you must provide your name, phone number, email and the application number you would like to comment on. Once you are registered staff will forward information on how to connect to the Zoom meeting (i.e. zoom Wi-Fi login or conference call number).

If you are concerned that you do not have access to phone or internet or are otherwise concerned about the reliability of your signal, please ensure that you submit written comments. Written comments do not negate your opportunity to also speak at the Public Meeting but do ensure your voice is heard should your electronic connection to the meeting not work.

If you are unsure whether or not you would like to speak at the meeting but want to listen and have the option to comment on a particular application, please register with the Council/Committee Facilitator. You will not be required to speak if you do not want to.

WHY REGISTER

By registering staff are aware who is attending the meeting in person and for those connecting from elsewhere can ensure that you are permitted access to the virtual meeting, we know which application you are commenting on and, can call on you at the appropriate time to comment if you wish to do so.

SUBMITTING COMMENTS AND REQUESTING NOTIFICATION

You can express your concerns/ comments about the proposed changes in writing to the Township of Woolwich. Any comments received on or before **Wednesday March 19, 2025** (Note that this date is before the public meeting) will be included in a report prepared by Development Services and presented at the Public Meeting. Any comments received after the Public Meeting, but prior to Council making a decision on the applications, will be considered.

Notice continued to next page



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Notice continued from previous page

The personal information accompanying your submission is being collected under the authority of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and may form part of the public record which may be released to the public. This information is collected and maintained for the purpose of creating a record that is available to the general public at the Committee of the Whole and Council meetings. Please note that while the Committee of the Whole and Council may redact some personal information such as email addresses and phone numbers, your submissions will otherwise be made public in their entirety. Questions about this collection should be directed to the Records and Freedom of Information Officer at 519-669-1647 or 1-877-969-0094 ext. 6005.

If you wish to be notified of future meetings and reports regarding this application or the decision of the proposed amendments, please:

- submit a written request, noting that you wish to be kept informed, to the Township of Woolwich, Development Services, 24 Church Street West, Box 158, Elmira, Ontario N3B 2Z6, or
- email your request noting that you wish to be kept informed to planning@woolwich.ca

If Council approves the change, a notice will be mailed to you explaining the By-law.
Dated at the Township of Woolwich this 6th day of March, 2025.

COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT NOTICE OF HEARING MONDAY March 24, 2025, at 4:30 P.M.

Pursuant to the Planning Act and Ontario Regulations 197/96 and 200/96 take notice that the Committee of Adjustment for the Township of Woolwich will meet for the purpose of hearing all persons interested in support of or opposition to the following application as described below.

Committee of Adjustment meetings are held virtually via Zoom where public attendance can be arranged with staff, if required. Below is information on how you can view or participate in the meeting as well as how to submit comments. Please contact the Committee Secretary by email to planning@woolwich.ca or by phone at 519-669-6040 if you have any questions.

MINOR VARIANCE APPLICATION A4/2025 – Trevor Nissen and Jacyln Van Der Kraak
PROPERTY: 55 Pintail Drive, Elmira, Plan58M27 Lot 19
ZONE / USE: Residential R2A with Site Specific provisions in Section 16.141/ single detached dwelling and detached accessory shed
PROPOSAL: The applicant is requesting relief from the site specific provisions in Section 16.141 a) to reduce the required rear yard setback from 15 metres to approximately 1 metre to permit the construction of a 45 square metre detached accessory building. The existing 9 square metre shed is proposed to be removed.

MINOR VARIANCE APPLICATION A5/2025 – James and Dana Costello
PROPERTY: 20 Mill Street, Elmira, Plan 559 Part Lot 90, RP58R20856 Parts 3 and 4
ZONE / USE: Residential R5 / single detached dwelling and detached accessory building
PROPOSAL: The applicant is proposing to increase the maximum allowable detached accessory building area to approximately 69 square metres whereas 64 square metres, being 10% of the lot area is permitted. The applicant is proposing the construction of a new 69 square metre detached accessory building. The existing 56 square metre detached accessory building is proposed to be removed.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

As in-person meetings are not an option at this time, you can view or participate in the meeting as follows:

- view the Committee of Adjustment livestream on the Woolwich Township YouTube channel at the following link [@woolwichtownship9588](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwoolwichtownship9588) OR
- participate by registering with the Committee Secretary on or before 12 noon on Wednesday March 19th. To register please email planning@woolwich.ca or phone 519-669-6040. When registering you must provide your name, phone number, email and the application number you would like to comment on. Once you are registered the Committee Secretary will forward information on how to connect to the Zoom meeting (i.e. zoom Wi-Fi login or conference call number).

