



The St. Clair Township

BEACON

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Issue 12

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December 2011

BEACON EXTRA!
**NO TIMELY FIX FOR
CLEAN HARBORS
EMISSIONS:
NEIGHBOURS AND
COUNCIL
OUTRAGED!**
Pages 2, 3,4



*Warmest wishes for
a bright, joyful
Christmas
and a very happy
New Year
from
St. Clair Township Council
and Staff*

This year, rock your inner Santa!

Please support your local Christmas hamper program

In 2010, 190 families in St. Clair Township experienced the kindness and generosity of hundreds of township residents. These residents took time out of their busy Christmas season to donate to Operation Christmas Tree in north St. Clair Township and the St. Vincent De Paul Christmas hamper program in south St. Clair Township.

Once again this year, the need is great and donations of non-perishable food items and new, unwrapped toys are needed to fill Christmas hampers for the less fortunate families in the community.

Donations to Operation Christmas Tree can be made on Saturday, Dec. 10 at the OPP donation drive-through in the parking lot of the St. Clair Township Emergency Services building at the corner of



Lyndoch and Hill Streets. Donations can also be dropped off until Dec. 15 at the former Baptist church at the corner of Hill and Alfred Streets during the week from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Cash donations will also be welcomed at the Southwest Credit Union.

Donations to the St. Vincent De Paul hamper program can be made by calling 519-677-5773, with the hampers being assembled on Dec. 14 to be ready for pick up at St. James Anglican Church on Lambton Line on Saturday, Dec. 17. Schools within the municipality will be conducting their own collection efforts as well.

***Know the spirit of Christmas by helping to
brighten the lives of those in need.***

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To contact The BEACON

send an e-mail to: beacon@twp.stclair.on.ca
or write 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.



Municipal Notes

Clean Harbors meeting a failure

A crowd of concerned and angry residents turned out at the Brigden fairgrounds exhibition hall on Nov. 15 expecting to get answers to some very important questions. Above all, they were hoping to find out when they could expect to be free of the unbearable, stomach-turning stench that frequently emanates from

the Clean Harbors hazardous waste facility on Petrolia Line. They were seeking a resolution to a problem that has been making their life miserable for over four months now. And at the end of the meeting, it was clear from their strong negative reaction that the information

See Meeting fails, page 3

Holiday office hours

The St. Clair Township municipal office will close at noon on Friday, Dec. 23 and Friday, Dec. 30.

Livestock valuer required

St. Clair Township is inviting anyone interested in the position of livestock valuer to submit a letter of interest to the undersigned by Jan. 7, 2012. The livestock valuer is someone with an agricultural background who investigates claims under the Livestock Damage Program. Questions about this casual position may be directed to the undersigned at 519-867-2021.

John De Mars
Clerk

Council meeting schedule

Regular meetings of St. Clair Township Council are held on the first and third Mondays of the month. The next meeting is slated for Monday, Dec. 5 at 6 p.m. **PLEASE NOTE: The meeting on the third Monday, Dec. 19 will take place at 8 p.m.** Anyone wishing to address council should call the municipal office at 519-867-2021.

Overnight parking on streets prohibited

All motorists are reminded that overnight parking on all municipal streets is prohibited from Dec. 1 to April 1, 2012. This ensures that snow plow crews will be able to clear the roads safely and efficiently. Vehicles left on the streets will be ticketed.

Don't shovel snow onto public thoroughfares!

Homeowners please note that the Highway Traffic Act prohibits the shoveling of snow out onto public roads. Unexpected quantities of snow on public roads create a hazard for motorists who use the roads.

Small game hunting licenses available

Township of St. Clair small game hunting licences are now available at the following locations: Pic-N-Pay Variety in Sombra; Courtright Variety Store; Corunna Home Hardware; Agris Co-operative Ltd. in Brigden; and the St. Clair Civic Centre on Emily Street in Mooretown. The fee is \$5 per resident and \$8 per non-resident. Applicants must apply in person. Multiple licenses will not be issued.

John De Mars
Director of Administration



Sewer and hydrant flushing continues

The St. Clair Township Department of Public Works will continue flushing all sewer mains and fire hydrants throughout the month of December between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

During work on the sewer mains, residents may notice some gurgling noise in drains. If this condition persists after 24 to 48 hours, please notify Public Works at 519-867-2993.

During work on the fire hydrants, residents

may notice some discolouration while using taps, flushing toilets, doing laundry, etc. If this occurs, run the cold water tap for a few minutes or until the discolouration disappears. If discolouration continues after 10 to 15 minutes of normal use, please notify Public Works at 519-867-2993.

Brian Van Hyfte
Coordinator of Operations
Water/Wastewater

Meeting fails to resolve dire issue of Clean Harbors stink

From page 2

they had received was neither satisfying or acceptable.

At the end of a brief review of what the company believes is causing the problem and what measures will be taken to solve it, the news the residents had been waiting for was finally revealed. They were told that by May, 2012, the problem should be fixed.

