

Shores of Erie International Wine Festival trial underway

By Jonathan Martin

As of Thursday, the trial into the death of Emily Bernauer has begun.

Numbered company 1681541 Ontario Inc., known as the Shores of Erie International Wine Festival, is facing two charges. The first alleges it failed to inspect the ID of a person who appears to be under the age of 19. The second alleges it allowed a person under 19 years of age to consume alcohol.

Shores of Erie pleaded not guilty to both charges.

Then-18-year-old Bernauer, who was volunteering for Sobeys at the 2014 festival, was killed in a single-vehicle collision after leaving the event. Toxicology reports show she had alcohol and marijuana in her system at the time of the crash.

The Ontario Court of Provincial Offenses heard from four witnesses who said they volunteered with Bernauer at the festival just before she died, a volunteer who worked for the festival, a festival director and an officer who responded to the scene of the crash.

According to Ann-Marie Carosella, who said she spent the day with Bernauer, the volunteers had made an agreement with one another around a week before the event.

"If we had even one drink, (we said) we'd get a ride home," Carosella told the court.

The witnesses' testimonies revealed that the afternoon of the Wine Fest, a few of the volunteers met up in the Sobeys parking lot and walked over to the festival grounds together.

The witnesses agreed that once they arrived they walked through a "vendors' gate," handed passes to the gate's attendants and received a stamp on the inside of their forearms identifying them as vendors.

Festival director Kelly O'Rourke said vendors didn't need to be checked for ID as they entered the park because it was expected that they "weren't there to drink."

Witnesses said they arrived on the grounds at around 2 p.m., which was when Carosella and Bernauer's shift

was set to begin.

Carosella said the two headed over to Sobeys' tent, but were told business was slow, so they could spend a while exploring the festival.

Witnesses said Carosella and Bernauer met back up with the other women and the group headed over to a booth that sold tokens, which could then be exchanged for alcohol.

Robyn Sampson, who was one of the women with whom Carosella and Bernauer met, said she was around 15 feet away when Bernauer bought a token. Abby VandenBrink, who said she was around 10 feet away, agreed. Carosella said she experienced the same thing.

The witnesses stated that none of them were asked to show ID. VandenBrink said she offered, but was told, "Oh, I don't need that."

"I thought it was weird," said Carosella. "I'm young and I get ID'd everywhere."

All the women, except for Bernauer, were in their early 20s at the time.

Carosella, Sampson and VandenBrink said they and Bernauer continued walking around the festival and exchanged their tokens for "wine slushies" and "wine spritzers" without being asked to show identification.

When they returned to the Sobeys tent and got to work, the women said they brought their drinks along with them.

They agreed that at some point, though none could identify when, "several" bottles of wine were placed in the cooler meant to chill the food they were vending. Though none could remember by whom, they agreed they were told the wine was meant for them and, in turn, drank it.

Later on in the night, the women said Sobeys owner Renato Rota brought wristbands used to identify a person as over 19 into the Sobeys tent. Witnesses said he placed them on a table.

The women, except for Carosella, said they remember Rota saying, "If you're 19, take one."

Carosella remembers Rota asking, "You're all 19, right?"

Festival director Kelly O'Rourke told the court that vendors should not have been able to access batches of wristbands in the way Rota did.

The women said they took the wristbands.

In a crash-scene photo shown in court, Sgt. Matthew Capel-Cure, who responded to Bernauer's fatal accident, identified a "green and white" wristband on her arm matching the description of the wristbands distributed that night.

At this time, no verdict has been rendered. More witnesses are set to appear in court as the trial continues in January.

Charges against wine fest volunteers withdrawn

Charge expected against corporation

By Jonathan Martin

Five of the Shores of Erie Wine Festival volunteers who had charges laid against them have seen those charges withdrawn.

Anne Rota, Don Deslippe, Karen Gyorgy, Paul Mersch and Joanne DiPierdomenico were being charged with two separate counts related to permitting underage drinking.

Both charges have been lifted from all five prior to plea.

It is expected that the numbered company 1681541 Ontario Inc., the North American Industry Classification System Code for Shores of Erie International Wine Festival,

will be charged in their stead.

The case will resume at the court of provincial offences Sept. 21 according to Alexandra Cardella, who acted as an agent of the volunteers' attorney Monday

Eighteen-year-old Emily Bernauer was killed in a car accident after working at the wine fest last year.

Renato Rota was Bernauer's employer and was managing the Sobey's booth where she was working that night. He is still being charged with one count of permitting a person who appears to be under the age of 19 to have liquor. His matter is expected to be addressed in court again Aug. 24.

Resident's confrontation with police goes viral

By Jonathan Martin

while on a highway.

Two Facebook videos showing an Amherstburg resident confronting a police officer have gone viral.

In the comment section of his video, Rebidoux wrote that he plans to fight the ticket.

Kenn Rebidoux posted the videos May 19 alleging the off-duty officer, who identifies himself and presents his badge number in the footage, made an unsuccessful attempt to merge in front of Rebidoux on Highway 20, then proceeded to tail-gate him home.

In the videos, the officer neither confirms nor denies any of the allegations and Amherstburg police refused to comment on the situation since Rebidoux's ticket is before the courts.

Rebidoux claims to have tapped his brakes, which prompted the officer to pull up beside him and display his badge once they entered a residential area. Rebidoux says he motioned for the officer to pull over and began to record the incident on his cell phone. Rebidoux exited his vehicle, approached the officer's and the confrontation began.

Later on in the day, Rebidoux recorded the officer approaching his home to present him with a court summons for "stunting," which can be defined in this context as breaking unnecessarily

Wednesday, July 18, 2018

Alhambra boating day



Aaron Rupert enjoys the sunshine and waves on the Detroit River last Saturday. Alhambra Garcia Caravan #230 teamed with Park Haven Marina on a boating day for people with intellectual disabilities. For more, please turn to Page 6.

RTT PHOTO BY JONATHAN MARTIN

Alhambra teams with area marina on special boating day

By Jonathan Martin

Local people with intellectual disabilities got a break from the heat this past Saturday.

Alhambra Garcia Caravan #230 and LaSalle's Park Haven Marina joined forces with local first responders to offer up boat rides on the Detroit River.

Marina members took passengers for short outings on the water, where the Canadian Coast Guard sprayed them down with massive hoses. When they got back on dry land, attendees could take part in a barbecue, dance party, or simply hangout and be social.

Richard Prieur, who founded the chapter with his brother, said the tradition began to satiate the need for social activities felt when Boblo Island Amusement Park closed down in 1993.

Since then, members of Park Haven Marina have donated their time, boats and nautical skill to bring the community Alhambra serves out onto the water.

"It's a big deal," Alhambra grand commander Therese Barichello said. "They're using their own gas, their own equipment to put on this event. It's incredibly generous."

Russell Mino doesn't see it that way, though. He spent the day taking people out on his 32-foot 1972 Pacemaker.

"I do this for myself," he said. "You can't describe the feeling you get from this."

Mino and his wife have been taking part in the event for between 10 and 12 years. He said every year, he comes away feeling better than the year before.

Ashley Sutton and Tortia Wysymski brought five people with them that Community Living Essex County supports onto Mino's craft.

"Being out on a boat is really stimulating for people with autism or intellectual disabilities," Sutton said. "All of them had smiles on their faces while they



Dylan Sabi and Ashley Sutton relax on a couch in a leisure vessel they took for a ride last Saturday.

were out on the boat."

Wysymski said CLEC has been coming to the event for around a decade and she's been attending for just as long.

"Another major benefit of this event is the opportunity it affords (the people supported) to interact with the larger community," she said.

Barichello said the community keeps growing. She said every year, Alhambra sees more people come out to take part in the event. This year, she estimates that the boat and barbecue day drew more than 200 attendees.

Alhambra's membership numbers, though, are dwindling. Barichello said that as the group's base ages, more and more members are dropping out of active participation.

"We would really like to have some new members," she said.

The International Order of Alhambra is an organization of Catholic men and women that assists people who are intellectually disabled or physically handicapped.

Barichello said her branch meets for one hour per month for nine months out of the year.

The boat and picnic day will return next summer.

Alhambra Garcia Caravan #230 is based out of McGregor.

For more information on Alhambra Garcia Caravan #230, visit www.facebook.com/garcia230. People can also call 519-919-6462 or 519-726-6494.

More information on the Alhambra organization can also be found at www.orderalhambra.org.



Crowds crave "Car Crazy"

RTT PHOTO BY
JONATHAN MARTIN

Doug Bardeau examines the interior of a car at the 2018 Amherstburg Gone Car Crazy Show. Bardeau traveled down from London, Ontario to spend the day at the festival.
By Jonathan Martin

The 13th annual Amherstburg's Gone Car Crazy Show (AGCC) has revved up a record number of autophiles.

An estimated 700 cars, old, new, big and small lined Amherstburg's streets last Sunday while throngs of automotive enthusiasts crowded around them for a look at the details.

The event featured live music, food, drinks, games and contests in addition to the rumbling main attractions.

The day's success was bitter-sweet for AGCC organizer Eleanor Renaud, though.

After 13 years, she's stepping down as coordinator. "Our first show had 125 cars," she said. "We were so thrilled. And every year after that it's grown. I think that's what I'm most proud of."

Renaud said that with around 700 cars rolling in this year, 2018 marks the most successful AGCC show yet.

She added that she's not worried about next year in the least.

"This event is a well-oiled machine," she said. "There's not going to be much for my successor to figure out, unless they want to add to it. Of course, I'll be there to guide them along the way as well."

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Final year for Renaud as car show organizing committee chair



A 1936 Chevy Standard, owned by Rob Downie, drove away with the Paulie Award for best in show at the Amherstburg's Gone Car Crazy show. Mayor Aldo DiCarlo makes the official presentation.



Throngs of patrons buzz around the more than 700 cars that showed up for the 13th annual Amherstburg's Gone Car Crazy Show.

One of the highlights was the award ceremony. Renaud announced the winners and Mayor Aldo DiCarlo handed out plaques and trophies.

Favourite Cruiser: 1947 Cadillac Suite owned by Lenn Rule

Favourite Mopar: 1970 Dodge Challenger owned by Kirk Perry

Favourite Interior: 1932 Buick Vicky owned by Gale and Ken Reader

Best Original: 1969 Camaro Z28 owned by Joe Cappelino

Long-Distance Award (traveled 303km): Bob Ward

Sweet 70s: 1970 Plymouth Duster 340 owned by Larry Limpki

Sexy 60s: 1963 Corvette Split-Window owned by George Fedex

Favourite GM: 1969 Chevy Camaro owned by Lunzio Santafora

Favourite Ford: 1961 Ford Starliner owned by Russ Hazael

Favourite Engine: 1965 Oldsmobile 442 owned by Glen and Ellen Ross

Favourite Pickup: 1954 Ford Pickup owned by Peter Dyck

Nifty 50s: 1956 Ford Thunderbird owned by Harry Hutch

Favourite Corvette: 1970 Corvette owned by Brad Laporte

Coollest Ragtop: 1957 Chevy Bel Air Convertible owned by Sean Dennis

Mayor's Choice: Fairlane 500 owned by Richard and Carol Martin

Participants' Choice: 1955 Chevy Handyman Wagon owned by Mark Gilbot

Paulie Award: 1936 Chevy Standard owned by Rob Downie

50/50 Draw Winner (\$1,609): Pauline Bates

Continued from Page 1

Renaud said the reason she's decided to step down is that 13 years was enough for her.

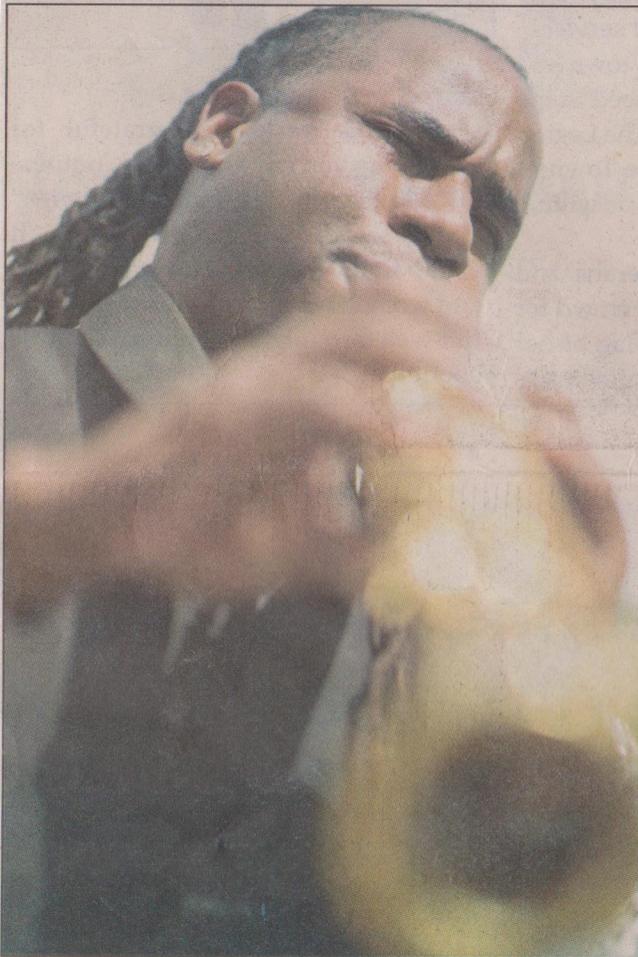
"I'm tired," she said. "It's time for me to move onto something else."

It seems that Renaud will be leaving behind quite a mark.

Richard Mallat has been bringing his vehicles to various car shows for years. He said that, in his mind, none of them compare to Amherstburg's.

"You go to some shows and it's in a parking lot," he said. "Here, you get the atmosphere and the trees and the volunteers are just fantastic."

Wednesday, June 6, 2018



(Top left) Yancy, a member of Detroit-based jazz band Straight Ahead, puts some soul into his music at the Amherstburg Freedom Museum's annual Ribs and Ragtime garden party. The event was held last Saturday at the museum. (Top right) Jazz vocalist Kymberli Wright blasts out a high note at the Amherstburg Freedom Museum's 2018 edition of its annual Ribs and Ragtime garden party.



Ribs & Ragtime rocks Freedom Museum

By Jonathan Martin

The Amherstburg Freedom Museum's (AFM) ninth annual Ribs and Ragtime garden party got more than 170 people out to enjoy history, food and tunes.

The evening featured a performance by Detroit jazz group Straight Ahead, a rib and chicken dinner and tearful birthday song for the mother of AFM board chairman Monty Logan.

The event spilled out into a blocked-off King St.,

where passersby paused to listen to Straight Ahead's syncopated rhythms.

AFM curator and administrator Mary-Katherine Whelan described Amherstburg's role in the development of the music the group was playing.

"Jazz music's commercial beginnings, with a greater Canadian relevance, took place in approximately 1917 with Amherstburg's own Shelton Brooks," she said.

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Amherstburg Freedom Museum's "Ribs & Ragtime" a hit

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Brooks, who was born in Amherstburg in 1886, wrote the massively popular "Darktown Strutters' Ball," which would go on to be recorded by the Original Dixieland Jass Band in 1917. The band is credited with making the first ever jazz recordings only a few months prior to taking on Brooks' work.

"Brooks moved into Detroit as a teen, where many of history's greatest jazz hits were developed and where Straight Ahead is from," Whelan said. Straight Ahead received a warm reception, according to AFM board president Monty Logan, which bodes well for AFM's upcoming programming.

"Events like this make up almost 80 per cent of our fund raising," he said in a speech given just prior to Straight Ahead's performance. "Events like this allow us to continue to tell the stories of (the African-Canadian) legacy."

Logan went on to take a "liberty" with his speech. He wished his mother, sitting at a table just in front of the stage, a happy 70th birthday. Event volunteers brought out a birthday cake while Straight Ahead played a "ragtimey rendition" of 'Happy Birthday' and the woman covered her eyes to hide her tearful smile.

According to Logan, 2018 was another successful year for the garden party and he looks forward to doing it again next year.

replaced them with new ones. "That's something we started a couple

Councillor Diane Touger attended the event and shook her head at the state of the flagpoles.

active service members in the crowd for their service and planted a flag of her own on a few of the cemetery's

and women who left our town knowing full-well they might not return. Today is about that."