If you are unsure whether or not you would like to speak at the meeting but want to listen and have the option to comment on a particular application, please register with the Committee Secretary (see above information). You will not be required to speak if you do not want to.

WHY REGISTER

By registering staff can ensure that you are permitted access to the virtual meeting, we know which application you are commenting on and, can call on you at the appropriate time to comment if you wish to do so. As it is virtual, registering will provide a level of security that is necessary to prevent unwanted guests from disrupting the meeting. Applicants and their consultants will be automatically registered and contacted accordingly by the Committee Secretary ahead of the meeting.

SUBMITTING COMMENTS

If you would like to comment on a particular application, staff always recommend that you do so by:

- submitting a letter by mail or delivering it to the Township office at 24 Church Street West, Elmira and placing it in the drop box on the Maple Street side of the building; or
- submit an email to planning@woolwich.ca

You can also contact the Township Planner at 519-669-6033 to discuss any comments / concerns however, this is not considered a formal comment.

The Committee will consider submissions for or against the applications. All submissions must be made no later than 4:30 p.m. on Thursday March 13, 2025 (Note that this date is before the meeting). Any submissions received will be included in a comment package and presented at the meeting. This information is collected and maintained for the purpose of creating a record that is available to the general public at the Committee of Adjustment hearing. Please note that while the Committee may redact some personal information such as email addresses and phone numbers, your submissions will otherwise be made public in their entirety.

This notice has been sent to commenting agencies, and to owners of property located within 60 metres (200 feet) of the subject properties. If you wish to be notified of any last minute changes to the agenda (i.e. withdrawal of an application) you must contact the Committee Secretary at 519-669-6040 or 1-877-969-0094 (Ext. 6040) or by email to planning@woolwich.ca.

Notice of Decision: Within 10 days of the meeting, a copy of each decision will be sent to owners, agents, those who submit written comments, and people who register for the meeting. If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Committee of Adjustment in respect to this application, you must submit a written request to the Committee Secretary or register ahead of the meeting. This will also entitle you to be advised of a possible Ontario Land Tribunal appeal.

Appeal of Minor Variance and Consent Applications: There is a 20-day appeal period before a decision becomes final and binding. In accordance with Section 45(12) of the *Planning Act and Bill 23 – More Homes Built Faster Act* **only** the applicant, the municipality, certain public bodies or specified person (as defined in the *Planning Act*) and the Minister, that have an interest in the matter have the right to appeal a decision to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

QUESTIONS / FURTHER INFORMATION

Please feel free to reach out to Township Staff by phone or email to assist you should you have any questions. Contact the Committee Secretary at 519-669-6040 or 1-877-969-0094 (Ext. 6040) or by email to planning@woolwich.ca

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

Obituary

Weber, Aden
October 10, 1924 - March 2, 2025

Aden passed away peacefully into the presence of his Lord, at Derbecker's Heritage House LTC, St. Jacobs, at the age of 100 years. Beloved husband of Martha (Burkhart) Weber (2020). Cherished father of Don (Marg), Mary Martin, Stewart, Joyce (Ernst) Gaessler, Maynard (Lorraine), David (Marilyn), and Linda (David) Gee. Loved by 15 grandchildren, 37 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild. Visitation will take place on Friday, March 28, 2025 from 2-4 and 6-8 p.m. at the Dreisinger Funeral Home, 62 Arthur St. S., Elmira. Interment will be held at 12 p.m. on Saturday, March 29, 2025 in St. Jacobs Mennonite Cemetery, 2035 Three Bridges Road, St. Jacobs. A memorial service will be held at 1:30 p.m. at Emmanuel Evangelical Missionary Church, 2 First Street, Elmira, with a reception to follow in the fellowship hall. As expressions of sympathy, donations to Seeds International, would be appreciated and may be made through the funeral home. A full notice will be published at a later date.

www.dreisingerfuneralhome.com

Obituary

Shantz, Martha

Martha passed away peacefully at St. Mary's Hospital with her family present on Monday, March 3, 2025 at the age of 91 years. Beloved wife of Urias for 70 years. Loving mother of Paul (Marlene), Delphine (Paul) Martin, Dale (Rosanne), Daryl (Arlene), Ray (Doris), Miriam (Grant) Martin. Will be missed by 41 grandchildren and 75 great-grandchildren. Survived by sister Erma (Harvey) Gingrich, sisters-in-law Almeda Shantz, Anne Shantz, Edith Shantz, and Annie Gingrich. Predeceased by her parents Mannasse and Lydia Ann Weber, sister-in-law Nancy (Walter) Martin, brothers-in-law Melvin (Alice) Shantz, Noah Shantz, Orvie Shantz, Aden Shantz, and Abner Gingrich. Visitation will be held on Friday, March 7, 2025 from 1-4 and 6-8 p.m. at the Dreisinger Funeral Home, 62 Arthur St. S., Elmira. Private family service will take place in the funeral home chapel at 8:45 a.m. on Saturday, March 8, 2025 then to Goshen Mennonite Meeting House for burial and public service. As expressions of sympathy donations to Christian Aid Ministries would be appreciated and may be made through the funeral home. A heartfelt thank you to the staff in the CCU at St. Mary's Hospital for their kind and compassionate care.