Rod Brooks of Ortech Environmental tried to assure the residents that the results of the extensive air sampling his company had done revealed 38 compounds that could pose a health risk but, according to the Ontario Air Standards and Assessment Values, "all levels were under regulatory standards."

This news was of little comfort to the residents who have had to suffer the nauseating effects of the emissions on a continuing basis. "We're stunk out of our homes!" shouted resident Jim Stanton. "When is it going to stop? They're making kids sick."

Another resident spoke about how, in the middle of the night, he'd awakened unable to breathe because of the emissions and he explained others had experienced the same symptoms.

Meeting moderator Bryan Boyle asked the group to write down words that best represented the situation they were coping with - the results were compelling. Words like *cancer*, *repulsive*, and *scared*, and the phrase *shut down until they have it controlled* were submitted. The residents also voiced their concerns about the negative effect the problem has on property values. And the strongest message conveyed during the evening was this - *fix it or shut it down*.

Throughout the meeting, a contingent of Clean Harbors representatives sat mute at one end of the hall, even though the residents repeatedly demanded to speak directly to them. Several St. Clair Township council and staff members, including Mayor Steve Arnold, were in attendance, sharing the residents' desire for answers. On several occasions, the issue has been brought to council where all corrective measures available to the municipality, including the hiring of legal council that specializes in environmental issues, have been explored and exhausted.

But when it became apparent that a quick solution to the problem would not be forthcoming, Mayor Arnold expressed his frustration with the way the meeting was being conducted. "If we continue this process, at the end, there will be a bunch of people who leave here frustrated," he said. "Somebody needs to listen to the emotion that's out there." He added, "The neighbours need to be set at ease. They want to understand how things are going to be made better."



Protesting that the proceedings were a waste of time, about two-thirds of the group walked out of the meeting.

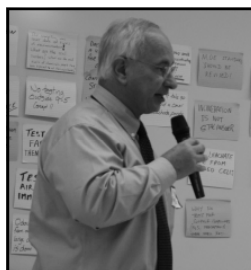
Finally, protesting that the proceedings were a waste of time, about two-thirds of the group walked out of the meeting. As resident Joe Dickenson said, "We are not being heard. Our concerns are not being addressed."

The company maintains that the powerful odour is being caused by too much leachate, liquid that oozes out of the open cells at the landfill site. The leachate is the result of water runoff from rain and snow, and it contains small amounts of any material that is landfilled in those cells. Further, the company believes that atmospheric conditions that occurred this summer contributed to the formation of the odorous vapours.

However, there has been some speculation that perhaps something else is to blame for the odor. The facility began using another disposal method this summer through a thermal desorption unit (TDU). Some of the residents noted the start-up of the TDU seemed to coincide with the onset of the odour.

Toward the end of the meeting, Phil Retallick, Clean Harbors Senior VP of Regulatory Affairs, was adamant that leachate was the cause of the odour and not the TDU. He also tried to assure the residents who remained in the hall that the odour was being caused by sulphides and, therefore, is not toxic. But he admitted the company should have been more proactive to prevent the problem. "We needed to address it a lot sooner than we did," he said. Referring to the odour as "a nuisance," he said, "The MOE has put us on a very tight schedule."

Mr. Retallick suggested that the onset of the colder weather may help lessen the intensity of the odour. "The winter months will knock down the odour," he



Phil Retallick

See Abatement plan, page 4

Shared Alert FM emergency notification system a first in cross-border cooperation

The Alert FM emergency notification system, now in effect in St. Clair Township, marks a first in cross-border cooperation. A formal announcement outlining this partnership was made during an unusual ceremony that took place aboard a Sombra Blue Water ferry in the middle of the St. Clair River on Oct. 25.

The significance of the event was made clear from the outset. A boat from the St. Clair County Sheriff's office kept a watchful eye on the ferry while a Homeland Security helicopter made regular passes overhead.

Dignitaries, emergency response representatives, and a large media contingent from both sides of the border were on hand for the official roll-out of the system. The Alert FM system will carry emergency information delivered through data subcarriers on communication towers of participating local radio stations including Blackburn Radio (CHKS 106.3) on the Canadian side and WNFA 88.3, WNFR 90.7, and WSAQ 107.1 on the American side. The compact Alert FM receivers are currently available to the public for \$10 per unit at the Corunna Home Hardware, the St. Clair Township Civic Centre on Emily Street in Mooretown, the Emergency Services Building at Lyndoch and Hill Streets in Corunna, the Shake N Bait in Port Lambton, and Always Quilting in Bridgen. The units are worth almost \$40, but the municipality is subsidizing two-thirds of that cost from a reserve fund for the first 1,000 units. Once the allotted funds have been exhausted, the cost of subsequent units will be \$30 with the township contributing \$10.

The Alert FM system is flexible, allowing emergency messages to be targeted toward specific organizational groups or geographic areas, delivering weather warnings, evacuation or shelter-in-place instructions, Amber Alerts, and homeland security notices.

