



THE BEACON

of St. Clair Township

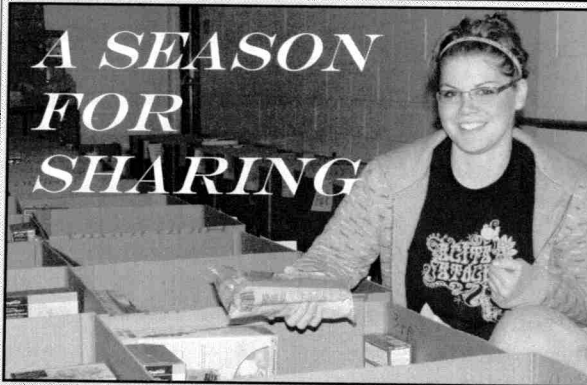
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Issue 1

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A SEASON FOR SHARING

For the fourth year in a row, Jessica Little of Corunna, a Grade 12 student at St. Clair Secondary School, volunteered her time to help assemble over 100 food and toy hampers for distribution to less fortunate families in north St. Clair Township. Little was one of many volunteers who helped to make the 2008 Operation Christmas Tree program a success.

Memories are all that is left of Christmas 2008 and for many of St. Clair Township's less fortunate families, these memories are a lot more pleasant than they would have been. These families received Christmas hampers filled with donated food and toys courtesy of Operation Christmas Tree in north St. Clair Township, and of the combined efforts of several organizations and service clubs in south St. Clair Township. It is estimated that between the two hamper programs, over 140 families and individuals were able to enjoy a merrier Christmas.

The spirit of sharing was wide-spread during the month of December, when many schools, churches, service clubs and other organizations undertook the collection of non-perishable food and toys. At Sir John Moore Community School in Corunna, the students accumulated an impressive donation of goods which was picked up by volunteer firefighters from the St. Clair Township Fire Department's Corunna station and taken to the Operation Christmas Tree col-

lection station at the former Murray Street Public School. This was typical of the way the whole community worked together on this worthwhile project.

Another very successful collection effort took place on Dec. 13 at the Corunna OPP satellite station, where the OPP drive-through donation station was staffed by Santa, OPP officers, members of the Corunna Community Policing Committee, members of the First Corunna Cubs and Scouts, the Optimist Club of Moore, Commissionaires Great Lakes representatives and several enthusiastic teen volunteers. This four-hour effort alone garnered four pickup truck loads of food, about 1,350 pounds of it, plus numerous toys and about \$750 in cash donations. OPP Sgt. Paul Futers says the drive-through event has grown in popularity since its inception four years ago. "Hard economic times bring out the best in people," he said, adding that children who have the opportunity to volunteer at this kind of fundraising event learn a valuable lesson in social responsibility. "It sets a good example to the kids and it strengthens society."

The Operation Christmas Tree program collected 12,700 items from local schools and garnered an overall total of 18,200 pounds of food (9.1 tons!)



Diane Tenant of Corunna drops off her contribution to Operation Christmas Tree at the OPP drive-through donation depot.

Photos by Bonnie Stevenson

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TO CONTACT US

Individuals, schools or organizations that wish to publicize a non-profit event or suggest feature story subjects or topics can do so free of charge by e-mailing:

beacon@twp.stclair.on.ca

or writing to: The Beacon, c/o St. Clair Civic Centre,
1155 Emily Street, Mooretown, Ont., N0N 1M0.

**The deadline for submissions is the
third Monday of each month.**

COUNCIL
NOTES

MPAC reps report to council

MPAC (Municipal Property Assessment Corporation) representatives recently attended the township's Committee of the Whole meeting to discuss the impacts of the recent reassessment on all property classes in St. Clair Township. The committee was informed that assessment increases would be phased in over a four-year period. Of special interest was the reduction in the assessment of the Lambton Generating Station (LGS) just south of Courtright. MPAC representative Dave Douglas said that a new protocol for MPAC was to assess the water intakes for the Ontario Power Generation facility. The LGS water intake was assumed to be more sophisticated than was actually the case, so the assessment on the property was reduced accordingly. Douglas then explained his rationale for the assessment reduction and assessment of approximately \$11 million due to the obsolescence of the facility. He stated that the main aim of determining a fair assessment is to determine what property is worth in a sale between a willing seller and a willing buyer. It was Douglas's opinion that, given the provincial mandate that coal generation will no longer be legal after Dec. 31, 2014, the value of the LGS property will be significantly decreased. This is because a willing buyer of the OPG

property would have only a relatively short time to generate a return on the investment.

In response to the committee's questions, Douglas said MPAC would revisit its position relative to the assessment if LGS does not, in fact, close at the end of 2014 or if the biomass-burning experiment is successful.