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Villanova raises big bucks in the fight against cancer... pg. 23

“Torpedo-shaped” device leads to Legion evacuation

By Jonathan Martin

Amherstburg police ordered staff and patrons of Legion Branch 157 to clear the premises Wednesday after what appeared to be a World War Two era ordnance was found in the electrical room.

Branch president Dennis Purdie said he received a call from colleague John Copland, who had been doing some routine cleaning.

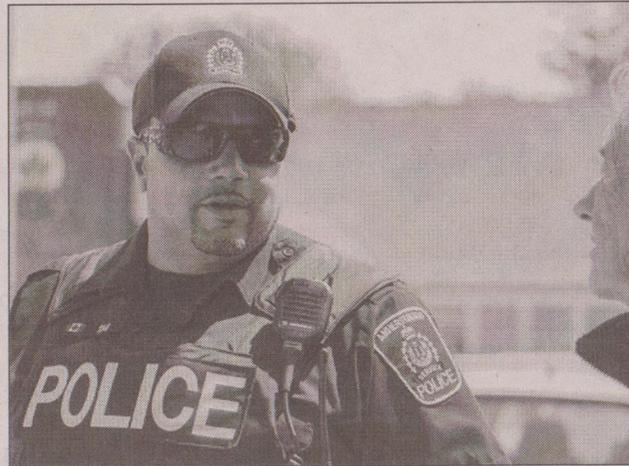
“He found something shaped like a little torpedo,” Purdie said. “It was about a foot and a half tall and was heavy.”

Copland said neither he nor Purdie know enough about explosives to have been able to properly identify the object. After some discussion, they decided the best course of action was to call the police and let them take over.

“I thought to myself, ‘Somebody must have been ticked off that we raised the price of beer,’” joked Copland.

Purdie said when he called the police he was told to evacuate the building. Before long, police had the perimeter taped off, closed the streets and had notified neighbouring businesses.

Senior Constable Shawn McCurdy said police contacted the Canadian Armed Forces for help identify-



Senior Const. Shawn McCurdy speaks with Legion Branch 157 president Dennis Purdie outside the building as officers deal with a potential explosive found in its electrical room last Wednesday.

RTT PHOTO BY JONATHAN MARTIN

ing the object and began looking into how it ended up in the Legion. As they did, groups of onlookers started gathering around the police tape.

Finally, they made some headway.

“We got information from the person who donated

it to the Legion,” McCurdy said. “It has been disarmed.”

Through electronic communication, the armed forces were able to determine that the object was harmless. Later on in the day, McCurdy posted on the Amherstburg Police Service’s official Facebook page.

“It was determined that the ordnance was a deactivated World War Two aircraft modular practice bomb,” he wrote. “This bomb was used by the air force for practicing dropping bombs. The ordnance would leave a smoke trail as it fell to the ground to determine the accuracy of the drop.”

Amherstburg police officers retrieved the bomb from the electrical room and took it away. The Legion has since returned to business as usual, though Purdie jokingly said he would look into having something made to commemorate the “Bomb Scare of 2015.”

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Author's "Kickstarter" campaign successful, new book coming in August

By Jonathan Martin

An Amherstburg author has successfully funded his soon-to-be self-published novel with days left on his Kickstarter campaign.

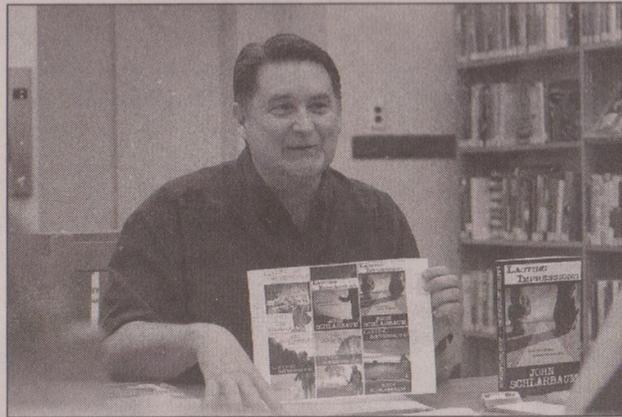
John Schlarbaum has been writing novels for over 25 years, which, he said, is actually when his latest work, "Lasting Impressions," took form. This is the first time Schlarbaum has used Kickstarter as a method of funding his work and the campaign has recently surpassed his \$4,000 goal. He said the funds will go toward covering both the promotional and publication cost. Now, with six self-published novels under his belt, Schlarbaum feels he has the skills he needs to do his thriller, "Lasting Impressions," justice.

In his twenties, Schlarbaum began delving into the literary genre of magic realism. Horror-thriller novelists Clive Barker and Stephen King were both major inspirations.

"I was working in television at the time," he said, "and the show (I was working on) was on hiatus for a few months. I had no other project to work on, so I started thinking 'Well, maybe I could write my own book.'"

Schlarbaum grew up in West Lorne, Ontario. At the time he was writing the original manuscript for "Lasting Impressions," he said its population was around 1,000. He decided his hometown was the perfect setting for what was in his head. He tried to imagine how he and his community would react if an enigmatic but beguiling stranger swept into their lives. From that thought, protagonist Dale Hawks was born. Schlarbaum wrote on-and-off, but never really saw himself getting the book done. Eventually, he spoke to fellow novelist Arthur Hailey while working on a television program. Hailey's novel "Runway Zero-Eight" was the basis for the 1980 film "Airplane!"

"He said to me, 'The difference between an amateur writer and a professional is that at the end of a certain period of time the professional has a finished manuscript.'" Schlarbaum said. "That was really the kick I needed. When I got home, I really buckled down."



John Schlarbaum speaks to his readers about his newest book, "Lasting Impressions," at the Amherstburg Public Library last Thursday.

Once the manuscript was complete, Schlarbaum took his novel to the Oakville Public Library, where he asked that it be made available to the public for a week at a time. In the back of the book, he included questionnaires so readers could provide him with feedback.

"I think the idea of getting a book in the hands of avid readers and then receiving their honest thoughts back in one week was ahead of its time," Schlarbaum said. "It was a new concept that was met with a great deal of enthusiasm. Finally, these book lovers could make their opinions known to the author immediately."

Based on what his readers told him, Schlarbaum cut, edited and tweaked his story into what he feels is a better-rounded, more concise novel.

"Most of the stuff I took out was background story," he said. "When I was working in television I was thinking very visually. 'Oh, we have to meet this person. Oh, we have to meet that person.' What ended up happening was that the reader was introduced to nine different characters in nine chapters."

On top of that, Schlarbaum said he gave every character he introduced a detailed background story. He said much of the feedback he received surrounded what a confusing read the manuscript proved to be. So, he took out the unnecessary exposition and reworked the narrative to focus more closely on his

main character.

From there he moved on to write his other novels, which range from mystery series to a standalone romance novel. Until today, however, only one copy of "Lasting Impressions" has existed for public consumption.

Partly in celebration of a quarter-century of writing novels, Schlarbaum has decided it is time to republish his first venture into the world of fiction. He has spent the past two years re-editing "Lasting Impressions" with an eye he says has refined itself significantly since writing the first novel in his Steve Cassidy trilogy, "Barry Jones' Cold Dinner."

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Kickstarter campaign

Continued from Page 11

As an added celebration of 25 years and in a self-described effort to "pay-it-forward," Schlarbaum has partnered with the Windsor Public Library to promote first-time author Karen Kilbride's novel "Dead Weight."

Now that Schlarbaum's Kickstarter campaign has been successfully funded, he said "Lasting Impressions is guaranteed to be released on-schedule this August."

Public board hears concerns over school closure recommendations

By Jonathan Martin

The Town of Amherstburg has offered to work with the Greater Essex County District School Board on the construction of a new General Amherst High School. Amherstburg's chief administrative officer John Miceli, Councillor Rick Fryer and Councillor Leo Meloche stood beside local lawyer Anthony Leardi as he made his presentation at a GECDSB meeting Sept. 15.

Leardi spoke to the Program and Accommodation Review Committee just prior to the presentation of a report co-authored by Superintendent of Education – Accommodations Todd Awender and Director of Education Erin Kelly.

The report outlines the reasons Kelly and Awender recommend the closure of Harrow District High School and Western Secondary School. The report, which was released online Sept. 14, has been met with resistance from those who would be directly affected by the closures.

Harrow resident Mike Munger approached the microphone with the HDHS mascot, a blue hawk, standing just to his right.

"If we close the schools in this town we're gonna have trouble getting people coming in here to work," he said. "I spoke with a guy we were trying to hire as a medical director and his answer was, 'Well, I'd be

very interested, but if you don't have any schools I'm not gonna work in a town where my kids gotta be bused out to some other town to go to school."

Turning to the board members, he added: "If the community of Harrow decided to do this, it's their place and they have the right. You do not have the right to change our town."

Mary McLaughlan's son, Stephen, is a Western graduate. He is also a special needs student.

"Nobody is speaking up for our special education students and making them a priority," said McLaughlan.

When Stephen was in grade school McLaughlan and her husband found themselves having to "advocate for support" on behalf of their son. When he began attending Western, she said Stephen received the attention he needed. McLaughlan attributes this to the specialized training Western's staff receives in dealing with special needs students.

"If we close Western," she said, "students who should be taking classes at the locally developed level will be taking applied classes and will struggle."

The directors report proposes that three new Adaptive Basic programs be opened in General Amherst High School, Kingsville District High School and Belle River District High School.

McLaughlan doesn't think special needs students will

want to attend Adaptive Basic programming while their peers follow a more traditional educational format within the same facility.

"When this PARC was started we had to consider the provincially mandated values: The value to the school board, value to the community, value to the local economy," said Leardi. "(The closure of Western) is being recommended to save money, so it's fair to ask how much money can be saved by closing Western."

Closing Western would save the board \$610,000 annually according to the directors report. Based on the GECDSB's projections for the 2015-16 fiscal year, Leardi estimates the board's savings to be fourteen hundredths of a percentage point of the total budget.

"I think the real issue we're struggling with is the issue of each building's backlogged capital repair cost," Leardi said.

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Centennial Park, Libro Centre suggested as school sites

Continued from Page 3

According to the GECDSB's 2014-15 Accommodation and Capital Planning Report, General Amherst High School's Facility Condition Index will reach 108 per cent within five years and renewal needs will rise to over \$30 million. The report states, "It is time for these challenges to be addressed." Leardi said a new 1,000 student school would cost the

board approximately \$25 million, far less than what it would cost to maintain Amherst's status quo. He offered both Centennial Park and the Libro Centre as possible building sites.

The Libro Centre site is already fully-accessible to persons with a disability. When asked whether a school built on the site could be designed with Western students in

mind, Leardi said there is "no doubt." At 149 acres, the Libro site could fit somewhere in the area of 40 General Amherst schools and could easily accommodate the population of both schools.

The GECDSB's Capital request must be submitted to the Ministry of Education by Oct. 31. From there, the ministry will decide whether or not to offer the board funding.

Local golfer to tee off in Special Olympics

By Jonathan Martin

Some of the major players in a local golfer's life have gathered together to get him to the Special Olympics North America Golf Invitational Tournament.

Kyle Spearing teed off along with 47 of his supporters Saturday at Sutton Creek Golf Club.

The event was planned by Spearing's trainer, Cory Lajeunesse. Proceeds will be used to cover the cost of travelling to the tournament.

Lajeunesse expects the price tag of participating in SONA, which will be held in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, to land at around \$4,500. He said any additional revenue will be put in a fund to be used by other aspiring golfers who are members of the LaSalle Windsor Special Olympics.

"Overall, I think what we're doing is a great thing for a young man who is giving back to his community," Lajeunesse said. "He's getting a lot of support and outside of that we're raising funds for something important."

Lajeunesse has been training Spearing for the past four years. They meet twice per week for private lessons.

"I'm proud that Cory Lajeunesse is my coach and he got me to the North American games of the (Special) Olympics," Spearing said. "Seeing everyone come out to support me, I feel happy. I feel special."

Brian Spearing, Kyle's father, said Lajeunesse's lessons have done more than simply improve his son's putting skills.

"Being a parent and working with a special needs son, it's tough sometimes," he said. "When he has somebody else working as a mentor with him I really see the change. He has the confidence now to go out and do more on his own."

He said seeing the world through a golfer's lens has allowed his son to translate the structure of the game into his daily life.

"Golf gives him patience. I can see it in everything he does."

Family friend Bob Goggin remembers the first time Spearing hit a golf ball. His son, Luke Goggin, was Spearing's grade school classmate.

"Luke and I always liked golfing and Kyle was always wanting to go with him," Goggin said. "Kyle doesn't live too far from us."

Goggin took the boys to a golf course in Oxley, where he said it was immediately apparent Spearing had found his niche. Since then, his son and Spearing have played on and off for years.

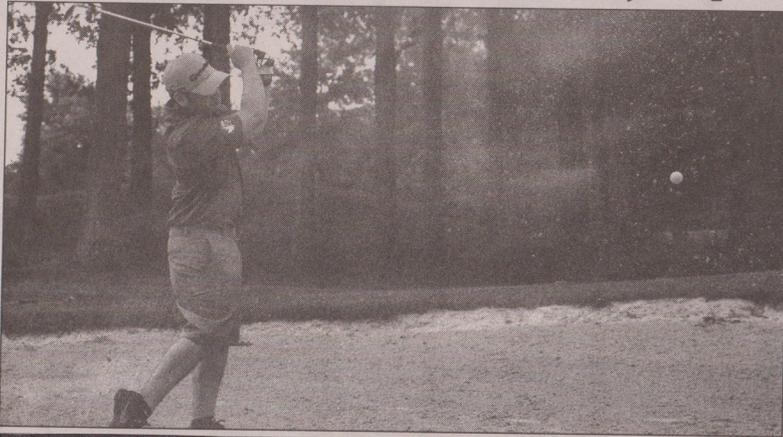
Luke Goggin recalls it as well.

"We were about 10 years old and he beat me by a couple points," he laughed. "After that, I think I cheated a little bit because I didn't want to get beat every time."

More than a decade later, Goggin is getting married and Spearing is set to stand in his wedding.

Goggin and his fiancée shared a Thanksgiving-style meal with Spearing and around 65 others in the golf club's dining hall, where prizes were raffled off and the event's results were announced.

Lajeunesse estimated around \$5,000 was raised, which means both he and Spearing will be attending the Special Olympics North America Golf Invitational Tournament from Sept. 10-13.



Kyle Spearing, 23, hits a golf ball out of a bunker at Sutton Creek Golf Club last Saturday, July 25. Spearing will be playing at the Special Olympics North America Golf Invitational Tournament in September.

RTT PHOTO
BY JONATHAN MARTIN

A'burg fire dept. to use Enbridge grant for distribution of safety pamphlets

By Jonthan Martin

Enbridge Incorporated, the developer of the Amherstburg Solar Project, has been handing an annual cheque to Amherstburg's fire chief for the past three years.

Tuesday, interim fire chief Al Reaume met with Professional Engineer Ian MacRobbie and public relations professional Cynthia Lockrey. In the garage of Amherstburg Fire Station 1, they discussed what this year's \$3,500 cheque would be put towards.

"We had some issues with the Shores of Erie Wine Festival when that storm hit," Reaume told MacRobbie. "People didn't seem to really know what to do."

As a method of educating the public about proper responses to emergency situations, Reaume will use Enbridge's funds to deliver an informational pamphlet to each home within the Corporation of the Town of Amherstburg.

"The pamphlet deals with everything," said Reaume. "We'll cover all the topics, but we'll place a little more emphasis on the weather-related topics."

Last year's grant went towards safety equipment for the firefighters themselves. MacRobbie expressed his happiness that this year Enbridge's "Safe Community Program" is becoming even more "community-focused."

"We're happy to continue to work with the fire department," he said. "Safety is our number one priority. Not only for our workers, but also for the people in the communities where we operate, so (this is) an excellent fit for our program."

Reaume estimates the total cost of the pamphlets' production and distribution to be near the amount the cheque is made out for. He said anything beyond the \$3,500 will be drawn out of a general account.