St. Clair Township Fire Chief Roy Dewhirst noted, "I am very pleased about this partnership and the communication gaps the project will bridge between government officials and residents." Mayor Steve Arnold added, "There are no lines to emergency safety...people will be able to sleep peacefully at night knowing they will be notified (in case of an emergency.)"

Jeff Bohm, Chairperson of the St. Clair County Board of



After the ceremony, Jeffrey Friedland, St. Clair County Director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, left, and Jeff Bohm, Chairperson of the St. Clair County Board of Commissioners, were presented with a St. Clair Township flag symbolizing cross-border cooperation. Presenting the flag were Mayor Steve Arnold and Fire Chief Roy Dewhirst. Photo by Bonnie Stevenson

Commissioners, said, "I am proud of the efforts put forth to establish cross-border collaboration and get the network up and running. I hope this is one of many project that can be implemented through partnerships with our Canadian neighbours."

Jeffrey Friedland, St. Clair County Director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management echoed this sentiment, noting the new system makes this area a leader in cross-border projects. He expressed the hope that others will pay attention to what is being done here.

Chief Dewhirst believes the system will prove its usefulness in many ways, including its ability to give township residents ample notification in the event of severe weather, since severe storms usually track across St. Clair County, Michigan first.

To allow for a smooth introduction of the Alert FM system, St. Clair Township has been divided into eight areas, with the most vulnerable area, Corunna, being activated first. When activated, the units sound an alarm, exhibit a flashing red light, and display a brief message indicating the nature of the emergency.

Leachate abatement plan slated for completion in May, 2012

From page 3

said, adding that the bacteria that generates the odour needs heat to grow. But for those whose lives continue to be adversely affected by the odour's severe effects, this information offers no comfort.

The leachate abatement plan that has been developed by Clean Harbors calls for an increase in the capacity of the south leachate reservoir from 6.5 million litres to 15 million litres, after which a floating high density polyethylene cover system will be deployed to eliminate the open storage of leachate. There will also be an increase in the on-site destruction of leachate via

the incinerator, and short-term on-site treatment and discharge of process water. A number of other strategies will be developed and used to complete the overall abatement plan. Mr. Retallick said the plan will include a redesign of the water runoff plan and a cap on the landfill to keep water away from it, which is expected to reduce the amount of leachate generated.

Although these plans and strategies may answer the technical questions at hand, the fix will come too late to make life easier for residents who are being forced to endure the constant onslaught of the Clean Harbors emissions. They need a resolution now.

BCF funding will provide Froomfield with sanitary sewers and water mains

To borrow a quote from that famous contemporary philosopher Kermit the Frog, "It's not easy being green." Ever since the rise of environmental awareness, lawmakers at every level of government have been finding this to be all too true, especially when it comes to finding the money to fund green projects.

It takes a lot of money to provide effective upgrades to outdated infrastructure and governments have to walk a very fine line between doing what is best for the environment while limiting the tax implications to ratepayers. However, in St. Clair Township, a recent announcement is making it a bit easier to be green, at least where the health of the St. Clair River is concerned.

In the recent past, the township received \$3,015,990 in funding from COMRIF (Canada Ontario Municipal Rural Investment Fund) and \$31,527,763 from BCF (Build Canada Fund) for a total of \$34,545,753, with all three levels of government, Federal, Provincial and Municipal, contributing one-third of that total. The funding financed the construction of the new Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant in Courtright.

The project came in under budget thanks to the extensive use of local sub-trades and local materials. The estimated surplus of \$3.7 million was enough to cover the cost of the Froomfield project, so the municipality asked BCF, through MP Pat Davidson's office, for permission to use the surplus for that purpose. Approval was given and engineering drawings for the project are currently underway.

The scope of the project includes the installation of gravity sewers plus two new pumping stations and a forcemain to the existing sanitary sewer system in Corunna. It also provides for the replacement of the aged potable water system and a new water supply. Tenders will likely be



MP Pat Davidson and St. Clair Township Mayor Steve Arnold seal the deal to benefit Froomfield and the St. Clair River. *Photo by Bonnie Stevenson*

advertised late this winter upon receipt of MOE approval, with construction starting in the spring of 2012. If everything stays on schedule, it is anticipated the project will be completed by the end of 2012.

Mayor Arnold pointed out that the project also involved the installation of a new pipeline down the St. Clair Parkway, a project that challenged the patience of many motorists this past summer. This pipeline will accommodate effluent that will be pumped from the newly-upgraded Corunna facility down to the newly expanded Courtright treatment plant.

The completion of the Froomfield project will be a major milestone in St. Clair Township's effort to protect the St. Clair River. "The Froomfield project will take us totally out of the river," said Mayor Arnold, who added that area contains the final three remaining *areas of concern*. "This is a positive step forward for the St. Clair River

cleanup effort."