The committee and MPAC representatives also discussed, in general terms, a possible reassessment to develop a current base line to capture new buildings and facilities that may have been built without benefit of a building permit.

LHIN representatives
report to council


Representatives from the Erie St. Clair Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) visited a recent sitting of the Committee of the Whole to detail the history and the mandate of the organization. The committee was advised that the group administers an annual budget of \$910 million for hospital funding, community health centers and other health-related functions, excluding physicians, provincial drug plans, laboratory and ambulance services.

Ralph Ganter, a planner for the LHIN, explained a recent study that was undertaken to determine best practices and reduce wait times at all

emergency rooms. Ganter says the second draft of the small emergency room report is being reviewed by staff. The completed report should be presented to the board in January, 2009. He added that, when the report becomes available, public input will be an important part of process.

Mayor Arnold explained the township's frustration at not being able to attract physicians and health facilities to St. Clair Township to support the existing medical community.

St. Clair Township council holds regular meetings on the first and third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. Anyone wishing to address council should call the municipal office at 519-867-2021.



MUNICIPAL PROPERTY ASSESSMENT CORPORATION

Property Assessment Information Session

January 12, 2009
Township of St. Clair
Council Chambers
1155 Emily Street
Mooretown, Ontario
1 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Representatives from MPAC will be in attendance to discuss the Assessment Notices sent to property owners in the Township of St. Clair.

1-866-296-MPAC (6722)

IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM JOHN JACK IRWIN

The Beacon remembers former Moore Township Councillor John "Jack" Irwin, who died peacefully on Nov. 20 at the age of 76. Jack retired from Bayer in 1991 and was a member of the Brigden Optimist Club and the Royal Canadian Legion, plus several other community organizations.

Jack is survived by his four children, John, Tammy, Debbie and Jeffrey, and their families, as well as his sister, Donna, and brother, Brian.

May He hold you in the palm of His hand.

Council Diary will appear again in the February issue of *The Beacon*. Council members are enjoying some well-deserved family time over the Christmas holidays.

Rebekahs send more than good wishes to local soldier's unit

As most families in St. Clair Township enjoyed the festive mood of the Christmas season, other families' thoughts were half a world away in a land torn apart by armed conflict. The family of 1st Hussars armoured reserve Cpl. Chris Hurd, currently serving a five-month tour of duty in Afghanistan, was one such family. Hurd's wife, Lynn Donovan, and their 23-month-old daughter, Alyssa, live in Sarnia, but Lynn's mom, Susan Donovan, of Corunna, is a member of the Mayflower Rebekah Lodge #324. So it's no surprise that the morale of the men and women serving in Afghanistan is of particular concern to the lodge.

The lodge members decided lend their support and send their love by filling 10 boxes with personal hygiene and grooming items, books, DVDs, amusements and non-perishable food items to be sent to Cpl. Hurd and his unit. Many of the items were contributed by the following donors: Bridgen Fuel Company, Corunna Shell gas station, Bad Dog Restaurant, Corunna Home Hardware, Hogan Pharmacy, Golden Palace Restaurant, Corunna Car Care, Dr. Bedard (dentist), Kay's Petals and Plants, Antonio's Pizza Restaurant, Bluewater Foodland, Watson Tim-Br Mart, Residence on the St. Clair, Just New Releases, Dr. Robert Waybrant (chiropractor), Dr. D. MacNeill (dentist), Anne's Book-keeping and Tax Service, UPS Store (Lambton Mall Road), Sarnia Pawn Shop, The Bargain Store (Corunna, Sarnia), Point Edward Charity Casino, Liquidation



Shown assembling gift boxes are Mayflower Rebekah Lodge #324 members, from left: Joyce Brock, Evelyn Teft, Noble Grand Diane Forrest, Nelda Gunness, Vicki McNaughton, Sue Donovan, Donna Thomas, Bonnie Lackey, Karon Berry. Seated left: Vice Noble Grand Diana Robinson, Francis Payne.

World, and the Southwest Regional Credit Union.

Susan Donovan takes pride in the role her son-in-law is playing overseas as well as the effort her lodge sisters are making to send his unit a bit of good cheer from home. "I'm proud of him and of all the men and women over there, and I'm proud of all the ladies of the lodge for doing this," she said. "We just want to make their Christmas morning a little brighter."

Christmas may be over, but it's never too late to show support for our Canadian soldiers. For donation information, call Susan at 519-867-3604.

COMMUNITY POLICING

Latest phone fraud revealed

The Lambton OPP is warning the public to beware of a phone fraud involving extended warranties for vehicles. The caller offers an extended warranty on your vehicle and asks for credit card information to obtain payment. This fraudulent scam has been reported in and around the Sarnia-Lambton area.