"If we have to throw in a few extra dollars we will," he said. "The main thing is that we get the message out."

The pamphlets have yet to be printed, so they will be distributed upon their completion.

VENETIAN TWIN VILLAS

By: Jonathan Martin

The site of Amherstburg's demolished water tower is being given new life. The land on the corner of Alma St. and Venetian Dr. has been vacant since early 2013. Aside from a few piles of dirt, the only things presently calling it home are tufts of weeds and swarms of bugs.

That doesn't sit well with Drew Coulson of Coulson Design-Build.

"It's a nice neighborhood," he said. "Amherstburg isn't a drive-through town and we (need) to reflect that."

With that in mind, Coulson plans to build a set of Venetian twin villas on the site.

He described the proposed houses as a set of semi-detached townhomes running from 1,100-1,200 square feet apiece.

Four of the six units have already been sold. Since Coulson hasn't started construction yet, the buyers have been able to customize the features of their homes-to-be.

Coulson hopes to put a shovel in the ground within the next couple weeks. When he wraps up the project around five months from now, he thinks buyers will be waiting to get inside.

"Semi-detached homes have been getting more



Future site of Venetian Twin Villas where the original Amherstburg Water Tower once stood.

Photo by Jonathan Martin

and more popular," he said. "They're more affordable and lower maintenance, but you still get that community vibe." Coulson is also been building homes in the south of the town since 2014. He said in the two years since he started the project he hasn't built one home with the original model's specifications.

"They're just selling so fast that people snap them up before they're built and ask for us to cus-

tomize them, which we're happy to do," he said.

"I think people are happy with what they're getting and it's priced right."

If the trend continues, the two remaining unsold villas on the corner of Alma and Venetian will be "snapped up" very soon.

SOUTH END OF BOBLO GETTING MAKEOVER

By: Jonathan Martin

Boblo Island's south end is getting a makeover. A ring of waterfront property looping around the south of the island is being put together by Dominic Amicone, owner and president of Amico. Though the project is still in its infancy, Amicone estimates the area will see between 150 and 200 waterfront homes erected.

The houses will stand along a peripheral road, flanked on one side by the water and an environmental conservation area on the other. Amicone said the conservation area will be veined with maintained walking and running trails, but added that environmental protection is paramount.

"We wanted to develop it to be respectful of nature," he said. "But we still want to maintain that island feel. There will be no condominiums. It'll all be family housing."

When this set of houses is completed, Amicone said he will have realized his dream for Boblo.

"I think we're finally completing the development of the island," he said.

"We've created a sustainable, long-term residential area that's becoming an integral part of the Amherstburg community."



View of Detroit river from the former Boblo dock. Photo by Jonathan Martin

NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORKS



Artist rendering of plans for vacant land across from Duffy's Motor Inn.

By: Jonathan Martin

Amherstburg's downtown core is getting an extension.

There are plans in the works to develop the plot of vacant land across from Duffy's Motor Inn. Dominic Amicone is heading the project. He said the new developments will be a little more mixed-use than the other commercial buildings on the road, but they will be, in essence, a con-

tinuation of the the downtown scene.

"We're looking at connectivity with the town's waterfront trail system and augmenting it here," he said. "We want people to be able to live and interact with (the community) on the water."

Amicone said the buildings will interweave housing and business. Those living inside them will be able to step out their front doors into a bustling small town hub of shops and parks.

Architecturally, Amicone plans on keeping with

the nautically-themed aesthetic of the town.

"We're going to be respectful of where the town came from from the perspective of it being on the water," he said.

The project is still in the early planning stages, so no construction time frame is yet available. Amicone said he hopes to release one soon.

Contact John D'Alimonte at 519-796-8073 for more information.

RICHARD PEDDIE - DREAM JOB

By: Jonathan Martin

Office work can sometimes be unpleasant. It's important to have somewhere quiet, peaceful and hidden away from the endless meetings, conferences and spreadsheets.

Just ask Richard Peddie. He worked as CEO of Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment for more than 15 years. A little while before he began what he described as an "active retirement," Peddie built his hideaway on Boblo Island. Since then, he and his wife have spent close to half their free time there.

"We had a place just north of Toronto, up near Creemore (now Clearview Township)," he said. "When we found (Boblo), we decided it was the better place for us."

Peddie and his wife, Colleen, still keep their primary residence in Toronto. Colleen works throughout the week as CFO for Bensimon Byrne, OneMethod Inc. and Narrative PR. When she closes up shop Friday, she makes the drive back down to Amherstburg, pulls onto the ferry and lets the relief wash over her.

"When I arrive (in Amherstburg) at the end of the week, that four-minute ferry ride really is this calming release of tension," she said. "It really feels like a get-away."

Lauding the town's climate, riverfront, safety and history, the Peddies said they chose Amherstburg "for a number of very important and positive reasons."

They took note of Amherstburg's low housing costs and low cost of living while they were in the market for property. Today, they still believe purchasing land on Boblo was a wise choice. Richard described Amherstburg property as "very good blue chip stock." He said he believes it will act as a long-term hold.

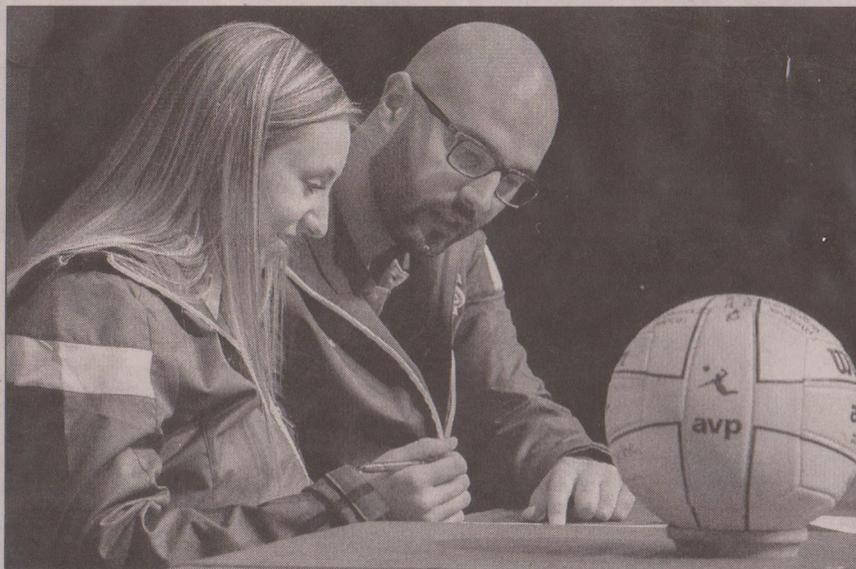
The Peddies didn't move down from Toronto for the financial prospects, though. After all, they've both enjoyed decades of success in life and in business. Richard said the real reason they decided to build a house in Amherstburg is far simpler:

"The ferry ride from Boblo takes me right to town in only four minutes," he wrote in his memoirs. "I've had a good long ride, one the lasted 41 years, and now I do appreciate a shorter one."



Author Richard Peddie shows his book, *Dream Job*.

Villanova volleyball star earns scholarship



RTT PHOTO BY JONATHAN MARTIN

Head coach of the St. Clair College women's volleyball team Jimmy El-Turk (right) explains the contents of a player contract to Villanova student Madison Trotter in Villanova's auditorium last Tuesday.

By Jonathan Martin

Opportunity has sent a hard spike toward a local volleyball player and she isn't about to let it pass her by.

Villanova student Madison Trotter signed on to play for the St. Clair College women's volleyball team last Tuesday.

The agreement includes a \$1,200 grant toward each semester's tuition. Trotter plans to use that money to attend the college's pre-health program. From there, she hopes to follow in her father's footsteps to work as a nurse.

Her father, Michael Trotter, is also the one who got her involved with volleyball. He has refereed the sport

for around 35 years.

"She's gone to a lot of my matches and that's what got her interested," he said. "She started getting involved at around eight-years-old and participated in some of my clinics."

As she got older, Trotter started playing travel with the South County Bandits. When she reached high school, she joined the Villanova Wildcats under head coach Deb McMahon.

"This past summer I got a job at a hair salon and I'm a receptionist there, so when the high school volleyball started I was juggling high school volleyball, travel volleyball, work and school," said Trotter. "It

was hard sometimes, but when it's something you love you've got to find a way to make it work."

McMahon said players like Trotter are a rarity.

"They come cyclically," she said. "You get one in a million after a couple years, but hopefully some girls will be inspired, work hard like she did and learn to fill her shoes."

McMahon has been Villanova's head volleyball coach for 15 years. Trotter is the third student to sign for a post-secondary scholarship since her tenure began. Maria Carlini earned an NCAA Division I scholarship to the University of Wisconsin in 2003 and Samantha Sutton preceded Trotter in being picked up by St. Clair College last year.

St. Clair College women's volleyball head coach Jimmy El-Turk started working at the college in May of 2015, so Trotter is the first local athlete he has personally brought onto the Saints.

"It's exciting for me to find such a skilled player so close to home," he said. "She's been playing a long time and you can tell her ability to set and manage the offence is very good."

El-Turk said in order to keep her scholarship, Trotter will have to maintain a grade point average of 2.0, which translates to 60 per cent or a C-.

Trotter said she's used to juggling academics and extra-curriculars, so she isn't worried.

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Trotter headed for St. Clair College in the fall

Continued from Page 28

"I'm often up studying until 1 a.m.," she said. "Some nights I go from school to practice, to work and then back to travel practice until 10 o'clock at night."

Once she graduates, though, Trotter said she'll be done with the sport.

After college, Trotter decided she wants to direct her focus completely toward helping others as a registered nurse.

Catholic Women's League gets entertained at fundraiser

By Jonathan Martin

How do you know a priest cares about a cause? He's willing to dress up like Whoopi Goldberg in front of a sold-out house.

Father Donatien (Donato) Lwiyando and his troupe sang and danced their way through excerpts from the 1992 film "Sister Act" Saturday at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Amherstburg. The performance was staged as entertainment for an afternoon tea hosted by the Saint John the Baptist Parish's Catholic Women's League (CWL).

"We wanted to spread out to our community, not

Father Donatien Lwiyando plays Whoopi Goldberg in a production of songs from "Sister Act" at Amherstburg's Knights of Columbus Hall last Saturday afternoon. Lwiyando and his congregants, who played musical nuns, were part of the entertainment at a tea party held by the Catholic Women's League.

just our parish," said CWL president Rose Beneteau. "We want people to see we're having fun, coming together and enjoying each other."

The three year-old CWL is donating the event's proceeds to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and the St. John the Baptist church restoration fund.

Beneteau said the league has also donated a cheque to the Hope is Life shelter, founded by Donato more than eight years ago in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Hope is Life provides shelter and services to women and their children who have been affected by military unrest in the region.

"Sister Act" will be publicly performed a second

time at St John the Baptist's parish picnic on June 14 at Toddy Jones Park.

After Donato and his congregants had stepped away from the stage, published poet Linda Bertrand stepped up to read some of her work.

"It was really a great honour to be here today," said Bertrand. "Most of my writing reflects my faith in God and I love to honour Him with my writing."

Beneteau said the afternoon tea's 120 seats were sold out in a week and a half. Due to popular demand, she said she plans on holding another next year.



RTI PHOTO BY JONATHAN MARTIN

ACS recognizes volunteers at appreciation dinner

By Jonathan Martin

More than 100 local volunteers had a bit of time donated back to them Wednesday evening.

Amherstburg Community Services invited its regular contributors to the Verdi Club for dinner, prizes and words of appreciation.

The not-for-profit has been active in the community for more than 40 years. It relies heavily on donated time and skill to continue its work.

The services ACS provides range from delivering healthy, pre-prepared meals to those whose mobility is impaired to increasing financial literacy and helping with debt-management.

Amherstburg deputy mayor Bart DiPasquale sat on ACS' board of directors around 10 years ago.

"I started talking to Helen Hayward, who ran the organization at the time, and immediately felt a connection with it," he said. "Even now, it's very close to me. I don't have a lot of time left on my plate now, but I still try to carve out as much as I can for it."

Before stepping back from ACS, DiPasquale worked with its board to hire current executive director Kathy DiBartolomeo in 2009.

"Our strength really comes from our volunteers," said DiBartolomeo. "(Since I became executive director) the community has really stepped up. We've had a huge influx of volunteers (over the past seven years), which



Amherstburg Community Services executive director Kathy DiBartolomeo (right) speaks to volunteers at the Verdi Club.

has allowed us to add some programs, expand others and substantially increase the amount of good we do. The volunteers really do it because they love doing good (deeds)."

LaSalle Mayor Ken Antaya started volunteering with ACS' Meals on Wheels program when he retired from his position as the town's CAO. He said he volunteered because he could see the effect his good deeds were having.

"I got involved when they were (cooking the meals) in the basement of St. Andrew's (Anglican Church) in LaSalle," he said. "It's something that's very important to me. As soon as I'd walk in, I don't think I've ever seen somebody that happy to see me."

He added that while serving dinner is important, he believes the real service Meals on Wheels provides is

giving love and friendship. Antaya said he continued volunteering for a couple months after being elected mayor, but found he wasn't able to give ACS everything he feels it deserves.

"It's the people who can commit and are reliable who really make the program (what it is)," he said. "I think tonight is important because we need to show the people (who have committed) the impact they have."

As a way of driving that message home, the night concluded with the reading of a letter. June Fox has used ACS' services for a long time, but was unable to attend the event due to health concerns. Instead, DiBartolomeo stepped onto the stage to read it out on her behalf.

"I would like each of you to look at the other volunteers sitting at your table as if you were looking in a mirror," the letter read. "Because, collectively, each of you inspires the best in people."

Great Waterfront Trail Adventure comes to Amherstburg



RTT PHOTO BY
JONATHAN MARTIN

Deputy Mayor Bart DiPasquale moves in for a hug with warden of Lambton County Bev MacDougall after presenting her with a pin in the shape of Amherstburg's crest in Amherstburg on Monday. McDougall participated in the 2016 Great Waterfront Trail Adventure, in which cyclists rode from Pelee Island to Grand Bend, which falls under McDougall's jurisdiction.

By Jonathan Martin

Cyclists from across North America rolled into King's Navy Yard Park Monday for a short break on their 400 km quest to complete the 2016 Great Waterfront Trail Adventure.

The GWTA first spun onto the scene in 2008 and featured a 720 km ride from Niagara, Ontario to the Québec border.

Since then, the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail has expanded to run 1,600 km. It skirts the shores of Lake Huron, Lake St. Clair, Lake Erie, Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River. By 2017, the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, which is heading the project, plans to add Lake Superior to the list.

According to Marlaine Coehler, executive director of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, the GWTA is how her organization celebrates new trail extensions. This

year, the trail has stretched onto Pelee Island from Grand Bend. Cyclists braving the expedition are taking a route put together by the charity, so they can put all their focus into pushing themselves forward.

Linda Stewart is one such adventurer.

"I know that I get stronger every day on this ride," she said. "By the end, I feel amazing. I feel like I can do anything."

Monday only marked the start of Stewart's six-day journey. With close to 300 km left, she still has a ways to go before she hits Grand Bend.

As warden of Lambton County, of which Grand Bend is a part, Bev MacDougall can't wait to put Lambton's trail system to use.

"We started working on the Lambton County

Regional Trail System in 1997," she said. "Because that's where we'll be finishing up, I thought this was a great year to do the ride."

MacDougall said cycling tourism is "a great way to see communities," noting that the slower travelling speed encourages trekkers to stop at interesting locations within different municipalities.

Linda Stewart said spending time outdoors in those communities – "living outside for a week" – is her favourite part of the experience.

"Being on the road outside and sleeping in a tent with great people is fantastic," she said. "Cyclists are a special breed. If you were broken down on the side of the road, another cyclist would never go by you without making sure you were okay."

Stewart said she's gotten to know a number of the participants over the years. At 56, she has been cycling for years and said she has no intention of stopping any time soon.

"When you don't take care of yourself you're in for a much rougher time in your later years," she said. "Keeping yourself in shape is just so important. For me, this is one of the ways I plan to do it."