www.dreisingerfuneralhome.com

Obituary

**Brubacher, Edith (Joan)**
August 21, 1935 - February 27, 2025

Passed away on Thursday, February 27, 2025 at St. Mary's Hospital surrounded by the love of her family. Beloved wife of the late, Edward Yeoman (1957-1971) and Cleason Brubacher (1973-2002).

Loving mother of, Lori Voisin (the late Jerome "Butch" Voisin 2024) and Debbie Yeoman. Cherished grandmother to Jenna (Jeff) Durrer, Scott Voisin, Blake (Danika) Voisin, Amanda Smit, Vanessa (Chris) Dietrich, and Phil (Jessica) Smit. Adoring great grandmother (Gigi) to Max, Nate, Reid, Kensie, Zachary, Emma, Conor, Ethan and Charlie.

Joan will be dearly missed by her sisters, Lois Watters (the late Ross Watters 2016) and Barb (Al) Seymour. Survived by many nieces and nephews and fondly remembered by extended family and friends.

Joan adored her grandchildren and great-grandchildren and loved spending quality time with them over the years. Many fond and fun filled memories are deeply cherished while gathering at the trailer at Fisherman's Cove or later at her cottage in Southampton. Joan was an avid sports fan all her life and could be seen on many occasions in the stands cheering on and supporting her family. She will be profoundly missed by all.

Cremation has taken place. A private interment will be held at a later date at Hillview Cemetery, Woodstock, ON. Funeral arrangements entrusted to the Henry Walser Funeral Home, 507 Frederick Street, Kitchener. 519-749-8467.

The family is grateful for the caring and expert staff at Barnswallow Care Community and to St. Mary's hospital for their guidance and compassion.

As expressions of sympathy, donations to Grand River Hospital Foundation would be appreciated by the family (cards available at the Funeral Home).

Visit www.henrywalsers.com for Joan's memorial.

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Obituary

**Beal, Monica Anne (nee Raftis)**

On Monday, February 24, 2025, Monica passed away peacefully with her loving family by her side, after a prolonged illness.

Monica was the beloved wife of Jason (Jay as she affectionately called him) of over 23 years. She was an amazing and devoted mother to Matthew and Emma. Loving daughter of Ron Raftis and wonderful sister to Kevin Raftis. Monica is predeceased by her loving mother, Susan (Haggstrom) Raftis.

Monica will be greatly missed by Father-in-law, Gord Beal, Mother-in-law, Helen Beal, Brother-in-law, Jarrett Beal, Sister-in-laws, Lori Raftis and Julie Beal, nephew, Patrick and nieces, Lilly, Sarah and Laura.

Monica was born on August 18, 1973 to Ron and Susan Raftis, in Hamilton, Ontario. Her parents stressed the importance of family and promoted involvement in athletics and clubs as she was growing up. Monica's three lifelong friends (Lee-Ann, Kim and Teresa) from high school have been there for her throughout every step of life's journey. Monica's post secondary education included an undergrad degree from the University of Guelph and a diploma from Sir Sandford Fleming college in Lindsay, where Monica and Jay first met. Upon graduating, her career took her to Alabama for several years working as a software trainer, travelling the world including such places as Europe, the Middle East and South Africa. During their time in Alabama Monica and Jay had many adventures and immersed themselves in the southern culture and lifestyle. She and Jay were married in 2001 and had their first born, Matthew a couple of years later. Upon returning to Ontario, Monica and Jay moved to the Kitchener area where Emma was born. They eventually settled in the nearby town of Maryhill to raise their family. Monica's interests included travel, camping, walks/athletics, gardening, reading, homeopathy, glass bead window crafting, volunteering at the kids' schools and helping to coach her kids' sports teams.

We will remember Monica as a strong, loving, thoughtful and kind person, who was as down-to-earth as they come. We feel so fortunate to have had her in our lives, and we take comfort in the fact that she's been reunited with her mom.