An area of concern (AOC) is a site on the Great Lakes system where environmental quality is significantly degraded and beneficial uses, such as the health of beaches in that area, are impaired.

MP Pat Davidson noted the Froomfield project is the latest of a series of forward-thinking projects that have been undertaken in St. Clair Township. "Council has shown itself to be progressive," she said. "(The project) will have a big environmental benefit because the effluent will be properly treated. There will be health benefits to the residents and, because the township was diligent and able to use local labour, there was a direct positive economic impact on the community."

Although it still isn't easy being green, at least the shores of St. Clair Township will be user-friendly for people and wildlife all the way from Froomfield to Port Lambton...even little green frogs.

HERITAGE CORNER



Leaving for Grandpa Brown's farm for Christmas

These Christmas images from the 1880s show how the holidays have changed over the years. Thanks to the Moore and Sombra Museums for these images of Christmas past.



Volunteers get sneak peek at new museum building

During the recent Sombra Museum volunteer appreciation dinner, the volunteers got a sneak peek inside the newly-constructed museum building on Smith Street. The building includes a special archives room that incorporates features that will help protect and conserve the museum's rich and varied collection of documents, photos and other historically relevant materials. Another room has been especially designed to accommodate the marine exhibit. And a meeting room complete with kitchen will provide a venue for meetings and special events.

The new building will not be formally opened until spring, 2012, and museum curator Shelley Lucier says there is still much to be done. "Our brand new, state-of-the-art facility is complete, but it is empty," she said. "We are busy planning and developing our new display rooms and working on plans to provide interesting, topical and meaningful programs."

"Because it is a brand new facility, there are many

items we need to properly allow us to display the artefacts so as to tell the stories they reveal. We need to purchase shelving, display cases, tables, an overhead projector, and a digital camera to digitize our collection. We would also like to landscape around the facility as well as develop signage to identify the museum."

This list of items has become a "wish list" and Shelley invites local businesses and individuals to fund one or more of them or to make a monetary donation toward their purchase. Tax receipts will be issued for these donations.

Through the winter, volunteers will undertake the enormous task of moving artefacts from the current museum building across the street into the new building. Then, the old museum building will be returned to its original state as a grand old Victorian home known as the Bury House. When it has been restored, visitors will get the true feel of what Victorian home life was really like.



Volunteers inspect one of several spacious rooms.



Volunteers are treated to a delicious meal.

Children's Safety Village will give children the information they need to stay safe

The injury or loss of a child is the type of nightmarish scenario every parent fears, yet it's difficult to anticipate every hazard a child might encounter. Statistics show that 90 to 95 per cent of childhood injuries are preventable. To address this alarming issue, many municipalities now include Children's Safety Villages.

An informational presentation was recently made by members of the Lambton Children's Safety Village Committee, who are exploring the possibility of building a safety village in St. Clair Township. The proposed site for the village would be in Mooretown on Emily Street to the south side of the St. Clair Township Civic Centre.

Committee member OPP Cst. John Reurink noted the village will offer expert, age-appropriate safety training to school children from Junior Kindergarten through Grade 6. He says these safety villages have been built all over southern Ontario to effectively deliver safety training to children and Lambton County is one of the last areas to have one. He says the need for this facility has been proven. "(Statistics prove) children who are involved with the kind of training they receive within the safety village environment are much less likely to sustain preventable injuries," he said. "We've been attempting to get a safety village in Lambton County for years."

Topics covered will range from traffic safety to home and farm safety, and will even teach children about threat posed by the Internet. Partners in the operation of the safety village include: local police, fire and EMS person-

nel, the Lambton Federation of Agriculture, the Lambton Junior Farmers, CBSA (Canada Border Services) and the RCMP. Cst. Reurink noted all of these groups have contributed a "wish list" of components that should be incorporated into the village to ensure children receive comprehensive safety training. The goal of the interactive facility is to give children safety skills they will remember and use every

day. "Through hands-on training, children will develop a positive attitude toward safety that will be remembered and practiced into adulthood," said Cst. Reurink.

The village component of the facility will include a miniature system of roadways marked with real traffic control signage and signals, including a level railway crossing. There will also be an interactive building that will house classrooms, demonstration rooms, a working kitchen and the new Mooretown library. Cst. Reurink noted the village will employ green technology and LEED certification will be sought. LEED is a set of standards that acknowledges green and sustainable development of building sites, including: efficient energy and water use; the use of green materials; and the careful choosing of resources.

The village is intended to be a multi-use facility. The Lambton Children's Safety Village Committee hopes that, in addition to its primary function, it will also be used to host special events for occasions such as Christmas and Easter, as well as large business and family events. The interpretive building will be used on a day-to-day basis, housing the Mooretown library and providing meeting space for community and business groups.