Mayor cuts ribbon as part of Amherst Supply expansion celebration



RTT PHOTO BY
JONATHAN
MARTIN

Amherst Supply Castle Building Centre opened its new showroom last Tuesday with Mayor Aldo DiCarlo cutting the ribbon. The St. Arnaud St. business also held a fundraiser for Community Living Essex County's Channel Resource Centre. CLEC board president Ron Giofu (left) and Amherst Supply owner Ken Harris (right) were also in attendance Oct. 25.



A barbecue for CLEC was held Saturday. Audrey Walker, Sue Olson, Cindy Winter, Lucas Olson, Ashley Olson, Kevin Meloche and Brittany Bolger were among those working the grill. Amherst Supply staff member Kristi Smith is not pictured.

By Jonathan Martin

When Amherst Supply first opened, all it sold was animal feed.

Now, around five years later, owner Ken Harris has watched Amherstburg mayor Aldo DiCarlo cut the ribbon at Amherst Supply's "grand re-opening."

The ribbon-cutting ceremony officially opened a store showroom displaying appliances, building products, hardware and accessories.

"I like to tell people it's not just a ribbon-cutting," DiCarlo said. "A business has had enough confidence in the town of Amherstburg to invest in it."

Amherst Supply also held a barbecue Saturday in celebration of its expansion. The proceeds from the event went to Community Living Essex-County.

"It was a fantastic surprise," said Sandra Paisley, support manager for CLEC. "Amherstburg is a very giving community."

For Harris, the cutting signified a new beginning.

"As much as it is about the opening of this new wing," he said. "It's also about reaching a point where I'm comfortable saying we're a full-service building product store for Amherstburg."

Amherst Supply, in its new form, is open now.

Meloche family food drive declared a success

By Jonathan Martin

Amherstburg councillor Leo Meloche has declared his family's food drive a success.

Meloche said he and his family exceeded their goal of 2,500 food items, which they donated to food banks throughout Windsor-Essex County.

The last batch was made up of around 1,000 items. They dropped it off to McGregor's St. Vincent de Paul, where a couple of Meloche's long-time friends donate their time.

"I don't think it matters where you give to as long as you give," Denise Jones said to Meloche as she accepted his van full of cans. "There's need

everywhere."

Denise and her husband, Phil, said the number of families using the McGregor St. Vincent de Paul food bank has almost doubled over the past six months. With Christmas coming, they expect that number to triple.

The couple attribute the bank's increased use to rising hydro prices.

According to the Ontario Association of Food Banks' 2016 Hunger Report, they're not the only ones making that connection.

"The rising cost of hydro is of incredible concern to the OAFB," the report reads. "It is making a direct and, sometimes, devastating impact in the lives of Ontarians who are already struggling

to make ends meet, as well as negatively impacting the organizations and programs that are working hard to assist them."

Meloche said he has been gathering food goods in his garage since last Christmas, when he and his family decided to undertake the enterprise.

"I remember getting baskets from Goodwill when I was a kid," Meloche said. "I guess (donating now) is a way of giving back."

He said the McGregor food drop is the third he

and his family have done. Meloche said he'd also made one around Easter at the Amherstburg food bank and one around Labour Day at the Essex Food Bank.

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Leo Meloche, Denise Jones, Phil Jones, Andrea Meloche, Joyce Gyori and Tyler Meloche pose with their last few boxes of food donations before handing them over to the St. Vincent de Paul food bank in McGregor last Monday. The Meloche family exceeded their goal of donating 2,500 food items to three food banks within Windsor-Essex County.

Meloche family hits goal

Continued from Page 13

While this is the first food drive he and his family have organized, he said he plans to turn it into something of a tradition.

"It was really done in the interest of honouring my father (Omer Meloche), who loved this communi-

ty," Meloche said. "He was an integral part of the development of Co-An Park and did a lot of legwork to get it to where it is today. This is a way to recognize his contributions."

Meloche said he has already made room in his garage for next year's batch of canned goods.

Local TD Bank adopts two families through Mission

By Jonathan Martin

The Amherstburg branch of TD Canada Trust is in the giving spirit this holiday season.

Four TD employees headed to the Amherstburg Food and Fellowship Mission last Tuesday morning with a car full of canned goods, gifts and a \$400 cheque.

According to Janet Willoughby, branch manager at Amherstburg's TD bank, the local Canada Trust is no stranger to giving back during the holiday season.

"We've been doing this for as long as I've been here," said Willoughby. "And I've been here since 2009."

This year, the bank has also "adopted" two families, meaning Willoughby and her staff provided the contents of two families' Christmas lists.

"We wanted to do it last year too," Willoughby said. "Unfortunately, we were a little bit too late and all the fami-

lies had already been adopted."

Mission president Tim McAllister said families being adopted too quickly is a good problem to have.

"It's a joyous occasion when the community steps up and helps out their neighbours," he said. "We still have one family left (to adopt) this year, but I know the community will come together and help them out."

McAllister has been president of the Mission for around 16 years and said the community has never let the Food and Fellowship Mission down. He emphasized that a big part of what makes the Mission work as a community charity is just that – its sense of community.

"Just as important as the food is the fellowship," he said. "I've seen it work its magic before, so I'm confident that the community will look after this family."

The family who has yet to be adopted has one little boy, age nine, whose favourite colour is green.



Amherstburg Food and Fellowship Mission president Tim McAllister (left) prepares some garlic after receiving a donation from the Amherstburg branch of TD Canada Trust in at the Mission in Amherstburg last Tuesday.

His wishlist includes pajamas (size 14-16), a jogging suit (size 14-16), boys' underwear (large), Legos, a dart board, a Playstation 3 controller and anything

having to do with Pokemon.

Anybody wishing to help out can find more information on www.aburgmission.ca.

Amherstburg firefighters hit the town collecting toys

By Jonathan Martin

Sparky the Fire Dog got to ride in an Amherstburg fire engine Monday as he collected donations for his toy drive.

Seven firefighters from Fire Station No. 1 – along with their furry mascot – filled one of their fire trucks with toys picked up from drop-off locations at Amherstburg's WFCU branch, Movati

Athletic Amherstburg, Amherstburg's Canadian Tire and General Amherst High School.

According to Amherstburg firefighter Mark Stock, this year's toy drive was a blazing success.

"There are going to be a lot of happy families come Christmas morning," said Stock. "We've got a fire truck completely stuffed full of toys."

Stock said the toys will be delivered

to families through the Amherstburg Goodfellows. While he was unsure of how many families will receive a gift, he said he is confident this year's take-away is as good – or better – than last year's.

Amherst was the last stop on the firefighters' trip. Ruben Tar, GAHS student parliament prime minister, said he is proud of his classmates' participation.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Staff at WFCU's Amherstburg location make a toy donation to the Amherstburg Fire Department Monday morning.



RTT PHOTO BY JONATHAN MARTIN

General Amherst High School student council, Amherstburg firefighters and Sparky the Fire Dog pose for a photo with the 590 toys GAHS students gathered for the 2016 Stuff a Fire Truck Toy Drive in Amherstburg Monday.

WFCU helps with toys as well

Continued from Page 23

"Our goal was ultimately go get one toy from every student," he said. Amherst houses roughly 650 students. "We came very close to that at 590 (toys)."

Tar and Miya Taylor, deputy prime minister, said they are proud of their bulldogs and wouldn't have done anything different given the chance. They attribute the campaign's success to their student government's social media presence and the face-to-face time they spend with their classmates.

"We got really in their faces this time," they laughed.

"Amherst collects a large number of toys from the students every year," said Stock. "They do a really

great job."

Based on his enthusiastic head-nodding, it's likely Sparky agrees.

WFCU Credit Union's contribution was part of their Joy of Giving program that includes such things as adopting families and food and coat drives. WFCU's staff highlight is their "200 Ways of Giving."

The Amherstburg Fire Department's toy drive was also given \$200 to help with the drive. Other contributions were made to the Amherstburg Food and Fellowship Mission (see photo on Page 14) and Wings Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre.

Wings was given \$100 as a donation to help with supplies for rescued animals.

"Christmas at the Museum" celebrated in Nazrey AME Church

By Jonathan Martin

It's beginning to sound a lot like bebop at the Amherstburg Freedom Museum.

Local trio Jazzus Ensemble decked the halls with 14 bouncy tunes for 2016's Christmas at the Museum.

Around 80 people – a mix of ages and races - gathered in the museum's church, where AFM president Monty Logan said he hoped to "both entertain and educate." Around halfway through the concert, Jazzus set down their instruments and historian Irene Moore-Davis stepped up to take centre stage.

She taught the concertgoers about the Number Two Construction Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force. The battalion was founded in Nova Scotia in 1916 to give Canadian men of African descent a chance to join the war efforts in WWI.

"There were some other men of African descent who

fought in other battalions," Moore-Davis said. "But this was the first (and only) all-black battalion in Canadian history."

The battalion was used to build infrastructure in battlefields overseas.

"It was a construction battalion because it was believed by many people that black men weren't suitable for the role of soldier," said Moore-Davis. "People thought they couldn't be trusted to hold arms or be counted on in a fight."

When WWI ended, the battalion was disbanded.

"I thought it was really great hearing about (the battalion)," said Gregory Moore, bassist and guitarist for Jazzus. "It's an important part of our history." Jazzus became acquainted with the Freedom Museum years ago. According to Logan, it's good to have them back.

"They're a great ensemble," he said. "Those guys are

awesome. This has been a fantastic way to bring the community together."

The motif of community coming together extended into Jazzus' history.

"We all play together in the same church in Harrow," said Moore. "We've been playing at St. Mark's for around eight years. We formed the band maybe five years ago."

None of the members of Jazzus have any formal musical education. According to Moore, they learned from each other.

"And YouTube," he added. The trio all nodded in agreement and laughed.



Local jazz band Jazzus plays one last set at the Amherstburg Freedom Museum's "Christmas at the Museum" concert in Amherstburg last Wednesday.

Around 80 people showed up to listen to some bouncy tunes and learn a little bit about black history.

Jovanovski golf tourney coming to Pointe West

By Jonathan Martin

National Hockey League (NHL) all-star and Olympic gold medal winner Ed Jovanovski is trading in his hockey stick for a golf club in the name of charity.

The Windsor native and former NHL defenseman met with press last Tuesday at Pointe West Golf Club to announce his partnership with Amherstburg Chevrolet Buick GMC in the development of a new golf tournament.

The Ed Jovanovski Charity Golf Classic will raise

funds for the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) to support its breast cancer research. Jovanovski said he knows firsthand what the disease can do.

"A couple years ago my mother went through a pretty good battle with breast cancer," he said. "We're grateful for anything we can do to further (CCS research) along."

Jovanovski said his mother is doing well, though her time in the hospital was difficult for his whole family. Now that she's doing better, he said the timing seems right.

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NHL all-star and Olympic gold medalist Ed Jovanovski scurms with the press at Pointe West Golf Club last Tuesday. Jovanovski announced his partnership with Amherstburg Chevrolet Buick GMC to bring about the first annual Ed Jovanovski charity golf tournament.
RIT PHOTO BY JONATHAN MARTIN

Jovanovski golf tournament July 13

Continued from Page 18

"It has always been a dream of mine to hold a golf tournament," he said.

"Obviously, growing up (around here), this area is very important to me."

According to Scott Elliott, dealer principal for Amherstburg Chevrolet Buick GMC, the tournament, which is set to be held at Pointe West Golf Club, will include a deli-style luncheon, hole-in-one prizes, a putting contest, auctions and dinner.

Jovanovski said he's doing his best to convince as many of his NHL friends as possible to stop by. He did warn them, though, that no matter who shows up, he will be the best player on the green.

The tournament will be held July 13.

Fundraiser helps with new cabins at local campground

By Jonathan Martin

Local businesses have come together to replace two ramshackle cabins at a camp for underprivileged children.

The cabins had been standing since just after World War Two, according to Dan Inverarity, a local realtor who has been working with Kiwanis Sunshine Point Camp camp for years. He said the decades-old cabins lacked foundations, locks for the doors and windows and said it had

mate the camp needs to bring in around \$150,000 annually just to meet its operational costs. Inverarity said all the money raised so far will go towards meeting that requirement.

Continued on Page 13

been taking more and more work just to keep them livable.

To update them, though, would cost around \$50,000.

Even with the \$30,000 raised at an April 1 fundraiser, plus the more than \$40,000 in federal funding presented by MP Tracey Ramsey, that was a hurdle Inverarity said the camp wouldn't have been able to leap. Fundraising organizers esti-

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Local businesses come forward to build cabins at campground

Continued from Page 8

There was no money left to build the cabins.

Local businesses like Nor-Built Construction, BK Cornerstone, Santarossa J & Sons, Kehl Windows and Doors, Canflow Eavestroughs and Home Hardware decided that wasn't a problem. They donated both the materials and the manpower needed to raise the cabins in a single weekend. By next weekend, Inverarity hopes to have the siding in place.

"We'll probably be putting the finishing touches on the paint as the kids walk through the doors," he said. "Isn't that how it always works with renova-

tions?"

He said the new cabins are 20 per cent larger than the old ones, which allows each to sleep six campers in three sets of bunk beds. Inverarity also said the new cabins have improved airflow to keep the campers cool, locking windows and doors, a cement foundation and an overall better-quality build.

"They'll probably last another 80 years without a problem," he said. "Thank God for the local community. They donated everything. I didn't cut a single cheque."

Campers will get to experience the new cabins when the camp opens in nine weeks.



Members of local businesses, including Nor-Built Construction, BK Cornerstone, Santarossa J & Sons, Kehl Windows and Doors and Canflow Eavestroughs, stand beside local realtor Dan Inverarity (fourth from left) in the shell of a cabin at Kiwanis Sunshine Point Camp.

Amherstburg hopes to share integrity commissioner with surrounding municipalities

By Jonathan Martin

Amherstburg town council has decided to look into enlisting the services of a municipal integrity commissioner.

At a special council meeting held last Tuesday night examining an update to the Code of Conduct for Members of Council, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) John Miceli's recommendation was presented to council and approved.

At this point, any complaint against an Amherstburg official is brought before the corresponding ministry or the ombudsman's office, all of which work with hundreds of municipalities throughout Ontario. A municipal integrity commissioner focuses solely on the community in which he or she works.

Amherstburg Mayor Aldo DiCarlo said this allows him or her to become familiar with the area's trends and respond to the issues more quickly.

Miceli, who has worked with Windsor's integrity commissioner in the past, suggested that if Amherstburg were to hire a commissioner, the service should be shared with the surrounding municipalities

to ease the financial burden.

"What we would wind up doing is a Request for Proposal for this service," said Miceli. "We would ask for a retainer for the entire region where we would all participate in what we would mutually benefit from."

He estimated the commissioner's rate to be in the range of 80 to 150 dollars per hour and said that based off what Windsor pays its commissioner, an additional yearly retainer of around \$12,000 would also be paid.

"The ombudsman's office has tens of thousands of complaints," DiCarlo said. "It's not that they don't investigate as well as they can, but it's just that. As well as they can. A local integrity commissioner only has seven municipalities to look after."

DiCarlo said many of the issues arising in nearby municipalities are connected, so having one commissioner cover the whole area would also provide him or her with a top-down view from which to better attack the problems that arise.

Miceli has already met with the CAO's of the surrounding area and has been selected by them to head the initiative. Now that he has been given permission to look into the matter

from his own municipality, council research he brings back to the council will make a decision based on the chamber.

WOLFHEAD TO REMAIN A HUB FOR LOCAL PRODUCTS

By Jonathan Martin

Twenty-sixteen has been more than kind to Amherstburg newcomer Wolfhead Distillery, says co-owner Tom Manherz.

After a soft-opening in late May, Manherz and business partner Larry Girard had to hit the ground running in June.

According to Manherz, Wolfhead started out by selling its products faster than they could be distilled. With an eager public demanding fan-favourites like apple whisky, coffee liqueur and grapefruit vodka, the on-site distillery was forced to crank itself up to 11.

Manherz said it's not uncommon to see someone stop by for a drink and a bite to eat and then return a few times throughout the week to show off their new discovery to their friends.

The distillery has started receiving overseas recognition as well. The Summit International Awards (SMA) presented its Silver 2016 Creative Award to Wolfhead for its web design. The site was put together by Windsor-based Douglas Marketing Group.