We would like to thank the staff at the University of Alabama at Birmingham hospital, University Hospital and Health Sciences Centre in London, Guelph General hospital, Grand River Hospital and St. Joseph's Medical Centre for the exceptional care they always provided to Monica over the years. We would also like to thank all of the nurses and PSWs that helped to care for Monica as well as the palliative nurses and doctors that ensured Monica's comfort and dignity.

In addition, we will be forever grateful to our family and friends who have surrounded us with love and support throughout this journey. Every gesture no matter how big or small was felt and appreciated more than you know.

Monica's family will receive relatives and friends from 2-5 on Sunday March 9, 2025 at the Wall-Custance Funeral Home and Chapel, 206 Norfolk Street, Guelph, ON.

A service and celebration of Monica's life will be held in Maryhill with date/time to be announced.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Brain Tumour Society of Canada can be made in Monica's name.

Thank you for the best years of my life. I feel so fortunate to have been your husband. Your strength inspired me every day. You are my everything and my forever and I look forward to being with you again. Lots of love always.

ROBERTS: Combatting Trump

→ FROM 16

Others are requiring American growers to secure a foreign-product supply to supplant their U.S.-grown crops.

"Our first and by far most urgent call is for the Trump Administration to move quickly to negotiate a stand-down with these important trading partners," Puglia says.

For financial reasons, Trump may acquiesce in the short term. But he'll be back. The pushback by Ontario Premier Doug Ford and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has absolutely been the right approach to slow him down, and must continue.

OFA: Tips for farm employers and young workers alike

→ FROM 7

or have a child who wants to work on a farm this summer," said Skyanda.

"The family can watch this webinar and have a better sense of the questions they should be asking the employer, the things they should be looking out for, how to identify hazards and anything else they should know."

These webinars are important because they show all the parts that go into an internal responsibility system, noted Skyanda.

"Both the employers are responsible for identifying and rectifying hazards in the workplace, but the employee is also expected to identify and report hazards, and it is all a part of the big picture, so that's why we decided to put these webinars on."

↓ PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

GRATEFUL

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More speed cameras
Expanding its controversial speed-camera program, Waterloo Region this week rolled out seven new locations for ticketing, including in front of Wellesley Public School on Queen's Bush Road and St. Clement Catholic Elementary School on Lobsinger Line.

A case of measles
The Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health this week confirmed a local case of measles. In addition, an individual from outside the region with a confirmed case of measles attended an event in Guelph in February. Measles spreads easily through the air from person to person when an infected person talks, coughs or sneezes, the agency warns.

Doing the math on your chances to roll up & win

UW professor working on the probabilities as Tim Hortons reintroduces paper cups after shifting to online-only format

Andrea Eymann
Observer Staff

ALL GAMES COME WITH A mathematical probability of winning, and the ubiquitous Roll Up To Win contest at Tim Hortons is no exception.

A University of Waterloo mathematics professor who discovered a strategy in 2020 that led him a 98-per-cent success rate when the contest went digital during the pandemic says the return to paper cups this year puts a bit of a wrench in the gears.

Michael Wallace said the contest, which started last week and runs to March 23, got a bit more complicated as something of a hybrid.

The physical cups give players a one-in-six chance to win, and nothing can be done to boost your odds – it's just a matter of luck, he told The Observer.

However, the company still has the digital game, "and that's where things are less clear," the math professor said.

"Tim's has changed the prize assignment rules, and it seems they are trying to even out the offerings distribution to align with when people are playing."

Different rewards are available, from the easier-to-find free coffee and donut to less likely prizes such as Samsung TVs or Cineplex gift cards offering 75 free movies for a year, which can be a cup-exclusive or app-exclusive giveaway.

Along with the physical cups, Tim's customers can use their app to then get two digital attempts, or one app and paper cup chance with an eligible hot beverage.

However, players would receive one digital roll for an eligible menu item that is not a hot beverage.



University of Waterloo mathematics Prof. Matthew Wallace working on the probability of finding a prize in the revamped Tim Hortons' Roll Up to Win contest. **Submitted**

Additionally, you can increase your chance of getting three app attempts if you purchase a Tim Hortons home product.

As Wallace pointed out, finding an advantage will likely be more difficult this year.

"If you play at night time when fewer people are playing, there will also be fewer prizes available," he discovered, as he will be doing some experiments

to see if any probabilities can be boosted in the digital version of the game.

He wants to see if the app will give a better chance than the one-in-six odds with the reincarnated cups.

"My hunch is that the digital app could still offer better odds than the cups, but I won't know for sure until later in the contest after I've run my experiments," he said.