An official announcement regarding the Lambton Children's Safety Village will be made in the near future. In the meantime, the committee is in the process of seeking donors to help fund and support this important project. Cst. Reurink says all donors will be recognized on-site through such methods as engraved paving stones, and major contributors can opt to be recognized by having their names on one of the village streets or on one of the small mock village buildings that will comprise the village core. There will also be an opportunity for a major donor to sponsor the interpretive building.

Committee Chair Mary Ann Buntrock says all children will be able to experience the village free of charge to obtain the information and experience they need to stay safe. "The safety of the children should be of utmost importance to everyone. Safety should be free."

The committee has been invited to address council about the possible placement of the Lambton Children's Safety Village in Mooretown.

**Tell me and I will forget;
Show me and I *may* remember;
Involve me and I *will* remember.**
-Motto of the Children's Safety Village



Lambton Children's Safety Village committee members OPP Cst. John Reurink and Committee Chair Mary Ann Buntrock with the architects plan of the village.

Friends of the St. Clair River seek public support to win contest

The Friends of the St. Clair River (FOSCR) is a volunteer group dedicated to promoting conservation, beautification and other environmental activities associated with the St. Clair River. The group is currently entered in Shell Canada's *Fuelling Change Contest* and is looking for public support in hopes of winning the grand prize of \$100,000.

To enter the contest, FOSCR members submitted information regarding their project, *Remediating the St. Clair River Area of Concern*, to Shell for consideration. The project was approved for inclusion in the contest and the group received \$10,000 toward the project at that time. But to win the grand prize, the group's project must be selected by online voters. Anyone can vote by going online to www.fuellingchange.com

FOSCR President Darrell Randell says in the \$100,000 category there are eight projects being considered, but only two are in Ontario. Further, he noted that the FOSCR project is "focused on habitat improvements right here in our own area."

Appealing to local voters, Mr. Randell said, "We need your vote. Through this project we will work with other conservation partners to restore or protect natural habitat areas such as forest,

native grasses and wetlands in the St. Clair River Area of Concern. It will assist 15 landowners to restore or protect the natural habitats in suitable locations such as headwater areas of tributaries and riparian areas on their properties."

He added that remaining natural cover in both Lambton County and Chatham-Kent is well under what is recommended. This is cited as an impairment for the St. Clair River. "By increasing natural cover we create wildlife habitat, reduce soil erosion and promote the absorption of nutrients that would otherwise get into local watercourses," said Mr. Randell.

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The Friends of the St. Clair River recently accepted a donation of \$5,000 from Enbridge Pipelines Inc. to help fund a habitat restoration project on Bowen Creek in Lambton County. Over five hectares of wetland will be created through this project. Bowen Creek's wet prairie and mature deciduous forest provides refuge for more than 15 locally rare Carolinian flora and fauna. Local naturalists and wildlife experts envision future wetlands providing waterfowl brood, nesting and staging habitat.

Motorists urged to be vigilant and responsible this holiday season

The Lambton OPP is cautioning motorists to exercise good common sense and to be responsible while driving.

The 2011 Festive R.I.D.E. Initiative is now underway, with officers setting up random roadside checkpoints throughout Lambton County to ensure that motorists are not under the influence of alcohol or other substances that may cause impairment. Motorists are urged to plan ahead when heading out to any function where alcohol will be served. Either appoint a designated driver who will not be consuming any alcoholic beverages, call a taxi or have someone you can call to give you a ride.

And as always, motorists are reminded that driving while distracted, through the use of cell phones or texting devices, can result in a fine of \$155 under the Highway Traffic Act. Watching an entertainment device can result in a fine of \$110 and other forms of distracted driving can result in a charge of Careless Driving with fines ranging from \$400 to \$2,000, plus a possible license suspension of up to two years and/or a jail term of up to six months.

Voluntary toll supports MADD Red Ribbon Campaign

With the holidays upon us, the MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) Sarnia/Lambton Red Ribbon Campaign is underway, actively working to promote safe, sober driving. In support of this effort, a voluntary toll fundraiser was held in mid-November with about 70 Lambton College, OPP personnel and their family members collecting voluntary tolls at local retail locations across Sarnia and Lambton County. Thousands of generous motorists contributed and \$14,750 was raised to support the MADD campaign. In addition, about 10 thousand red ribbons were distributed for motorists to display on their vehicles in support of the campaign.

MADD Chapter President/Lambton OPP Cst. John Reurink says that the Lambton OPP have arrested and charged 74 people for impaired driving so far this year.

Let's all work to keep the holidays merry and bright for everyone. Drive with care, unimpaired and fully engaged in navigating the highways and streets.

Arrive alive!



Community Notices

Veterans and their spouses may be eligible for benefits such as disability pensions, hearing loss assistance and housekeeping. The Royal Canadian Legion Corunna Branch can offer help in determining if such benefits are applicable. For more information, contact Corunna

Branch 447 Service Officer Gerry Den Hartogh at 519-862-1613.

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Over 700 copies of The Brigden Book have been sold to date and it is still available at The Book Keeper in Sarnia, and in Brigden at Lily Lane Flowers and Always Quilting. This informative history book would make a terrific gift for the history buff on any Christmas list.