Manager of business development Karen Wettlaufer said despite the distillery's success, one of its main concerns remains the town in which it set down its roots.

"When visitors or locals come here, we're showcasing everything else that's local," said Wettlaufer. "We're really trying to become a hub of local products. I think people in Amherstburg and in the Windsor-Essex region are proud of what they have here."

Manherz said he insists the distillery use local ingredients wherever possible. Even the limestone used in the spirits' filtration comes from the quarry right across the street.

While he is proud of his decision to keep his products' ingredients local, Manherz does acknowledge that it increases production costs. Added onto that, the Liquor Control Board of Canada offers massive tax breaks – even tax exemptions – to wineries and craft breweries. Distilleries, on the other hand, are still subject to leftover prohibition regulations.



A view of the bar at Wolfhead Distillery, located at 7781 Howard Ave., Amherstburg.

"We hope to get on the same path (as) the wineries," said Manherz. "Once more craft distilleries start popping up, we'll have strength in numbers and we'll be able to make a change."

Despite the added financial strain, Manherz says he plans to continue using local ingredients because it's the "right thing to do."

He added that Amherstburg has been very good to him and it's only fair that he return the favour.

"Everything comes full-circle," he said.

NUCELLI'S FROZEN YOGURT CELEBRATING 30 YEARS IN BUSINESS

By Jonathan Martin

July 2017 marks the 30th anniversary of Nuccelli's Frozen Yogurt.

In 1987, owner Rob Iannucci was working in construction and really, really wanted to eat decent frozen yogurt. His solution was to develop a business that would eventually become TripAdvisor's highest-rated dessert spot in Amherstburg.

"As a vegetarian and a health fanatic myself," he said. "I don't want sugar and artificial flavours. All I saw was soft-serve. Nobody was blending bricks with real fruit."

According to a math-teaching friend of Iannucci's, Nuccelli's can use their technique to make a whopping 55,000 flavour combinations. And Iannucci's business is only getting bigger.

Until last year, Iannucci rented his workspace, but found there just wasn't enough square footage to keep up with the size of his production. He needed to expand.

"I talked to (local realtor) John D'Alimonte," he said. "(My new location) wasn't even on the market. He knew (the previous owner) was interested in selling, but didn't want to advertise it. So, John went up to the guy and things just sort of went from there. Now, I'm very happy."

Iannucci's move couldn't have happened at a better time. Every month of 2016 became his most successful month ever. Ultimately, that translated into Nuccelli's most profitable year in their history.

Iannucci thinks 2016's success may have been partially attributable to his TripAdvisor rating. As of January, Nuccelli's is the top-rated dessert location in Amherstburg. Iannucci said that over the summer they hit the number one spot in Amherstburg's restaurant category. At this time, Wolfhead Distillery carries the title. He said that over the summer, around 30% of his customers were tourists who stopped by during their visit to Amherstburg.

"I thank God all the time," Iannucci said. "It's been a joy for me. Now that this has been my best year ever, I'm thinking, 'How can I do better?'"

He said he plans to do a bit of interior design on his new location, but wants to save any big projects until next year. He and his staff are still getting used to the workflow of the new location.

Besides, 2017 will be a busy year for Nuccelli's. A 30th anniversary is no small accomplishment. Iannucci said he wants to hold some sort of celebration, but has yet to plan it. Whatever it turns out to be, Iannucci said it'll be more of a thank you to the town than a pat on the back for Nuccelli's.

"I thank God every day for this business because it's what I love doing," he said. "Amherstburg's been great."

BELLE VUE HOUSE TO BE A MAJOR ADDITION TO AMHERSTBURG'S MANY DRAWS

By Jonathan Martin

Amherstburg mayor Aldo DiCarlo said he intends the acquisition of Belle Vue House to be a major addition to Amherstburg's many draws.

The plan is to transform the building into a facility capable of hosting conferences and weddings. Some of council's ideas include multiple gardens, a conservatory, a greenhouse, a band shell, accessible pathways, a plaza area and event infrastructure.

Originally built in the first quarter of the 19th century, Belle Vue was declared a National Historic Site in 1959, but fell into disrepair after its purchase by a numbered company in 2001. In 2009, it landed on Heritage Canada's Top 10 Most Endangered Buildings list. The Friends of Belle Vue, now named the Belle Vue Conservancy, spent years lobbying for its preservation.

"The Belle Vue Conservancy is doing the work they said they would do on the town's behalf," said Amherstburg CAO John Miceli. "I think it's an incredible opportunity to have a dedicated group of volunteers like this. It's just amazing."

Last year, the town purchased the property for \$100,000 down with a five-year payment plan of



Artist rendering of the Belle Vue House renovation.

Photo courtesy of <http://windsorstar.com/news/local-news/amherstburg-reverses-course-agrees-to-buy-historic-belle-vue>

\$200,000 annually, interest-free, alongside a \$200,000 donation receipt.

Miceli estimates the cost of repair to land somewhere around \$2.5 million. He was quick to add, however, that any money going into the repair or restoration of the site will have to come through either fundraising or grants. He said the

last thing he wants is for Belle Vue to become a "drain" on the taxpayers.

A video visualizing the plans for the property can be found on the "About Us" page of the Belle Vue Conservancy's website: www.bellevueconservancy.com

RICCARDO'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT NEW LOCATION NOW OPEN

By Jonathan Martin

Riccardo's is now open and ready to serve the community. The prime corner location, teases passer-bys with a glimpse of the ambiance.

Owner Riccardo Maltese meant to welcome the hungry public to the restaurant's new location Dec. 1. More than two months later, the former home of Bright Child Montessori is finally ready to dish out the fare Italian-lovers have been missing.

According to Maltese, the reasons for the delays were many-fold.

"Turning a daycare into a restaurant isn't an overnighter," said Maltese. "We (had) to redo everything here."

Maltese said he and the construction crews working on his restaurant experienced a few delays citing issues with structural engineering, contracting work, drywalling and painting.

Despite the delays, Maltese said he is happy with the move overall. Located near the entrance to Historic Amherstburg on Front Road, he feels that Riccardo's is likely one of the first things a visitor will see when coming into town. Nearby, a small parkette shows off a sample of Amherstburg's award-winning gardens, which Maltese sees as the perfect spot for an after-dinner stroll.

In fact, the veteran chef said he can't imagine being anywhere else.



Artist rendering of the new Riccardo's location at 65 Sandwich St.

"I've been in Amherstburg for over 20 years," he said. "Over that many years you start to have a liking – a loving – for the place. I love the town, the community, the wonderful people."

Maltese invites everyone to stop by and visit the new location. Plenty of parking on the side and around back, will accommodate the expected crowds.

"I (was so) bored," he said. "I need to cook! That's what I do; that's what I love."

Riccardo's Italian Restaurant is open now at 65 Sandwich Street North in Amherstburg.

To make a reservation, call 519-736-4333.

Bob Meloche Memorial Fishing Derby popular again with kids

By Jonathan Martin

By now, local fish must shudder at the mention of the name Bob Meloche.

According to Meloche's son, Gord, the annual Bob Meloche Memorial Fishing Derby has been going on since he was seven or eight. That means the derby has been an ongoing tradition for around half a century. Still, it shows no sign of slowing down.

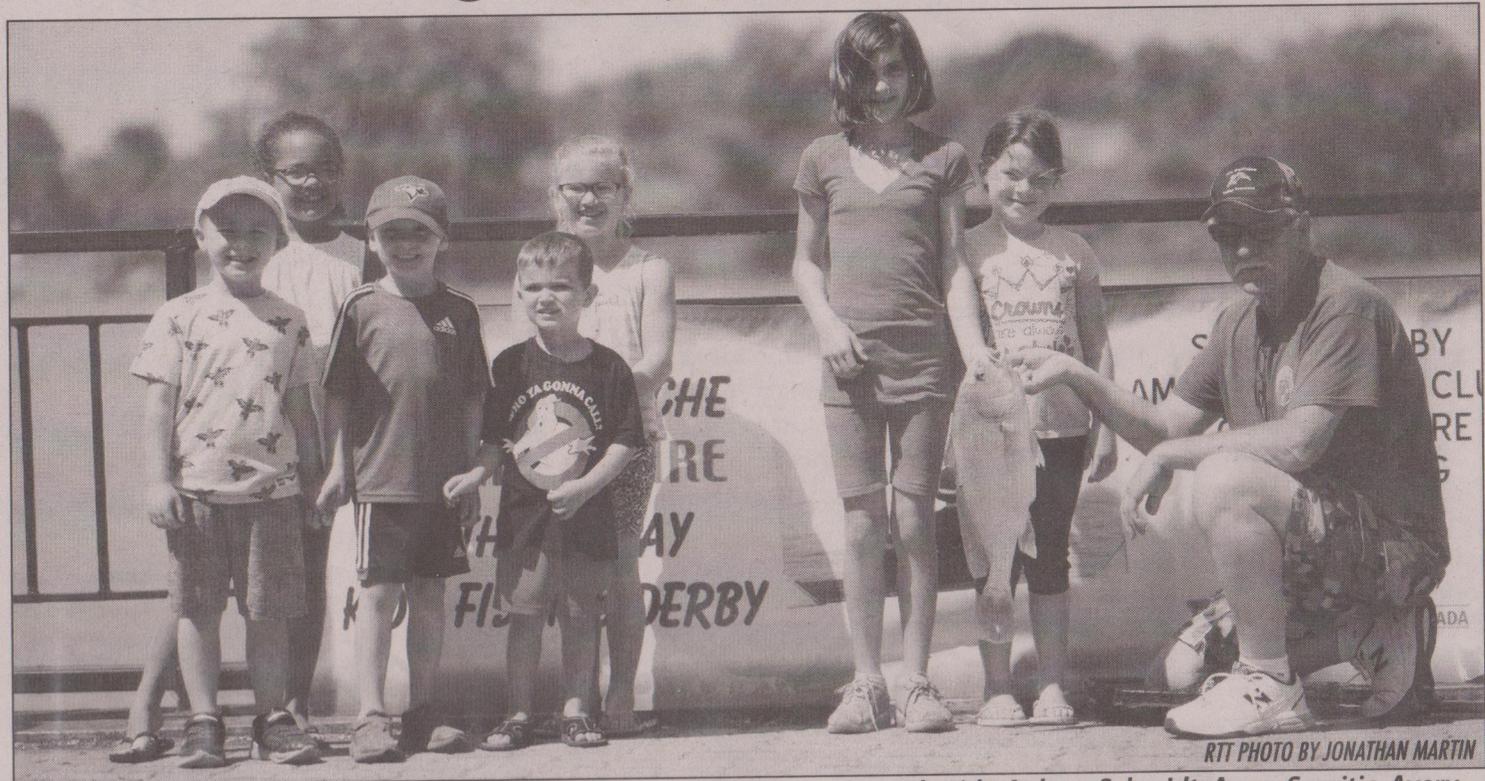
According to Luc Trembley, chairman of AMA Sportsmen's Club fishing committees, over 250 kids signed up for the Father's Day event. The young fishers packed King's Navy Yard Park, which the Town of Amherstburg offered up for derby use.

For the first time, fish were measured on-site at the Navy Yard Park, which allowed for fish to be released back into the Detroit River. In previous years, measurements took place at the AMA Sportsmen's Club facility, which sits a few kilometres away on Lowes Side Road, a long journey for a fish out of water.

The sportsmen's club is still the place to be after fishing is done, though. Free food, free games, contests and awards kept excited children busy into the afternoon. Trembley said the event was funded through donations and sponsorships from local businesses.

"We couldn't do this without the generosity of the community," he said. "We're truly grateful."

Gord Meloche said the AMA Sportsmen's Club's generosity



RTT PHOTO BY JONATHAN MARTIN

(From Left) Olivier Gemus, Shanell Schmidt, Sebastien Gemus, Archer Schmidt, Aubrey Schmidt, Avery Semitic, Avery Maiter and Tom Mailloux pose for a photo in King's Navy Yard Park. The youths fished out of the Detroit River as part of the Joe Meloche Memorial Fishing Derby. Avery Semitic caught the fish pictured.

shouldn't be understated, either.

"The club has always been good about giving to the children," he said. "They have so much youth programming here. Every year I see club members work harder and harder to give these kids the best experience they can."

This year, the children laughed as they watched their released fish zoom off into the river. Trembley said it was an opportunity to teach the kids about environmental preservation.

The children seemed to love the idea. After having their fish measured on a little table set up on the lawn, they waddled over to the railing to launch their catch into the river.

The Bob Meloche Memorial Fishing Derby also saw volunteers man the barbecue for the parents and the adults. Over 250 children took part in the annual Father's Day event.

PHOTO BY BOB WILSON



Wednesday, June 20, 2018

Workshop promotes more women in emergency services

By Jonathan Martin

More women are being encouraged to look into a career in emergency response, and if last Saturday is any indication, the future is in good hands.

One hundred eighty women sweat their way through Amherstburg's Libro Centre to take part in #WomenOnFire, a two-hour workshop for women interested in pursuing a career in emergency response.

EMS, police services, fire services and the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) brought in their female staff to guide potential candidates through a series of physical training exercises.

Donna Desantis organized the event. She works as a volunteer firefighter for Tecumseh Fire and as a facilities supervisor with the City of Windsor.

"I've been thinking about this for almost three years," she said. "I think diversity is critical to any organization, especially in the public service industry. As we're serving the community, diversity is critical to being able to network with the community, serve them and make those connections."

All the emergency response organizations involved in the event have a gender disparity.

Continued on Page 23



Alyssa Meloche (right) hoists a 45lb hose reel up 75 feet into the air last Saturday as part of #WomenOnFire, an initiative designed to introduce women to careers in emergency services.

RTT PHOTO BY
JONATHAN MARTIN

Nordic pole walking "a better way to walk"

By Jonathan Martin

European skiers had a problem in the early twentieth Century: during the Summer months there was a decided lack of snow.

Luckily for them, and thanks to the creativity of Finnish engineers, Nordic pole walking came to save the day.

The premise is simple: A Nordic pole walker uses two Nordic poles (similar to ski poles) to push him or herself forward in cadence with his or her footfalls. That means Nordic pole walking can be performed anywhere it's possible to go for a regular, old-fashioned stroll. Skiers could then keep the muscles they performed with strong while training on any terrain in any season.

Since then, Nordic pole walking has exploded in popularity and has started making its way into Ontario.

The secret to its success, said physiotherapist Kerry Holliday, lies in the incorporation of the upper body. When using proper technique, a Nordic pole walker engages 90 per cent of all muscles as oppose to the 40 per cent used when walking normally.

The exercise is low-impact and low-intensity. Holliday said it's easily accessible to anyone of any age.

"I'd say around 70 per cent of Canadians like to get



out and go for a regular walk," she said. "But pole walking is much better. They call it the pilates of walking."

Holliday started using Nordic pole walking to treat clients two years ago. She said it was a good way to expand her knowledge base and treat clients in new and interesting ways. When she happened to see people using the poles incorrectly at Amherstburg's Libro Centre, she said she saw offering classes as good way to give back to the community.

Holliday taught her first class Wednesday to a group of 12. She covered how to properly use the poles and gave an introduction to basic pole walking technique. After a short demonstration, her pupils turned theory into practice and began making their ways around the

centre's indoor track

Jackie Bump said she is one of the people who had been using the poles incorrectly. She uses exercise as a form of meditation. She said it relaxes her and brings her peace. Now that Holliday has taught her how to use the poles correctly, she's happy to have another way to go about keeping in shape.

"It's going to take a while to get used to the poles," she said. "But I'll be walking around town with them. People will see me. They can laugh, but that's okay. That's how you start trends, right?"

Holliday said after Tuesday's success she plans to continue offering Nordic pole walking classes. Her next one is scheduled for some time in July and she said she will also give one at the Seniors' Expo Oct. 1.

27- Wednesday, August 1, 2018

St. Vincent de Paul Society Shoppe now open at new location

Ribbon cut at new 61 Murray St. location

By Jonathan Martin

Amherstburg's St. Vincent de Paul Society Shoppe is officially open for business at its new location.

The store has been open to the public for a couple weeks already, but July 28 was marked by its actual ribbon cutting.