When the contest first went digital at the height of the pandemic, switching how the game was once played, Wallace decided to read the rules very carefully as he formed some theories.

Even though he didn't do any testing that first year, he saved up his 96 rolls, leading him to win 67 coffees and 27 donuts when he entered them all around 5 a.m.

"This combined two of my theories from the rules: that prizes would build up over time and that playing in the middle of the night would boost your odds," he said.

The advantage during this time, before the coffee chain changed its rules, was that when a reward was unused, it would be re-randomized to a future day in the contest.

→ ON A ROLL 27

Myths about minority organ donation

DEAR MAYO CLINIC: A co-worker was diagnosed with kidney disease last year. He is now on dialysis three times a week as he waits for a kidney transplant. He shared his hope to get a living donor, explaining that he will have a longer wait since there are not as many diverse people signed up as organ donors. Can you explain why this is and what can I do to help?



ANSWER: Higher rates of heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes are present in minority communities, contributing to more kidney failure. Though organs are not matched based on race and ethnicity, certain criteria, including blood

type and specific antibodies, must be matched to find a compatible organ. People from various ethnic groups will have a better outcome with a donor organ from someone of a similar background.

Only about 30% of donor organs are from people of colour, so diverse organs are less available.

So, unfortunately, your colleague is correct in that he would likely have

a longer wait time for a transplant if waiting on a deceased donor. Finding a living kidney donor is often a faster route to transplant.

Kidney donation is the most common type of living-donor transplant. Donors give one of their two healthy kidneys to the recipient. People only need one kidney to live a healthy, active life.

However, there is a

long-standing distrust of the healthcare community in certain minority groups, and many myths have been propagated about the process around organ donation, which has resulted in people being less likely to become organ donors.

Some of the common things I hear from patients include:

Myth: If I agree to donate my organs upon

death, the hospital staff won't work as hard to save my life.

Fact: People who are organ donors will be cared for if they are in the hospital as any other person. When you go to the hospital for treatment, the healthcare team will focus on providing care for you to save your life until your injury or condition is determined

→ MAYO CLINIC 27



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This recipe makes perfect guacamole every time

To make a smooth guacamole without relying on the coarse surface of a molcajete, a three-legged Mexican mortar made of volcanic rock, we minced the onion and chile by hand with kosher salt; the coarse crystals broke down the aromatics, releasing their juices and flavors and transforming them into a paste that was easy to combine with the avocado and other ingredients. (The salt will also help

America's Test Kitchen Rigorously tested recipes that work.

the aromatics break down in a regular mortar and pestle.) A bit of lime zest added further brightness without acidity. We used a whisk to mix and mash the avocado into the paste, creating a creamy but still chunky dip. Chopped tomato and cilantro added fruity flavor and freshness.

Classic Guacamole

- 2 tablespoons finely chopped onion
 - 1 serrano chile, stemmed, seeded, and minced
 - 1 teaspoon Kosher salt
 - 1/4 teaspoon grated lime zest plus 1 1/2-2
1. Place onion, serrano, 1 teaspoon salt, and lime zest on cutting board and chop until very finely minced. Transfer onion mixture to medium bowl and stir in 1 1/2 table-
spoons lime juice.
2. Add avocados and, using sturdy whisk,

- tablespoons juice
- 3 ripe avocados, halved, pitted, and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
 - 1 plum tomato, cored, seeded, and cut into 1/8-inch dice
 - 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- mash and stir mixture until well combined with some 1/4- to 1/2-inch chunks of avocado remaining.
3. Stir in tomato and cilantro. Season with salt and up to additional 1 1/2 teaspoons lime juice to taste. Serve.

For 25 years, confident cooks in the know have relied on America's Test Kitchen for rigorously tested recipes developed by professional test cooks and vetted by 60,000 at-home recipe testers. See more online at www.americastestkitchen.com

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FRIDAY, MARCH 7

Community World Day of Prayer Service at St. James Lutheran Church, 60 Arthur St. S., Elmira, at 2 p.m. (note time change from previous years.) This year's program features the Cook Islands. Hope Fellowship will provide refreshments following the service. For more information, contact Marie 519-502-7623.

Knights of Columbus Fish Fry at St. Teresa of Avila Parish Hall, 19 Flamingo Drive, Elmira. There will be continuous seating from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Take-out will be 4:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Purchase tickets by calling 519-669-3387 (Tuesday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) or by calling Rick Weishar at 519-577-5928. Cost is: Adults \$20, Children (6 to 12) \$12, Children (5 & under) free.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12

Senior's Community Dining at Wellesley Recreation Complex. Community Care Concepts invites you to join us at noon for lunch and fellowship. Cost: \$14. Please call to register by March 7 by calling 519-664-1900.