Poppy represents “a sacred act of remembrance”



A large crowd of residents gathered to witness the solemn Remembrance Day service at the Corunna clock tower park on Nov. 11. Local veterans were joined by emergency responders from the St. Clair Township Fire Department and the Lambton OPP Corunna station to pay tribute to those who have served and those who continue to serve their community and their country. Royal Canadian Legion Branch 447 Padre Paul Woolley presided over the service, calling the wearing of the poppy “a sacred act of remembrance.” The ceremony was punctuated with two formation fly-overs by a grouping of single engine planes.

Above: Wreath-laying ceremony saw about 50 wreaths placed by local dignitaries, service clubs, emergency responders and individuals. The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 447 Corunna wreath was placed by Branch 447 President Malcolm Boczak, shown here being escorted by Sgt. At Arms Kevin Harris.

Right: On hand for the solemn occasion was Sgt. Ryan Chirside, who is currently stationed in Gagetown, N.B. at the Canadian Forces School of Military Engineering. He drove from New Brunswick to Corunna to surprise his daughter, Carli, a Grade 1 student at Colonel Cameron Public School. Sgt. Chirside has served three tours of duty in Afghanistan and one in Bosnia with the 2 Combat Engineers Regiment. The regiment’s task in combat includes functions such as clearing roads of explosives and doing demolition work.



Free tutoring program available for students Grades 1 through 7

The Organization for Literacy in Lambton offers free tutoring in the Corunna area for students in Grades 1 through 7. Children who are struggling with reading and math can get the help they need to get the most out of the material they learn in school. They also discover that learning can be fun.

The *Skill and Drill* program is now offered on Mondays and Wednesdays at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Registration is ongoing throughout the school year based on availability. For more information or to register your child for this important program, call the Organization for Literacy in Lambton at 519-332-4876.



Winter fun is as close as the Mooretown Sports Complex

The Mooretown Sports Complex offers a wide variety of fun and fitness opportunities throughout the year. So this winter, when the snow and ice threaten to turn you into an inactive couch potato, remember that the benefits of physical activity include improved health and a remedy for the winter blahs. Here is a sample of the many programs and activities you and your family can enjoy this season.

Shinny Hockey for adults

Dust off that hockey stick and sharpen those skates! It's Shinny Hockey time again. Enjoy healthy physical activity and friendly rivalry on Tuesday mornings from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. The cost is \$5 per person but the bragging rights are priceless!

Tim Horton's-sponsored free public skates

The whole family can enjoy free skating sessions courtesy of Tim Horton's. These sessions will be offered from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. on: Wednesday, Dec. 28; Thursday, Dec. 29; and Friday, Dec. 30.

Recreational swims

Swimming is a great way to enjoy family time while fending off unwanted winter weight gain. Recreational swims are held on: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from noon to 1 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Friday from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.; and Saturday and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. (Please note there will be no

swims on Dec. 24, 25, 26, 31 or Jan. 1.)

Winter swimming lesson session

The winter session of swimming lessons begins the week of Jan. 9. Registration for these lessons is now underway.

39th annual Juvenile Silver Stick

Enjoy fast-paced juvenile hockey action as the 39th annual Juvenile Silver Stick Tournament comes to the Mooretown Sports Complex on Jan. 5 to 8. Admission is \$5 per adult, \$3 per student or senior, and \$14 for a weekend pass.

Note of thanks to the Optimist Club of Moore

A heart-felt note of thanks goes out to the Optimist Club of Moore for making it possible for 222 St. Clair Township Grade 3 students to take part in the Lifesaving Society *Swim to Survive* Program at the Mooretown Sports Complex. The club provided funds to cover the cost of bussing the Corunna students to and from the facility.

The program, which is designed for Grade 3 students, was offered thanks to a grant from the Lifesaving Society. It involves basic swimming skills as well as important self-rescue and lifesaving skills. Basic swimming ability is a fundamental requirement for St. Clair Township youth because of the close proximity of the St. Clair River.

Long-term fundraising effort sees pledge fulfilled

Ever since the Sombra Community Centre was built in the late 1950s, Glen Scott, one of its founders, has had a vision of what the centre would one day become. Over the years, he spearheaded an ongoing fundraising effort that recently resulted in his vision becoming a reality.

The centre now has a modern new kitchen, a new vestibule and other attractive new improvements. The project began with a contribution of about \$170,000 from St. Clair Township's Education and Environment Fund and a pledge from the Sombra Community Centre to repay a portion of the money. On Nov. 18, that pledge was honoured when a cheque for \$50,000 was presented to the township.

The money has been raised over a



On hand for the presentation, from left: St. Clair Township Deputy Mayor Peter Gilliland; Sombra Community Centre (SCC) Secretary/Treasurer Laurie Menard; SCC co-founder Glen Scott; Mayor Steve Arnold; Councillor Steve Miller; St. Clair Township Director of Community Services Gary Hackett.