Anyone receiving one of these calls should call the Lambton OPP at 1-888-310-1122 or Phonebusters at 1-888-495-8501. Phonebusters can also be accessed online by going to www.phonebusters.com to see a list and descriptions of common scams, along with tips on how to prevent yourself from being caught in one.

Police are warning that personal information should *never* be given out over the phone unless you have initiated the call and are familiar with the business or service company you are dealing with.

Thefts from unlocked vehicles are still occurring

Incidents of thefts from unlocked vehicles are still occurring throughout Lambton County and the Lambton OPP is still urging motorists to lock their vehicles, even if they are only leaving the vehicles unattended for a few minutes. Also, put valuables out of sight or remove them from the vehicle. Visible items of value encourage opportunistic thieves to enter vehicles they would otherwise ignore. Don't become a victim! And if you experience a theft, inform the police. A problem unreported cannot be remedied.

OPP contact numbers

Corunna office - 519-481-0161; Petrolia detachment - 519-882-1011; OPP dispatch - 1-888-310-1122; Crime Stoppers - 1-800-222-8477; Emergency - 911.

AROUND THE TOWNSHIP

Rebekah Lodge hosts luncheons

The Mayflower Rebekah Lodge #324 will host a series of luncheon and card afternoons at Thompson Gardens, 198 Beckwith St., Corunna beginning at noon on the following days: Jan. 12; Feb. 9; March 9; March 30; April 27; and May 11. Proceeds from these events will be used to fund the lodge's community efforts.

Trivia night in Brigden

The Brigden fairgrounds will host Trivia Night on Saturday, Jan. 17 beginning at 8 p.m. Teams of six will be competing and the cost will be \$5 per person. An open bar will be available. Don't miss this night of fun and laughter. It's a great evening to share with friends! For more information call 519-864-1197.

Robbie Burns dinner planned



Dust off your tartan kilt, hone your hankering for haggis and come out to the Robbie Burns dinner at the Corunna United Church on Friday, Jan. 23. Entertainment will be provided by *The Caledonians*. Tickets are \$25 per person. For more information or to purchase tickets, call Ken at 519-867-2806.

Youth horticulture meetings

The youth division (ages six to 16) of the Brigden Horticultural Society holds regular meetings at the Brigden library. Registration is \$6 per year. For more meeting information call Jackie at 519-864-4654 or Kathi at 519-864-1323.

Cribbage played weekly

Cribbage is played every Tuesday morning at 9:30 a.m. at the Corunna United Church. It's just 25 cents for coffee, cookies and a whole lot of fun!

Knights of Columbus breakfasts

The Knights of Columbus breakfasts at the St. Joseph's Parish Centre in Corunna are back and more popular than ever! Here is the 2008/09 schedule: Sundays, Jan. 11, Feb. 8, March 1, March 29, and May 3 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Flags offer Jr. C hockey action

Lots of great Jr. C hockey action can be found at the Moore Sports Complex when the Mooretown Flags take to the ice. Upcoming home games include: Jan. 3 against Wallaceburg; Jan. 17 against Essex; Jan. 21 against Wheatley; Jan. 24 against Blenheim; Jan. 31 against Alvinston; and Feb. 7 against Belle River. Game time is 7:30 p.m. Come out and cheer on the home team!

Winter programs at your library

When the weather outside is frightful, it's nice to sit inside with a warm up of cocoa and a book of your choice from your local branch of the Lambton County Library. But there's much more than that to enjoy, including these FREE services: access-from-home technology; live homework help; online electronic databases; video cassettes; CDs and DVDs; reference services; Internet access; and a variety of programs for children and adults.

Most of the St. Clair Township branches offer the Tales for Tots program for toddlers up to two years old and a story time for children ages three to five. In Mooretown, a drop-in craft time is available for children ages five through 12. To find out what programs are available at your local library, just drop in, call your local branch or visit the Lambton County Library Website at www.lclmg.org.

Let the Moore Sports Complex help you keep your New Year's resolution

If you're determined to keep your New Year's resolution to lose weight and get fit, why not let the Moore Sports Complex help you.

The health and fitness centre offers equipment for weight training, Stairmaster, Lifecycle, and treadmills, and stretch, strengthening and fitness classes are available. There is a 25 metre swimming pool where you can take water aerobics or swim those pounds away. Red Cross and Lifesaving Society swimming lessons are also available.

Let 2009 be the year you say "yes" to a leaner body and a healthier life. For more information go online to www.twp.stclair.on.ca or call the Moore Sports Complex at 519-867-2651.



Enbridge expansion projects completed

Enbridge Gas Distribution Inc. held a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house recently to mark the completion of recent expansion projects at its Sombra compressor station on Burman Line. In attendance were St. Clair Township Mayor Steve Arnold, left, Vice-President Jim Grant, Director of Storage Operations Jim Sanders, and Manager of Engineering and Construction Harald Brecht.

Photo submitted