THURSDAY, MARCH 13

Senior's Community Dining at Breslau Community Centre. Community Care Concepts invites you to join us at noon for lunch and fellowship. Cost: \$14. Please call to register by March 7 by calling 519-664-1900.

Evergreen Seniors' Fellowship at Woodside Church, Elmira, at 10:30 a.m. The Special Feature is "Sharing the Good News by Radio" by Galcom Ministries. Devotional and special music by Bob Heywood on accordion. Registration is required by March 9 at woodsidechurch.ca/evergreen or 519-669-1296. \$10 donation at the door includes a hot lunch at noon.

SATURDAY, MARCH 15

Elmira Legion Roast Beef Dinner. Legion Ladies Auxiliary dinner and fabulous desserts. 7 p.m. Menu includes roast beef, mashed potato, seasonal vegetable, coleslaw, and our dessert table. \$20/adult, \$10/10 and under. Tickets in advance are available at the Legion, 11 First St. E., Elmira.

MONDAY, MARCH 17

Woolwich Gardeners March Speaker presents Ben Caesar (Fiddlehead Nursery, Kimberley) "Plants for Edible Landscapes" at St. James Lutheran Church, 60 Arthur St. S., Elmira (Wyatt St. entrance) from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Woolwich Gardeners members free; free-will donation for non-members. Open to the public. Bring your own mug for refreshments and treats.

TUESDAY, MARCH 18

Gale Presbyterian Church Tuesday Luncheon. Menu: Pork roast, mashed potatoes with gravy, salad, vegetable, homemade bread and chocolate cake. \$12/person. Pay by cheque or e-transfer (bookkeeper@galepresbyterian.com), or cash at the door. Order by email: richard.mcfadden@galepresbyterian.com, or by phone 519-669-2852 opt. 3. Due to the popularity of our lunches, I suggest you order as quickly as possible. The deadline is Friday, March 14 at noon. Meals will be offered on a first-come, first-serve basis. We have been selling out to capacity before the closing date.

The Community Events Calendar is reserved for non-profit local events that are offered free to the public. Placement is not guaranteed. Registrations, corporate events, open houses and similar events do not qualify for free advertising. See complete policy online. All submissions are to be made online at observerextra.com/event-listing/

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healthywoolwich.org



Word of the Week

DOFF

To doff a hat or other piece of
clothing is to take it off

Mini - Word

1	2	3	4		
5					
6				7	8
		9			
10					

ACROSS

- On fire
- Booty
- Temporary suspension
- Dwarf buffalo
- Crunchy vegetable

DOWN

- Completely
- ___ constrictor
- Devoted
- Answer
- On behalf of
- A fairy

Sudoku EASY

9	8					1		
5		6	8	2				
3			4			5		
			2			6	9	
	4	5	3	9			8	1
6				7	1			
					2			4
		2	9	5	3			7
	3			4				

Sudoku HARD

	8			1				
1	9						4	8
					9			
	2	5	6	7				4
8			4			2		
		7			9			
			7	9		4	5	1
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Find - A - Word

THEME: DAYLIGHT SAVINGS

J	S	H	O	R	T	E	R	N	I	G	H	T	S	J	E
E	E	S	P	R	I	N	G	F	O	R	W	A	R	D	N
T	C	M	L	M	I	N	U	T	E	Z	U	U	T	T	E
L	O	N	G	E	R	D	A	Y	S	X	O	E	F	I	R
A	N	S	C	H	E	D	U	L	E	H	S	Z	E	M	G
G	D	E	B	S	C	P	E	V	E	N	I	N	G	E	Y
A	L	A	R	M	T	A	D	J	U	S	T	M	E	N	T
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M	O	R	N	I	N	G	F	S	U	N	R	I	S	E	B

ADJUSTMENT

- ALARM
- CLOCK
- ENERGY
- EVENING

FALL BACK

- HOUR
- JET LAG
- LONGER DAYS
- MINUTE

MORNING

- SCHEDULE
- SECOND
- SHORTER NIGHTS
- SLEEP

SPRING FORWARD

- SUNRISE
- SUNSET
- TIME

Crossword

ACROSS

- Having the worst smell
- Middle Eastern herbal drug
- Land nearly surrounded by water
- Specialized market segment
- Released from a reel
- Fruit flavoring compound
- Banned pesticide
- Small diving duck
- Perfume ingredient
- Computer account holder
- Breakfast strip varieties
- One who owes money
- Green leaf below petals
- Jamaican citrus fruits
- Ancient Greek citadel
- Clock face
- Prison slang for time served
- Former VP AI
- Worthy of respect
- Protest technique (2wrds)
- Add more fuel (2wrds)
- Stand against
- Refugee's sanctuary