Photo by Bonnie Stevenson

period of decades from weekly community activities such as euchre parties plus revenue from hall rentals. The upgrades are already starting to pay off,

according to Laurie Menard, secretary/treasurer of the Sombra Community Centre. "We're booked solid right into 2012," she said.

More AROUND THE TOWNSHIP

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some great entertainment. For tickets, call 519- 344-8626 or 519-867-2806.

Jamborees back at Brigden fairgrounds hall

Set your toes a'tappin' at one of several jamborees planned for the Brigden fairgrounds exhibition hall this winter. Come out to sing, play an instrument, take a few spins around the dance floor or just listen to the excellent music. The cover charge is \$2 per person and a ham and scalloped potato supper will be available at cost. A cash bar will also be available. The entertainment begins at 1 p.m. on the following dates: Holiday Jamboree, **Sunday, Dec. 11**; Winter Wonderland Jamboree, **Sunday, Jan. 8**; Valentine's Jamboree, **Sunday, Feb. 12**; Shamrock Jamboree, **Sunday, March 11**. For more information, check the Brigden Fair Facebook page or go online to the Website at www.brigdenfair.ca. You can also call the fair office at 519-864-1197 or contact Bill or Kathy at 519-627-5065. Don't let the winter blues get you down! Watch The Beacon or go online to the Website for more news of events happening at the Brigden Fairgrounds. Fundraising events like brunches, theme dinners, and special events will be taking place with proceeds going to fund the exhibition hall upgrades.

Indoor walking sessions offered

Indoor walking sessions are now offered on **Tuesdays and Thursdays** from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the Brigden fair-

grounds exhibition hall. Attendees are asked to bring indoor shoes for walking. For more information or to register for this free program, call 519-344-3017, ext. 237. This program is sponsored by the Moore Agricultural Society and the West Lambton Community Health Centre.

Cooking Buddies program offered

Cooking Buddies children's cooking classes are offered in two locations within St. Clair Township. They can be found in Port Lambton at Sacred Heart Church, 466 John Street, and in Corunna at Sir John Moore Community School, 274 St. Clair Boulevard. The program runs from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on the last **Thursday of each month**. Children ages six through 11 are invited to enjoy learning to cook, including measuring ingredients, reading a recipe, understanding nutritional information and enjoying the food. Limited spaces are available. To register for this free program, call 519-344-3017, ext. 237. This program is sponsored by the West Lambton Community Health Centre in partnership with the County of Lambton Peer Nutrition program.

Meat raffles at Brigden Legion

The Royal Canadian Legion Brigden Branch #635 hosts meat raffles on Saturdays at 4 p.m. Call the branch for more information.

Elimination Draw tickets are sold out!

Tickets for the 1st Annual Elimination Draw, presented by the Royal Canadian Legion Corunna Branch 447 and Ladies Auxiliary, are sold out. The draw date is set for **Jan. 14, 2012**.

Don't miss the Mooretown Juvenile Silver Stick tournament!

The 39th annual Mooretown Juvenile Silver Stick tournament comes to the Mooretown Sports Complex on Jan. 5 to 8, 2012. Daily admission will be \$5 per adult and \$3 per student or senior, with a weekend pass just \$14.

Come out and support these future NHL stars!



Petrolia Food Bank receives welcome donation from Brigden Fair event



The Petrolia Food Bank received a much-needed donation of \$300 during the Brigden Fair. The money was presented by Entertainment Tent Chairperson Marilyn Shaw, left, to food bank representatives Brian and Lynn McManaman, during a Pickin' N Fiddlin' show. The donation was made to acknowledge the fine entertainment provided by the Pickin' N Fiddlin' band, which included Gerald Bailey, Joe Kerwin, Joe Thorner, Bill Miller, Jan Smith, Joe McDonald, Joan Miller, Bill Myers, Fern Bezanson, Sabrina Rankin, John Murphy, Sydney Potts, Marilyn Whiting, Kathy Myers, and Lindsay Myers.

Photo submitted

AROUND THE TOWNSHIP



Santa to visit Courtright

The jolly old elf in red will be ho-ho-hoing his way to the Courtright fire hall on **Sunday, Dec. 4** and will visit from noon to 1 p.m. Santa's appearance is sponsored by the Courtright volunteer firefighters and will feature hay rides for all of the children. A light lunch and snacks will be provided.

Tree-lighting event set for Brigden

The annual tree-lighting event in Brigden will be held on **Sunday, Dec. 4** at 7 p.m. in the park at the intersection of Courtright Line and Brigden Road.

Local author to launch new book

Brigden author Brendan Kelly will hold a book reading of his new work, *Petroleum Way*, at the Brigden library on **Monday, Dec. 5** from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Coffee and tea will be provided. The author will also be reading excerpts from *Petroleum Way* in Petrolia at The Book Store on **Saturday, Dec. 10** from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. The books will be available at: The Book Store in Petrolia; The Book Keeper in Samia; Oxford Book Shop, 740 Richmond Street in London; and Attic Books, 240 Dundas Street in London.