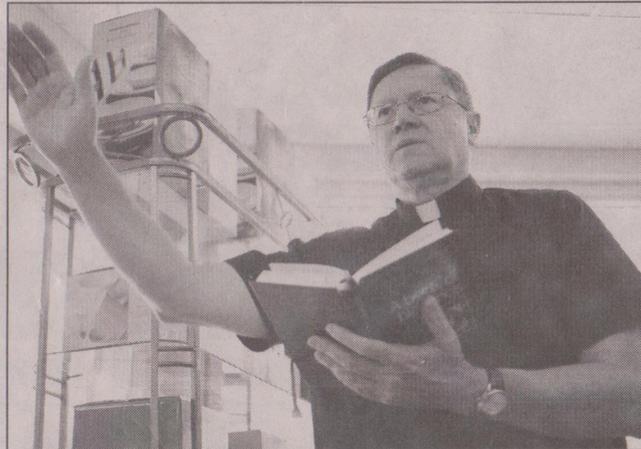
Previously located at 263 Dalhousie Street, the thrift shop has moved around the corner to 61 Murray Street.

Amherstburg Mayor Aldo DiCarlo showed up with a brand-new pair of gold-plated scissors for the occasion.

After the store received a blessing by Father Brian Jane, St. John the Baptist Catholic Church's pastor, DiCarlo cut a red ribbon in front of the shop's doors.

"Things like this are very important to communities," DiCarlo said. "Especially communities the size of Amherstburg. Small communities rely heavily on organizations that give back to their towns and (the Society of St. Vincent de Paul) gives back in so many ways."

Inside the store, there was a spinning wheel that gave customers the chance to win discounts



St. John the Baptist Catholic Church pastor Fr. Brian Jane says a prayer at Amherstburg's St. Vincent de Paul Society Shoppe on its grand reopening at its new location on Murray St..

alongside refreshments.

Rosanne Winger, general manager of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, said the public response to St. Vinnie's new location has been positive so far, even before their official opening.

"People seem to be liking the new space," she said. "It's cozy and fresh and newly-painted."

She said the store isn't fully set up, though. By next week, Winger hopes to have signage for and access to a garage door to accommodate those wanting to donate items.

Donation bins will also remain in the parking lot.

Wednesday, July 18, 2018

SPORTS › LIFE › ANNOUNCEMENTS › CLASSIFIEDS ›

"Lights Out at the Libro" held by Fighting Island Boxing Club

By Jonathan Martin

Beer, sweat and blood all flowed freely at the Libro Centre last Saturday.

Fighting Island Boxing Club hosted its "Lights Out at the Libro" event, where 20 amateur boxers fought it out in front of professional judges and a screaming crowd.

The card included athletes from a variety of age brackets and one women's bout. There was also a 50/50 draw and a raffle for a boxing-themed still-life painting with a handmade frame sculpted by Amherstburg town councillor Leo Meloche, who said he had never attended a boxing match before.

According to Fighting Island Boxing Club owner/coach Joe LeBlanc, the event went "pretty well."

LeBlanc said that he had originally scheduled 18 boxers to compete, but lost almost half of them in the days leading up to the event.

"It tends to happen in amateur sports," he said. "Either people back out or have other obligations. It is what it is."

Those who did compete, though, did "fantastic," according to LeBlanc.

"It's not about winning or losing in a



RTT PHOTO BY JONATHAN MARTIN

**Nate DiPasquale strikes Quentin Broad in the last bout of the night.
DiPasquale walked away victorious.**

club show," he said. "It's all about entertaining the public and getting these young athletes the experience in the ring."

LeBlanc said that as long as the boxers learned something in this local event they could use in one of the larger travel tournaments, their bout was a

win.

Nate DiPasquale is an Amherstburg native who finished off the night with a bloodied face, a win and a smile. He said the night benefited everyone.

"It was really great seeing all these people come out," he said. "Getting the community together like this, it's good for the club and it's good for the town."

**See additional photos
from last Saturday night's
boxing card on Page 26!**

DiPasquale said fighting in front of his home community was both unique and empowering. He said seeing the faces and hearing the cheers gave him a boost, but he had to reconcile that emotion with the cold precision of an intense, six-minute bout.

"You have to sort of block it all out and just focus on the other guy, where his hands are and where your head is," he said. "(Family and friends) will be there to celebrate with you afterwards."

The audience's tickets cost \$20 apiece, with all the proceeds going back into Fighting Island's non-profit programming.

Jack Morris Auctions Inc.

AUCTION REMINDER

Saturday, June 23 at 10:00 am

For Deanna Lowe & the estate of Rick Lowe at 4850 South Sideroad, Amherstburg.

Selling Rick Lowe's Electrical Contracting Supplies, Shop Equipment, Bicycles & Household

Terms cash, debit, Visa, MC.
3% premium on Visa & MC.

Auctioneer: Jack Morris, 519-687-2530
Details & photos at www.jackmorrisauctions.com



The River Town Times will be
CLOSED
on Monday, July 2nd in observance
of Canada Day and will reopen on
July 3rd at 9:00AM

The Advertising deadline is Thursday,
June 28th at Noon.

amherstburg RIVER TOWN **TIMES**

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"McGregor News" presentation packs community centre

By Ron Giofu & Jonathan Martin

A pair of events have been held recently in McGregor by the Town of Essex, but Amherstburg had some involvement in both.

The Essex Municipal Heritage Committee presented "McGregor News," a presentation that explored the first 25 years of the Village of McGregor. The village is currently split between Essex and Amherstburg down Walker Road.

The evening had some Amherstburg involvement too, as it was held in collaboration with the Marsh Historical Collection.

After tours of St. Clement Church, people made their way into the McGregor Community Centre where retired librarian Nancy Brown made a presentation on the origins of McGregor along with events and people that shaped the community.

"The bulk of the information came from volume one of the McGregor News," explained Brown. "McGregor had its own column in The Amherstburg Echo from 1875-1900."

Timber was a big draw in McGregor's early years. "That was the big resource at that time," said Brown. Despite being a predominantly French village, it was

named for William McGregor, whose background included being an Essex County warden and Member of Parliament.

After men such as Thomas Adair and Thomas Ouellette started buying up land in and around the "Walker Path," now known as Walker Road, the timber industry started booming with Hiram Walker wanting lumber to build railway cars. Rail lines stretched from Walkerville to Kingsville. Sawmills also went up in and around McGregor, which was known for its tall trees.

During its first 25 years, McGregor had six butchers, two meat markets, three harness shops, five shoemakers, nine barbers, eight blacksmiths and much more.

"It's hard to imagine there was so much activity back in those days," said Brown.

While fires in 1881, 1890 and 1891 caused damage including the warping of train tracks, there was still much activity including the construction of schools and churches.

An original wood framed church was built in 1880 while the current St. Clement Church was built in 1903.

"Just like today, there were fundraisers for things," said Brown.

Continued on Page 14



A group of volunteers were part of a recent clean-up in McGregor.

SPECIAL TO THE RTT

Royal Canadian Legion Br. 157 conducts grave decoration day

By Jonathan Martin

A solemn, uniformed procession lined the pathways of Rose Hill Cemetery Sunday in honour of deceased members of the Royal Canadian Legion and returned veterans who died over the past year.

Members of the Legion, Cadet Corps., Knights of Columbus and the community at large went through the cemetery, looking for graves marked by service records. When one was found, a small paper Canadian flag was planted next to the name.

"This is our way of paying respect to this past year's fallen Legion members and veterans," said Cpt. Jeff Turner, commanding officer of the 202nd Fort Malden Windsor Regiment Army Cadet Corps.

Turner said the day, termed "flag decoration day," is about paying homage to veterans who returned home from service and then died on Canadian soil.

The parade stopped twice before spreading out over the graveyard. Both times, bagpipes sounded and large flags were taken down from the cemetery's flagpoles. Legion members solemnly folded the old, faded flags and then replaced them with new ones.

"That's something we started a couple



(Above) Amherstburg town councillor Diane Pouget plants a flag on a veteran's grave with Cpt. Jeff Turner, commanding officer of the 202nd Fort Malden Windsor Regiment Army Cadet Corps. (Right) The 202nd Fort Malden Windsor Regiment Army Cadet Corps., Royal Canadian Legion Br. 157 and the Amherstburg Knights of Columbus march down the paths of Rose Hill Cemetery Sunday. The groups planted flags on veterans' graves as a show of thanks for their service.

years ago," Turner said. "We noticed the cemetery's flags were in disrepair, so we started replacing them every year."

This year, though, there was a hitch in the ceremony. The ropes and grommets from the flagpoles are twisted and worn. Getting the flags back up was difficult.

Councillor Diane Pouget attended the event and shook her head at the state of the flagpoles.

"I'm going to go back to the town and explain to them that they need some work done here," she said. "The Legion is very, very important to the Town of Amherstburg. I'm sure they'll be willing to participate in this project."

Pouget thanked the veterans and active service members in the crowd for their service and planted a flag of her own on a few of the cemetery's



gravestones and markers.

"We are very, very grateful for everything you have done and continue to do in the service of our community," Pouget said, addressing the crowd. "It is important that we honour those men and women who left our town knowing full-well they might not return. Today is about that."

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Local children safer thanks to car seat clinic

By Jonathan Martin

There were more minivans than fire trucks at Amherstburg Fire Station 1 recently as Safe Seats Save Children (SSSC) ran a car seat clinic.

SSSC is made up of volunteers who took courses in car seat inspection and now travel around Windsor and Essex County teaching parents how to keep their children safe on the road. The car seat clinic was brought to Amherstburg thanks to the Community Based Policing Committee.

Cathie Hedges has been working with the 20-year-old organization for around a decade. She said during her time with SSSC, parents have been coming

to the workshops with more and more knowledge.

"I think the media has a lot to do with (informing parents about car seat safety)," she said. "(Information) is easily accessible, so people are always out there looking. They also promote it in doctors' offices and hospitals."

Gioia Levesque works at Windsor Regional Hospital, which gives new parents pointers about how to prepare their child for the ride home. She is also the chair of the SSSC committee.

"I work in the neonatal intensive care unit," Levesque said. "I hear a lot of parents say, 'I'll just go to the fire station for the (car seat) clinic.' I tell them that we don't have one certified fire-

fighter in Essex County who is part of our committee or has been training. We just use their facilities to help us with the cars."

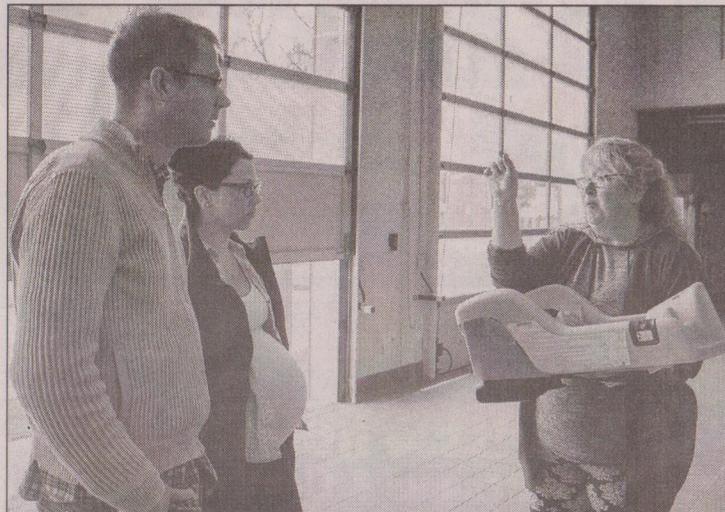
Levesque urges parents to attend a clinic whenever one is held in their area.

Joseph and Dawn Sobol pulled into the fire station's garage with two car seats in the back of their minivan, but no children to fill them. That is, no children yet. Joseph said he wants to be sure everything is ready by the time his

and Dawn's twin girls are born.

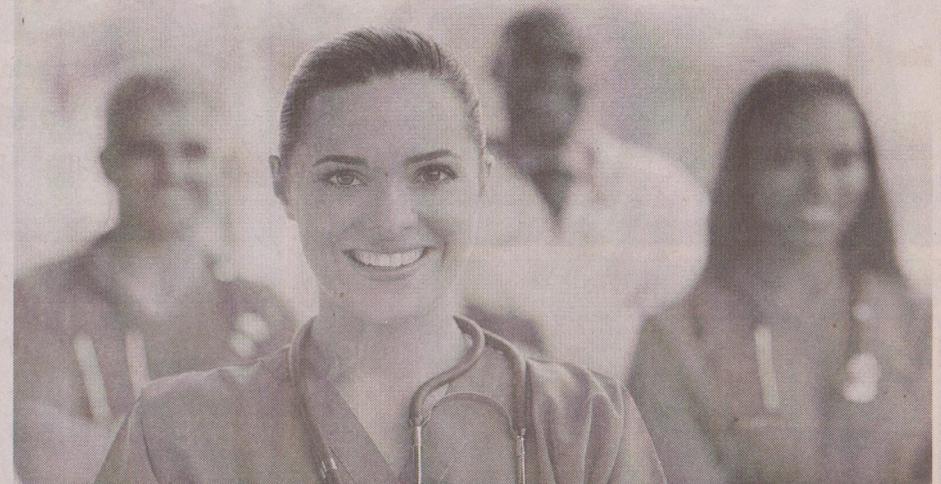
"Safety is obviously the number one thing on our minds right now," he said. "As adults, we know how to take care of ourselves. When you have a child who's small and fragile, as a parent, you want to make sure everything is perfect. You're afraid of unknowns."

He and Dawn listened carefully as Hedges showed them how to set everything up. By the time the Sobols pulled away, the car seats were ready and waiting for their charges.



Joseph Sobol (left) and Dawn Deslippe-Sobol learn about car seat safety from Cathie Hedges (right) at a Safe Seats Save Children workshop at Fire Station 1. The Sobols are expecting twin girls, their first children.

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PUBLIC ROAD DEDICATION

In Memory of Bruno Casanova

Amherstburg's 1st Arena & Community Centre Manager

October 11, 2008

AMBA teams with Kids Curing Cancer on "Fun Day" event



Lily Mallen, Ty Baillargeon and Kierstyn Baillargeon, all eight, sell baked goods at the Kids Curing Cancer booth, which was set up at Centennial Park in partnership with the Amherstburg Minor Baseball Association.

By Jonathan Martin

The Amherstburg Minor Baseball Association (AMBA) is throwing knuckleballs at cancer.

The group partnered with Kids Curing Cancer (KCC) during its annual baseball fun day to raise funds to help fight the disease. KCC set up a tent near the baseball diamonds at Centennial Park, where twins Kierstyn, and Ty Baillargeon, two of the three siblings who founded the organization, sold sweets, raffle tickets and accepted donations.

Meanwhile, the twins' peers knocked baseballs off tees and lobbed softballs around in diamond-wide games of

catch. The twins said they were unfazed by being left out of the fun; they prefer hockey anyway.

Brook Lippert organized the day's partnership between AMBA and KCC. She's the convener of AMBA's T-Ball division. This isn't her first experience working with the Baillargeons. She coached them during their own T-Ball playing days and has been friends with the family for years.

"My mom had cancer, so this is a cause that hits very close to home," Lippert said.

Lippert's mother's bout with cancer in 2010 sparked "Brook's Ride For Hope," a fundraising snowmobile run Lippert started in 2012.

Now, though, she said she's more than happy to help out the Baillargeons and Jodi Baillargeon, the kids' mother, said she's glad to have it.

"We showed up this morning and found that she had already done everything," Baillargeon said. "This is all Brook."

Lippert put together pledge forms for each of AMBA's teams to fill out. The team that brought in the most donations would win themselves a bowling party at Amherstburg's Fort Fun Centre.

Lippert donated the bowling party herself.

All funds raised during the baseball fun day will be donated to the Fight

Like Mason Foundation, which KCC has partnered with for the second year in a row.

Annually, siblings Lauren, 13; Ty, 8, and Kierstyn, 8, choose a charity to give all the money they raise throughout the previous 12 months.

KCC has also teamed with the Amherstburg Minor Hockey Association and the Amherstburg Admirals in the past on similar fundraising events.