- German thinker Immanuel
- Hidden information
- Yellow vehicles
- Emeril's exclamation
- Sandwich cookies
- Safe haven for ships
- Red wine grape
- Microorganisms living without oxygen

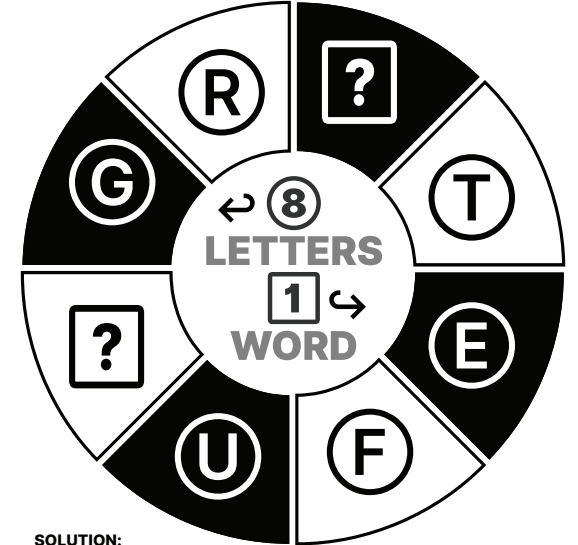
- Appears to be
- Office drawer money (2wrds)

DOWN

- Idaho's pride
- Look after
- Educational establishment Abbr.
- Small drink

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13	14
15										16				
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54							55							

8 Letters 1 Word



SOLUTION:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Figure out the mystery letters to complete this eight-letter word reading clockwise or counterclockwise.

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MAYO CLINIC: Debunking some common myths

→ FROM 24

to be nonrecoverable. A transplant team will not become involved before your condition is deemed as unsurvivable.

Myth: People who donate organs or tissues can't have an open-casket funeral.

Fact: Donors' bodies are treated with care and respect. And they're dressed for burial. No one can see that they donated organs or tissues.

Myth: I'm too old to donate. Nobody would want my organs.

Fact: There's no defined cutoff age for donating organs. The decision to use your organs is based on strict medical criteria, not age. Don't prematurely disqualify yourself. Let the doctors decide at the time of your death whether your organs and tissues are suitable for transplantation.

Myth: My family will be charged if I donate my organs after death.

Fact: The organ donor's family never pays for their donation. The donor family pays for all the medical care once you are determined to be a possible donor. Sometimes, families think those costs

are for organ donation. But the person who gets the organs for transplant pays the costs for removing the organs.

Myth: Becoming a living donor is a lengthy and costly process.

Fact: Anyone interested in becoming a living donor will have to undergo online screening and an in-depth physical and psychological evaluation process to ensure they are a good candidate for donation. The recipient's insurance always covers the cost. However, there are some programs available to compensate potential donors for time lost from work or school or to help with travel or dependent care expenses. Once a donor is approved, the time frame is up to the donor, recipient and the respective care teams.

Myth: Being a living donor will shorten my lifespan.

Fact: Most healthy people can live with only one kidney. We expect a person to live a full and normal life following their donation. At Mayo Clinic, we have living donors who have gone on to do incredible athletic feats, including climbing Kilimanjaro,

running marathons and having children.

Myth: As a living donor, I must be on medication for the rest of my life.

Fact: Living donors do not have any long-term medication requirements after donation.

Myth: I can only be a living donor if I'm a match for someone.

Fact: Even if someone wants to be a donor for a relative or friend but is found to be incompatible, they can still donate as part of a paired kidney donation chain. This process allows two or more donors to be matched with appropriate recipients in an exchange.

You can help your colleague by sharing information about organ donation and encouraging others — particularly those with diverse backgrounds — to consider becoming donors. It truly is a gift of life. Go to the Donate Life America website to learn more about signing up to be an organ donor.

↓ Mayo Clinic Q & A is an educational resource and doesn't replace regular medical care. E-mail a question to MayoClinicQ&A@mayo.edu. For more information, visit www.mayoclinic.org.



UW Prof. Matthew Wallace, whose go-to Tim Hortons order is an extra-large steeped tea with two milks, has tested several math probability theories to beat the odds in the coffee chain's Roll Up to Win promotional contest. **Submitted**

ON A ROLL: More research needed to determine the odds

→ FROM 24

"This meant that it was just as likely a prize could be re-randomized to the last day of the contest," Wallace noted.