Turkey bingo at Corunna Legion

The Royal Canadian Legion Corunna Branch 447 will host turkey bingo on **Wednesday, Dec. 7** at 7 p.m. There will be 25 games plus one special game with three prizes and a grand prize of \$400 Lambton Mall bucks. Door prizes will also be awarded. The cost is \$15 for three cards and everyone is welcome. Food will be available.

Christmas bazaar, tea & bake sale

The congregation of All Saints Anglican Church (intersection of Hill and Lyndoch Streets in Corunna) will host a Christmas bazaar, tea and bake sale on **Saturday, Dec. 10** from 10 a.m. to noon. The event will feature: baking, preserves, crafts, books, stained glass and a raffle, plus turkey and beef pies, fruit pies and carrot puddings. A tearoom will be serving tea or coffee and dessert for \$2.

Christmas dinner and concert planned

The congregation of the Community of Christ Church, (located at the corner of Brigden Road and LaSalle Line,) will hold its annual Christmas dinner and *On A Silent Night* concert on **Saturday, Dec. 10** beginning at 5 p.m. The concert will be presented by the church choir and all proceeds from the event will be used to purchase food for the breakfast programs at local schools. For more information, call 226-738-0693 or email k_knightjets@msn.com

Cruikshank Centre offers winter fun

The Cruikshank Centre at Thompson Gardens in Corunna has some special events planned for December. **Play Fun Bingo* on **Tuesday, Dec. 6, 20 and 27** at 1:30 p.m. A minimal fee will apply. **Euchre* will be played on **Tuesday, Dec. 6 and 13** at 7:30 p.m. A \$3 fee includes light refreshment. *An afternoon at the theatre will be offered on **Saturday, Dec. 10**. This bus trip will include a matinee performance of the *Nightingales Christmas Concert* at the Imperial Theatre followed by dinner at Waggs Res-

taurant. The cost is \$55 per person and the registration deadline is Thursday, Nov. 10. Please call 519-862-1628 for additional information. *And on **Monday, Dec. 12**, visit *Katie's Unique Boutique* at the Cruikshank Centre to shop for a wide selection of purses and fashion jewellery. For more information about the Cruikshank Centre, visit its Website at cruikshankcentre.com.

Quiet Christmas holiday service offered

A special *Quiet Christmas* holiday service is planned for those who are dealing with grief and stress during the holiday season. This service will be held at Brigden United Church on **Thursday, Dec. 15** at 7 p.m. Other services at the church will include a Christmas Eve service on **Saturday, Dec. 24** at 7 p.m. and a New Year's Day service on **Jan. 1, 2012** at 10 a.m. There will be no service on Christmas Day.

Sombra Sports & Rec sleigh ride

Get into the holiday mood with a good old fashioned sleigh ride on **Saturday, Dec. 17** from noon to 3 p.m. The event, sponsored by the Sombra Sports and Recreation group, will take place at the Sombra Ball Park.

Jam sessions planned for the Corunna Legion

A series of jam sessions is planned for the Royal Canadian Legion Corunna Branch 447 hall at Albert and Beckwith Streets this winter. The sessions will be held Saturdays at 3 p.m. on the following dates: **Dec. 17; Jan. 28, 2012; Feb. 25; March 31; April 28; and May 26**. Everyone is welcome to come out and play, sing or just listen to some great local talent. More information can be found on the branch's Website at www.corunna.ca/legion.

New Year's Eve Hawaiian style

Hey, all you kahunas and wahinis! Grab your grass skirt and surf board, (or shorts and sandals), and head for the Royal Canadian Legion Corunna Branch 447 hall on **Saturday, Dec. 31** from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. to spend New Year's Eve Hawaiian style! The Hawaiian theme will feature a pig roast and JAGA will entertain. There will be a photo booth, bubbly, and door prizes, and only 150 tickets will be sold. The cost is \$30 per person (\$25 for Legion members) and tickets are available by calling 519-862-1240. Free local rides home will be available.

Euchre afternoons set for Sombra

A series of euchre afternoons are planned for the Sombra Community Hall in the new year. The events will be held on Fridays at 1 p.m. on the following dates: **Jan. 6, 13, 20, 27; Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24; March 9, 16, 23, 30**. Admission is \$2 per session and a light lunch is included. For more information call 519-892-3964.

Rebekah Lodge hosts luncheons

The Mayflower Rebekah Lodge #324 will host a series of luncheons at Thompson Gardens in Corunna at noon on the following Mondays: **Jan. 9, 2012; Feb. 13; March 12; April 9; April 30; May 29; Sept. 24**. Everyone is welcome.

Celebrate Robbie Burns night

The 26th annual Robbie Burns dinner will be held at the Corunna United Church on **Friday, Jan. 20**. The event will include

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