At the time of writing, the total amount of money raised throughout the day has not been announced, but RTT has been assured that the results will be made available on the organization's Facebook page.

HDHS students speak out against PARC proposal

By Jonathan Martin

Following the final public presentation of the Program and Accommodation Review Committee (PARC) proposals May 12, Harrow District High School students have decided to speak for themselves.

One of the three proposals, all of which PARC will present to the Greater Essex County District School Board June 2, includes the closure of Harrow High in favour of its consolidation with Kingsville District High School.

When superintendent of education - accommodations Todd Awender opened the floor to the public, a line of students sporting t-shirts reading "I love HDHS" stepped up to the microphone.

"The Harrow Hawks have realized that their lives outside of school actually do revolve around the high school itself," said grade 11 HDHS student Matthew Broser. "The students of Harrow High cannot be moved just to fill classrooms elsewhere."

Broser emphasized that the connection he feels with the Harrow community stems from the resources shared between it and its small school. He said the sense of unity would be lost in a larger school acting independently of its community.

Harrow High alumna Klair Salter sympathizes with Broser.

"I feel like we're the only school here who has to fight," she said. "We are going to fight for this school."

Salter said she thinks exploring Premier Kathleen Wynne's community hub concept may help GECDsB find an alternative to closing the school. Community hubs will use existing public spaces, including schools, as locations through which to coordinate multiple public services.

"It (community hub planning) is in the very prelimi-

nary phases at the ministry level right now," Awender said. "What that is actually going to look like is something that will come in the future."

Mayor Aldo DiCarlo said the town is still investigating its options. He said his goal is to cause its students as little pain as possible.

"We're keeping everything open at this point," he said. "But hearing from both General Amherst High School and Western Secondary School, it sounds like one big new school to hold Amherst and Western would be nice."

He added that he is aware of some concerns that were over the differences in curriculum between Western and Amherst and how it may impact students' academic performance. He said the town is working as closely as possible with GECDsB so they can cooperatively make the best choices for the students.

Awender said there will be a final committee meeting, after which the revised proposals will be presented to the GECDsB for a trustee vote.

As they exist now, the three proposals are as follows:

PROPOSAL 1

- Maintain Western Secondary School and expand its programming.
- Implement community hubs in Amherstburg, Harrow and Kingsville.
- Maintain Harrow District high School until a JK-12 school is built.
- Build a new JK-12 school in Kingsville.
- General Amherst High School remains unchanged.

PROPOSAL 2

- Move General Amherst High School and Western Secondary School to a newly-built school in Amherstburg, but maintain separate programming.
- Implement community hubs in Amherstburg, Harrow



Matthew Broser, a grade 11 student at Harrow District High School, eyes the camera while speaking to superintendent Todd Awender at the final public PARC meeting in Kingsville last Tuesday night. Broser voiced his concerns over the proposed closure of Harrow high.

and Kingsville.

-Establish a JK-12 school in Harrow.

-Build a JK-12 school in Kingsville.

PROPOSAL 3

-Consolidate Harrow District High School and Kingsville District high School.

-Close Harrow District High School and move grade seven and eight students back to Harrow Public School.

-Build a JK-12 school in Kingsville.

-Move Western Secondary School and the Adaptive Basic program to General Amherst High School as a separate program.

-Allow Literary Design Collaborative students to return to their home schools or to attend General Amherst High School.

Co-An Park turns 40, tree dedications part of ceremony



The friends and supporters of the late Robert Anderson hold a brick on which his name is carved in front of a tree that was planted in his name. They planted the tree in Co-An Park, which he helped beautify during his time on its organizing committee.



Murray Sellars and his friends stand in front of a tree that was planted in Co-An Park to honour his contributions to its development.

By Jonathan Martin

Co-An Park has turned 40 and its patrons have thrown it a birthday party. Folks gathered around two small trees last Saturday in recognition of the contributions Robert Anderson and Murray Sellars made to the park.

Co-An Park is run through a collaboration between the municipalities of Essex and Amherstburg (formerly Colchester and Anderdon, respectively). One council member and three community members from each municipality make up a committee that runs the park.

Every year, the committee chooses two people who have contributed to the improvement of the park and plant a tree in their name.

Murray Sellars currently sits on the Co-An Park committee. Robert Anderson was a former member who died in 2017. Leo Meloche is Amherstburg town council's representative on the committee. As stones with Sellars' and Anderson's names were placed in front of the trees' trunks, Meloche spoke about their legacies.

"Bob truly dedicated his life to his family and to his fellow man and we

thank his family for allowing us to celebrate his achievements today," he said. "Murray, we thank you for your service and dedication to your community and to the Co-An Park. Please accept this tree as a memento of our gratitude."

Essex Deputy Mayor Richard Meloche is the official representative for his municipality.

Kenneth Holden was one of the first people to work on the park as it stands today. Forty years ago, he landed a spot on the board and started working on the park's fences and seating. Today, he simply likes to volunteer.

Last Saturday, as he cooked up steaks for the park's hungry baseball players, he reminisced about years gone by.

"We finished the bleachers on Christmas Eve," he said. "We were sitting there in the freezing cold, working on them. That was 20 or 25 years ago and they're still here."

He said that over the past few decades, he's seen the park improve dramatically. He said a lot of work has gone into making it what it is today, but that the work is worth it.

As kids whooped at the crack of a baseball bat, he smiled.

Fundraiser held for transverse myelitis patient on his 15th birthday

By Jonathan Martin



A local youth celebrated his 15th birthday in a big way this past Sunday.

A fundraising dinner, complete with live entertainment and door prizes, was held at the AMA Sportsmen's Club both in celebration of his birthday – he turned 15 on the 15th – and as a way to cover some of the costs associated with his treatment.

Phoenix MacDonald-Gagnon is fighting against transverse myelitis, a type of spinal cord inflammation that prevents signals from passing through the spinal

Phoenix MacDonald-Gagnon celebrated his 15th birthday last Sunday with a fundraiser in his honour at the AMA Sportsmen Association.

cord into the rest of the body.

For now, MacDonald-Gagnon is restricted to a wheelchair, but he's been making steady progress since his diagnosis last year, according to his aunt, Kari Dufour. She said that for now, the family is dealing with each challenge as it comes. One of those challenges is accessibility.

Phoenix and his mother, Betty-Joe MacDonald, spend their weekdays at Holland Bloorview Kids' Rehabilitation Hospital in Toronto. On the weekends, they come back South to stay with Misti and Wayne Moyer.

The house in which they're staying is not designed with wheelchair-accessibility in mind, according to MacDonald, so the next big project will be renovating the residence.

MacDonald said she hasn't been given an official figure yet, but she estimates the price tag for construction will sit somewhere between \$15,000 and \$20,000.

"It's not easy," she said. "We have good healthcare, but there are a lot of things that aren't covered."

Dufour said they applied to receive funding from the March of Dimes Canada, the Rehabilitation Foundation for Disabled Persons, but were denied. She said for now it looks like the family will be paying out-of-pocket.

Still, the MacDonalds are remaining in high spirits, especially on Phoenix's special day.

"It's really special to see all these supporters," he said.

"He's amazing," said Dufour. "He went in to see the head neurologist in the London hospital, and (the neurologist) used words like 'incredible.' He couldn't believe how far Phoenix has come in such a short amount of time."

Betty-Joe said that Phoenix has some movement in his arms, which she said is something the doctors told her Phoenix would be unlikely to achieve.

"We're hopeful that one day he'll have enough strength to walk again," she said. "For now, hope is definitely the key."

First-ever Escape Room Festival held at Fort Malden National Historic Site



RTT PHOTO BY JONATHAN MARTIN

Christopher Slickboer tries to figure out the combination on a lock in Breakout Kingsville's escape room at Fort Malden National Historic Site of Canada last Saturday. The escape room was one of eight at Fort Malden National Historic Site of Canada's first escape room festival.

By Jonathan Martin

Fort Malden National Historic Site of Canada has held its first escape room festival.

The festival featured eight escape rooms – interactive, narrative-based puzzle rooms – and participants were allowed to pick five to escape from. Fort Malden interpretation officer Alex Dale organized the event and he said he had wanted to expand the escape rooms already offered by Fort Malden but wasn't sure how to do it without disrupting the historic site's other programs.

Dale said the best course of action seemed to be to simply "have a day of fun" and bring the area's escape room aficionados together all at once.

Dale put together some all-new escape rooms with help from his staff. He said creating the puzzles for the rooms is challenging but rewarding.

"I like to keep things tactile," he said. "I want to engage people by forcing them to interact with their environments."

Dale also brought in three professional escape room companies to plan and operate four of the eight offered at the event. Hidden Trail Escape Room, Breakout Kingsville and Exodus Windsor Escape Room showed up, riddles in hand, to confound the day's parkgoers.

Dustin Vermast is one of the co-owners of Breakout Kingsville.

His room, specially created for the day by managing director Adam Cole, brought participants into the tent of a mid-1920s era traveling magician.

Eventgoers were promised a magic show, but the magician, Mr. Hocus, was nowhere to be found. In his place was a letter promising access to his magical secrets – and a future of riches and renown – if whomever found his letter could solve his puzzles and open his chest.

Unfortunately for those who are proficient at

puzzle-solving, Mr. Hocus is a dark magician. The only things in his chest were pieces of evidence that incriminated whomever touched them.

Those who beat the puzzles lost the game.

The tent Vermast brought to Fort Malden is one piece of a larger narrative, according to Cole. Mr. Hocus has two other rooms dedicated to him at Breakout Kingsville's actual facility.

For Cole, this room was an opportunity to further explore the character he has built a universe around. Hocus' newspaper clippings, the photos on his armoire, his knickknacks and decorations and personal effects – even his choice of music – all said something about the man Breakout Kingsville dreamed up while fully-immersing the player into that dream.

For Vermast, as much as it was about the art of expanding an ongoing narrative universe, it was also about breaking into a new market.

Continued on Page 14



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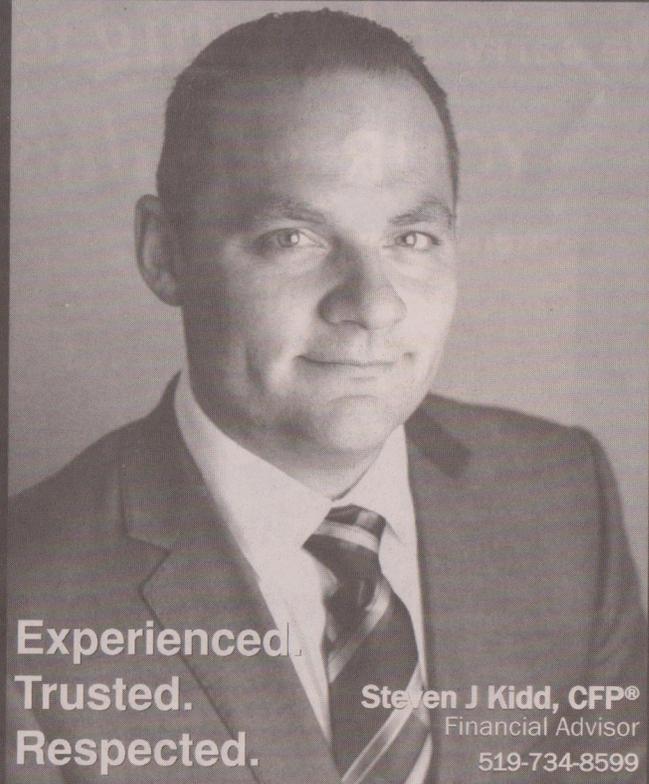
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General Amherst welcomes area Grade 8 students



RTT PHOTO BY
JONATHAN
MARTIN

Student council prime minister Dani Leroux speaks to a gym full of prospective Grade 9 students.

By Jonathan Martin

High School, hoping to figure out what the next four years of their lives might look like.

Grade 8 students have toured General Amherst High School. The estimated 100 or so students gathered in the

Prospective students visit General Amherst

Continued from Page 5

The lawsuit was made public Jan. 6, hours before Amherst's open house began.

Despite Musyj's absence, GAHS principal Hazel Keefner was pleased with the way the night played out.

"We usually have a really good turnout," she said. "I think most families from our feeder schools came. We also got some families from other boards."

She said the 100 or so visitors usually translate into 150 or so enrolments, though the numbers tend to fluctuate.

"As a general trend, enrolment has been declining," said Keefner. "But that's not unique to General Amherst. That's a trend in general."

The Greater Essex County District School Board's board of trustees approved several motions designed to address the growing number of empty desks in October.

The plans include the closure of Harrow District High School and the construction of a new dual-campus high school, which will house both General Amherst and Western Secondary School.

September's enrolment numbers are uncertain, since prospective students are not expected to submit their enrolment packages until February.

Keefner said she will treat next year's Grade 9's the same regardless of how many or how few they turn out to be.

"Every year I speak with the Grade 8's when they come in Grade 9," she said. "I make a practice of asking them what they like about high school."

Grade 12 student Danielle Leroux said what she loves about GAHS is the same now as it was when she first started.

"When you walk through those doors you're not a

jock, you're not a geek, you're not a popular, you're not a band kid," she said. "Here, at this school, you're an Amherst student and a Bulldog."

Leroux is Amherst's student council prime minister. She joined the club in Grade 9 and has kept at it throughout all four years.

"Student council at Amherst focuses greatly on everyone benefiting from all activities," said Leroux. "It has provided me with some of my best experiences ever."

Aly Cauchi, 13, is getting ready to graduate from Anderdon Public School. So far, she has looked at Walkerville Collegiate and General Amherst as potential settings for the next chapter of her academic story.

Of the two schools, Amherst seems to best match what she envisions, largely because of what Leroux said to the visitors in the gym.

"I like the programs and I like the clubs," she said. "There's a lot of variety in the types of clubs offered."

Because of her interest in performance art, Cauchi was, at first, sure Walkerville would end up being her choice.

"At first, when I saw (Amherst), I wasn't too sure (it would be the right fit)," she said. "But then I came in and I met the people and it was a good experience."

Now, General Amherst is at the top of her list. Despite how far off September is, she's excited to start.

The school also held a Grade 9 scratch art contest with winners being announced that night as well. Those winners included Vanessa Pidutti (first place), Alyssa Herd (second place) and a third place tie between Madison Sulja and Halle Kejick.

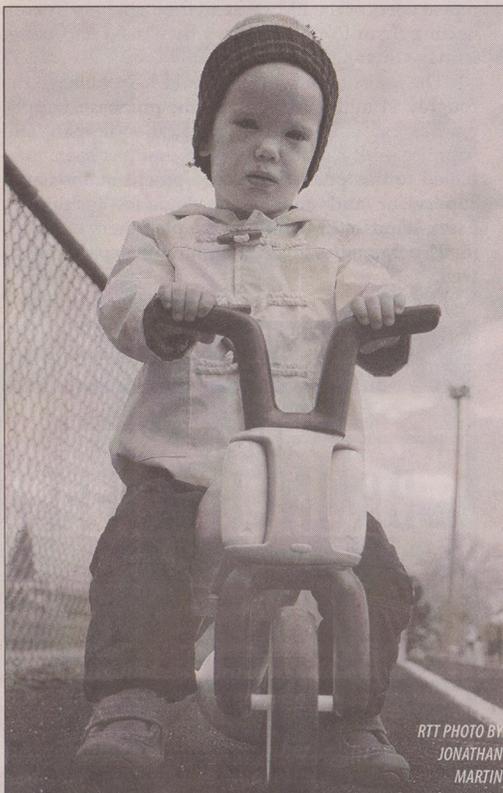
school's gymnasium last week, where faculty, current students and distinguished alumni lauded what they believe GAHS has to offer.

Notably absent, however, was 1987 GAHS alumnus David Musyj. Today, Musyj is president and CEO of Windsor Regional Hospital. According to Amherst's guidance head Chere Tulett, Musyj had to cancel his appearance because he was "dealing with lots of media."

Windsor Regional Hospital is facing a \$10 million lawsuit based on allegations of unfairness in its proposed acute care facility's building site selection process.

Continued on Page 11

Bike rodeo teaches young riders the rules of the road



RTT PHOTO BY JONATHAN MARTIN

By Jonathan Martin

Amherstburg police, Rotary Club members and Optimist Club volunteers took some time out of their schedules recently to teach children about bike safety.