He added: "This created a 'cascade' effect, where prizes would build up towards the end of the contest."

However, the next time the game was out, Tim's tweaked their rules, Wallace figures his strategy to only play in the early morning and save all his rolls would still work.

Yet, he didn't win at all, sparking the light bulb that he had to change his strategy.

In 2022, he was experimenting with different times of the day and week.

It wasn't until 2023 that he got a big change when the multinational Canadian coffeehouse started publishing the number of rewards that were won on the app.

"I tracked these data and used them to build a model of what times people were playing," he said, discovering the best and worst times to enter when the fewest or most people were engaged in the contest.

"This ended up being about 3:15 a.m. as the best time and 11:45 a.m. as the

worst," he noted.

In 2023, he finally got a bit of a winning streak back, as he won 50 per cent, including coffee and donuts at the best time of the day.

But he also discovered playing close to noon was the worst, with just 10 per cent of the time scoring a win.

This season of the game, as the rules were tweaked once again with the cups brought back, Wallace noted he would continue to experiment with different times of the day but, more importantly, different days of the week.

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Conservative

FOODLAND: He's focused on value-added service

→ FROM 16

proud history that includes its annual maple syrup festival, the Foodland franchise owner believes the town offers a great business opportunity for him.

"There's huge potential here – this is a growing community," he said.

In particular, Kelly hopes to grow the hot food offerings at the store, based on his customers' needs.

"There's a lot of young families, and as a parent with a young family myself, I understand that time is of the essence," he explained.

"You could price out going to McDonald's and feeding your family with four combos, or come here and get yourself some wedges, barbecue chicken and some salad.

"And, all of a sudden, that's cheaper than going to McDonald's, and it's better quality food too, so that's one thing we can leverage."

Quality is vital to Kelly. And buying local ingredients as much as possible too.

While standing near a bushel of apples near the doorway, he notes that he



Andrew Kelly at his new store in Elmira. **Julian Gavaghan**

has enjoyed attending the Elmira Produce Auction and buying fruit like that.

Kelly says he understands the growing budget constraints many families have but believes Foodland can compete on value, if not always price.

"Every dollar doesn't go as far as it used to, so you've got to show customers value," he explained.

"We aren't the cheapest guy on the block, but our offering is different. We're not Food Basics, you know.

"When I was in Mount Forest, we were right across the road from No Frills, and I used to say 'They are no frills and I'm all the frills.'

"So, if you want your meat cut in-house and you want Canadian triple-A, high-quality beef, this is where you come.

"If you want to order a cake and have a custom cake made for you, this is where you come.

"You want fresh baked bread that's baked in store or cooked meals that are ready to go, or specific sliced quantities of deli meat, this is where you go.

"You can't get that at Food Basics. We offer the services that you don't get at a discount store.

"Of course, that costs more as more employees are required to do it."

That, he says, is a big part of why he loves Foodland, which is part of the Sobey's-owned Empire Company. But there are other reasons too.

"I love the fact that we own them. It's not just corporate. We have ownership in it," Kelly explained.

"I really take pride in what we do. It's a Canadian-owned parent company. We have to fully support as many local suppliers as we can.

"A lot of these suppliers I've worked with in various capacities for many, many years.

"So I just love that emphasis that the Foodland brand specifically puts on supporting our local suppliers."

DYER: Europe takes a new tack on Russian threat

→ FROM 09

a pro-Moscow U.S. administration, they will have to figure out how to extend those modest British and French nuclear forces to protect all the NATO countries of Europe. Astonishingly, they seem ready to give it a try.

"We have a shield and [the non-nuclear NATO countries] don't," said French President Emmanuel Macron on Saturday, "and they can no longer depend on the American nuclear deterrent. We need a strategic dialogue with those who don't have it,"

Macron told Le Parisien newspaper on Saturday.

Germany's Friedrich Merz agrees, and Macron adds that he is ready to build an "autonomous European (nuclear) defence independent of NATO," although he reckons that it will take five to ten years to complete.

This is a momentous event: an entire continent is taking its leave from an alliance that has lasted for eight decades, although its ghost may be around for some time. Trump and his acolytes may be gone in four years (or not, as

the case may be), but it's very unlikely that Humpty Dumpty can be put back together again.

The war in Ukraine will continue, at least for a while, because Putin wants to keep all the territory he has conquered and probably some more besides. There will be no cease fire or NATO 'peacekeepers' in Ukraine; the Russians think they are on a winning streak. And although nobody loved the old world order, we'll miss it now that it's gone.

It was at least orderly. The next phase won't be.

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