Amherstburg's bike rodeo, which was created by the Optimist Club in the mid-'90s, is hosted annually. For the past few years, it has been held at Centennial Park's running track.

This year, volunteers handed out safety equipment like helmets and reflectors, taught children the rules of the road and presented blue ribbons to those who completed an obstacle course.

Brandon Renaud has been involved with the Optimist Club for around 15 years and served as club president for the past five. He said the rodeo was shut down for a few years in the early

2000s because membership was down and gathering enough volunteers to run it was difficult.

Now that the rodeo is back up and running, Renaud said he's reminded of why it was started in the first place. "We've got to make sure all these kids know what they're doing," he said. "That way, if they're out in traffic they know all the proper signals, what side of the road to be on, make sure their bikes are all lit up so cars can see them and know what to do so there are no incidents."

The rules of the road were taught to young cyclists by local police. As the children rolled across the track, men and women in uniform showed them how to signal, how to check their surroundings and then congratulated them when they succeeded.

Amherstburg police Const. Steve



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Two-year-old Teddy Jacob rides his tricycle on Centennial Park's track at the 2016 Amherstburg Bike Rodeo May 14. Amherstburg police, Rotarians and members of the Optimist Club spent the day teaching children how to stay safe while they ride (left).

Amherstburg police chief Tim Berthiaume and Mayor Aldo DiCarlo joined Rotarians, Optimists, and other police officers (including Const. Steve Owen, left) at the bike rodeo at Centennial Park May 14 (above).

Owen, liaison to the Amherstburg Community Based Policing Committee, said congratulations are in order for the program's success.

"We want to be sure children know the rules of the road as they get older, so we start at a young age," he said. "Along with the education, we encourage kids to have fun on their bikes, be active and lead a healthy lifestyle. We want them to enjoy it."

Amherstburg's Rotary Club worked alongside the police and the Optimist Club during the event. Rotarians handed out helmets, reflectors, bike locks and streamers to young cyclists. Rotary president-elect Laura George-Jurilj said she sees the effectiveness of bike safety education.

"In this day and age, kids don't know

any different than to wear a helmet because that's just how they were raised," George-Jurilj said. "I think we, as adults, need to be an example of being responsible and give our kids the tools to have fun on their bikes."

Ted Jacob's two children, Chloe, 4, and Teddy, 2, have been riding tricycles since they were a year old. Jacobs said the bike rodeo was an excellent way for his children to receive the tools they need, but was also a chance to become familiar with police officers.

"I want them to know that police are friends," Jacobs said. "I also heard there was a bouncy castle."

Chloe made her favourite part of the event perfectly clear.

"Bouncy castle!" she cried.

The 2016 Motorcycle Ride for Dad is this Sunday. It starts in Windsor at 10 a.m. with Royal Canadian Legion Br. 157 in Amherstburg being the first stop. Keep an eye out for the hundreds of bikes expected to roar into town!

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RTT PHOTO BY JONATHAN MARTIN

House of Shalom Fundraiser Sold Out

*Kevin Jarvis performs at the
AMA Sportsmen Club on Sept. 11.
The club hosted a fundraising dinner for
the House of Shalom.
Tickets were sold out and the House
raised approximately \$1,000.*

Public board hears concerns over school closure recommendations

By Jonathan Martin

The Town of Amherstburg has offered to work with the Greater Essex County District School Board on the construction of a new General Amherst High School. Amherstburg's chief administrative officer John Miceli, Councillor Rick Fryer and Councillor Leo Meloche stood beside local lawyer Anthony Leardi as he made his presentation at a GECDsB meeting Sept. 15.

Leardi spoke to the Program and Accommodation Review Committee just prior to the presentation of a report co-authored by Superintendent of Education – Accommodations Todd Awender and Director of Education Erin Kelly.

The report outlines the reasons Kelly and Awender recommend the closure of Harrow District High School and Western Secondary School. The report, which was released online Sept. 14, has been met with resistance from those who would be directly affected by the closures.

Harrow resident Mike Munger approached the microphone with the HDHS mascot, a blue hawk, standing just to his right.

"If we close the schools in this town we're gonna have trouble getting people coming in here to work," he said. "I spoke with a guy we were trying to hire as a medical director and his answer was, 'Well, I'd be

very interested, but if you don't have any schools I'm not gonna work in a town where my kids gotta be busied out to some other town to go to school."

Turning to the board members, he added: "If the community of Harrow decided to do this, it's their place and they have the right. You do not have the right to change our town."

Mary McLaughlan's son, Stephen, is a Western graduate. He is also a special needs student.

"Nobody is speaking up for our special education students and making them a priority," said McLaughlan.

When Stephen was in grade school McLaughlan and her husband found themselves having to "advocate for support" on behalf of their son. When he began attending Western, she said Stephen received the attention he needed. McLaughlan attributes this to the specialized training Western's staff receives in dealing with special needs students.

"If we close Western," she said, "students who should be taking classes at the locally developed level will be taking applied classes and will struggle."

The directors report proposes that three new Adaptive Basic programs be opened in General Amherst High School, Kingsville District High School and Belle River District High School.

McLaughlan doesn't think special needs students will

want to attend Adaptive Basic programming while their peers follow a more traditional educational format within the same facility.

"When this PARC was started we had to consider the provincially mandated values: The value to the school board, value to the community, value to the local economy," said Leardi. "(The closure of Western) is being recommended to save money, so it's fair to ask how much money can be saved by closing Western."

Closing Western would save the board \$610,000 annually according to the directors report. Based on the GECDsB's projections for the 2015-16 fiscal year, Leardi estimates the board's savings to be fourteen hundredths of a percentage point of the total budget.

"I think the real issue we're struggling with is the issue of each building's backlogged capital repair cost," Leardi said.

Continued on Page 4

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Centennial Park, Libro Centre suggested as school sites

Continued from Page 3

According to the GECDsB's 2014-15 Accommodation and Capital Planning Report, General Amherst High School's Facility Condition Index will reach 108 per cent within five years and renewal needs will rise to over \$30 million. The report states, "It is time for these challenges to be addressed." Leardi said a new 1,000 student school would cost the

board approximately \$25 million, far less than what it would cost to maintain Amherst's status quo. He offered both Centennial Park and the Libro Centre as possible building sites.

The Libro Centre site is already fully-accessible to persons with a disability. When asked whether a school built on the site could be designed with Western students in

mind, Leardi said there is "no doubt." At 149 acres, the Libro site could fit somewhere in the area of 40 General Amherst schools and could easily accommodate the population of both schools.

The GECDsB's Capital request must be submitted to the Ministry of Education by Oct. 31. From there, the ministry will decide whether or not to offer the board funding.

New initiative hopes to bring big sporting events to town

By Jonathan Martin

The first step in a new sport tourism initiative has been taken.

A meeting held at the Libro Centre last Thursday evening brought together business owners, town officials and local sporting community leaders in hopes of transforming Amherstburg into a prime athletic destination.

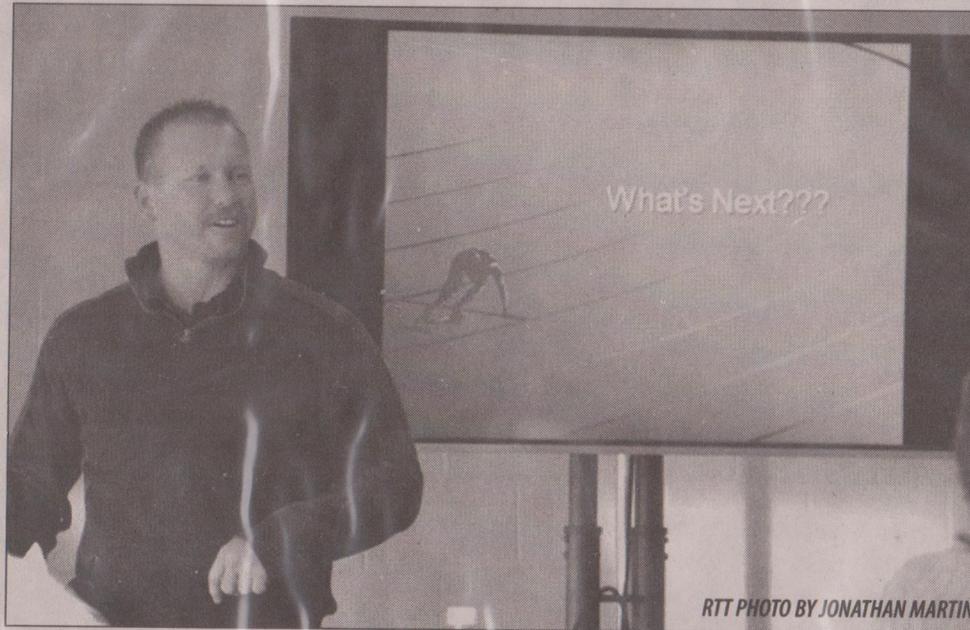
Amherstburg's business development and programs manager, Rick Daly, said he held the meeting because he feels Amherstburg has the potential to hold major sporting events.

Daly, who worked in sport tourism for 27 years, said those types of events could be a major benefit to the community.

"We have this wonderful town," he said. "We have to drive people to it. I want to bring people to Amherstburg through sport tourism."

Libro Centre operations manager Mike Henry echoed Daly's thoughts and added that there's no reason not to add sports to the town's long list of recreational resources.

Those who attended the meeting broke off into groups and rated Amherstburg's resources on a scale of



RTT PHOTO BY JONATHAN MARTIN

Manager of business development and programming Rick Daly speaks at a sports tourism meeting held at the Libro Centre last Thursday evening.

one to five. Based off the ratings, they then discussed what needed to be added, changed or eliminated in order to optimize the town's ability to host a major sporting event.

"As far as I'm concerned," Henry said, "with Amherstburg being in its locale and considering its demographic and the logistics of its streets we need

to make this a destination for something."

Daly's ultimate goal for the meeting was to garner interest in its attendants and use them as the building blocks for a steering committee. From there, he said he hopes the committee will flesh out the vision and present it to the parties who can help them realize it.

Daly said he doesn't think it's unrealistic to expect a major sporting event in Amherstburg within a year's time.

RunningFlat race director and founder Chris Uszynski said he is sure someone from his company will be joining the steering committee.

"I think our experience and our knowledge of our market is integral to whatever plan we develop," he said.

RunningFlat hosts Windsor's Colour Run, the Run for Heroes Marathon, the Zombie Chase and numerous other runs both in Windsor-Essex and in the United States.

Uszynski said almost half of the runners who attend his events come from outside the area, but end up staying in Windsor because of its more plentiful accommodations.

"I'm not saying we need to build a 40-room hotel," Uszynski said. "Forty rooms won't help us. I'm talking about getting people to open their doors and welcome people into their homes."

Daly said he liked the ideas and insights presented at the meeting. He hopes to hear more.

"This is just a spark," he said. "Hopefully, that spark turns into a wildfire."

Amherstburg Farmers Market open for 2015 season

By Jonathan Martin

If the Amherstburg Farmers' Market were a flower, it would be a perennial.

The market, made up of vendors whose goods have been produced within 50 kilometers of Amherstburg, entered its sixth season of bloom Saturday at the Malden Community and Cultural Centre (MCCC).

Gwen McCloskey, whose uncle was one of its founders, has been managing the market for three years.

"I come from an agricultural family," she said. "We do this to support local farmers. I do this because I love it."

Amherstburg's manager of tourism and culture Anne Rota said she, too, is pleased with the support her local community offers the Amherstburg Farmers' Market.

This year, the market is hosting 12 vendors whose products range from things grown and caught to things built and made.

"I'm still working a regular job," said Efi Vasilodimitrakis of The Good Greek Bakery. "Jon is taking care of the bakery. So, we cook everything together as a family and we love it."

Passion is a common motivator for vendors' participation in the market.

Patricia Saunders, founder of Growing Urban, said the reason she joined up was to pollinate her hometown with creativity. She sells art and urban gardening tools.

"I want people to do more backyard gardening," she said. "It's a lot of fun. A lot of people don't think of it and I think it needs to happen more."

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Amherstburg Farmers Market open at two locations again in 2015

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The market will be held at the MCCC Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m.

On Tuesdays, the market will sprout at Toddy Jones Park in downtown Amherstburg. Vendors will be selling their wares there from 2 p.m. until 7 p.m.

McCloskey said there has also been entertainment planned between now and when the market wraps up Oct. 10. Each week there will be contests, games and other activities held that could earn the winners "Market Dollars" to spend at the vendors' stalls.

She added that she thinks there's a great deal of talent in Essex County and is glad she can help showcase it.

Skate Amherstburg receives WindsorEssex Community Foundation grant

By Jonathan Martin

Skate Amherstburg is sharpening up its online accessibility.

On Dec. 7, WindsorEssex Community Foundation donated \$500 to the registered charity as a means of supporting its transition to a new online system. The software, designed by Uplifter Inc., is a cloud-based filing system which connects all Skate Canada clubs using its services.

"All of our member data is sent to them automatically as opposed to having someone in the office needing to manually update the systems," said Skate Amherstburg president Lynn Fox. "The coaches can log in and

update the information. There are different skill sets needed for each (skating) level. The coaches will be able to log in and update that and then the skaters will be able to see it from their personal accounts at home."

In conjunction with the system upgrade, Fox is also updating the charity's accounting systems. Until recently, the only method of payment Skate Amherstburg could accept was cash or cheque. Now it supports Visa and MasterCard as well.

The \$500 handed to Fox at the Libro Centre by Executive Director of WECF Lisa Kolody will only be used to finance the online registration system.

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Grant awarded to Skate Amherstburg

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The accounting software, which cost around \$200, came out of pocket.

"This is a part of our fast-track grants," said Kolody. "They're smaller grants that we can give out for emerging needs in the community."

WECF's fast-track grants, which can amount up to \$1,000, are given out for use on specific projects. Any costs beyond what is involved with the specified project are not covered.

WECF offers a number of additional grants registered charities can apply for depending on its circumstance. The foundation's grants come from the interest accrued within an endowment fund. To date, the fund sits at around \$12.5 million. Last year, the WECF donated around \$140,000 to various charities within Windsor-Essex.

Kolody thinks the best part of working there is getting to see the effect the money she hands out has on the organizations she gives it to.

"I love it because on the one hand we're raising funds, but we're also helping grassroots organizations," she said.

Fox thinks being on the receiving end of the cheque feels just as good.

"I'm really excited," she said. "We started implementing it and so far the feedback that we've got is good. It's new and there's going to be some training required, but it's good. It's a great start."

Skate Amherstburg's CanSkate program is set to begin Jan. 4. Registration via Skate Amherstburg's new online registration system is open now.

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Twelve Amherst track stars off to OFSAA Western Regional



RTT PHOTO BY
 JONATHAN
 MARTIN

A number of General Amherst track and field athletes have advanced to the OFSAA Western Regional. (Top) Mike Nasello, Jasmine Hurst. (Bottom) Jaiden Mulder, Joseph Gignac, Keely Gibb. (Absent) Nia Holmes, Jared Capaldi

Twelve students from the General Amherst High School track and field team have qualified for the OFSSAA Western regionals.

The athletes competed at the SWOSSAA track and field championships, which were held on Wednesday, May 27 in Chatham and ran through Thursday,

May 21 in Windsor.

The OFSSAA Western regionals are set to be held in London on Friday, May 29 and Saturday, May 30.

The top four at the regionals will qualify for the biggest high school sporting event in North America: the OFSSAA all Ontario in Toronto on June 4, 5 and 6.



PHOTO BY LES HOLMES/SPECIAL TO THE RTT

Jasmine Hurst (far left) won the senior girls 100m hurdles with Jaiden Mulder (right) capturing the silver medal at last week's SWOSSAA track and field meet at the University of Windsor.

Amherst's 2015 SWOSSAA medal winners are as follows:

Gold: JASMINE HURST for Senior Girls' 100m – 14.71 sec

Gold: JASMINE HURST for Senior Girls' 100m hurdles – 14.71 sec

Gold: JARED CAPALDI for Senior Boys' 200m – 22.17 sec

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