

FREE

A WEST PERTH PUBLICATION

the Heronry

Issue Includes

Ted "Teddy" Johns: A West Perth-Inspired Character

RURAL ROOTS

What Floats Your Boat?

SERVICE CLUBS

Mitchell Fair 2026

EXHIBIT AND SCHEDULE INFORMATION

Crazy Gladness!

COUNTY BUSINESS STORIES

Vol. 9

August 2026

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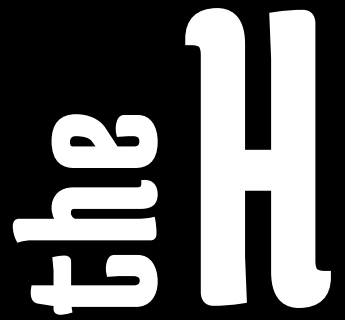
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What's a Heronry?

A “Heronry” is the name for the nesting colony where herons raise their young. Even though they're solo hunters, they nest in groups for added protection. We thought that was an inspiring picture of how communities can function.

Who runs the Heronry?

When we published the first issue of *the Heronry* in December of last year, the idea was that the work would be roughly a 50/30/20 split between me (Christina Hotz), Amelia McFarlane, and Bert Vorstenbosch Jr. As the publication has grown and life has changed, it's morphed into a bit more of a 70/20/10 dynamic.

Ultimately it will likely be taken over completely by me (Christina), but for now, billing, and distribution is handled by Amelia and Bert, with most everything else on my plate. Being connected with Office Pro in downtown Mitchell means that there's an obvious place that people can go to ask questions or make suggestions; Amelia has been a rock-star fielding all of those.

Are you getting paid?

Not yet! The hope is that we get enough consistent financial support to be able to draw wages eventually, but for now, the hours of work that go into this magazine are uncompensated. (You can help by donating or sponsoring ads).

Can you interview (Insert Name here)?

We'd love to be able to interview every person who is suggested to us, but unfortunately we just don't have the time and manpower. Since we're volunteering our time and expertise, we have to be careful not to overextend ourselves. The best way to make sure someone gets the recognition you think they deserve is for you to interview them yourself and to submit that interview for us to publish. We also accept creative writing, poetry, and memoirs.

Is Bert your boss?

Nope! We're very egalitarian; this is more of a partnership than anything else. Bert's company is handling the

financial aspects of things while we get organized, but that's only a temporary solution.

Why aren't you charging people money?

We look at *the Heronry* as a public service. In order for our community to reap the benefits, it needs to be accessible to everyone; this means that it needs to be free. We hope that people who really love what we're doing will donate via substack or by just dropping off donations at Office Pro in Mitchell. Eventually we'd like to register as a not-for-profit, but there are a lot of factors that go into being approved and we want to be sure that we have the nitty-gritty aspects of running *the Heronry* figured out before we take on any more challenges.

How do you find your writers?

It's a struggle! Some of our writers started out as featured people themselves, and others have popped out of the woodwork to volunteer. Sometimes I manage to convince a new person to give writing a try and they love it; other times they give it their best effort and realize it's not for them. Our number one rule is that no AI generating is allowed. The whole point of *the Heronry* is to build community, and you don't do that by getting a computer to write for you. Even using AI to edit is “iffy”; it all starts to sound the same, and we enjoy the collaboration that comes with going back and forth with writers.

Where can I get a copy?

We've got a list of distribution locations in every publication, and on our website as well! There are no guarantees that a distribution location will have copies though (they often run out), so it's always a good idea to give them a call to check before making a special trip to pick up a copy. Digital copies exist on our website as well, but we're leaning towards having that content just available on our substack platform - which allows people to get articles emailed to them directly.

More questions?

Email us: wp.heronry@gmail.com
or call Christina: 519-994-1431.



August Growth

Well, it's August apparently – or at least, by the time you read this it will be. For some reason I always expect the summer months to be slightly less chaotic than the rest of the year. Despite the fact that summer involves more sports, swimming lessons, and about 100 million outdoor responsibilities like maintenance and gardening, I'm always convinced that THIS summer, I'll take it easy.

We're not going on any extensive vacations (not even camping), we opted out of baseball this summer, and for SOME reason, I let my husband talk me out of expanding the garden this year. (He thinks I have too much to do already ... what does he know?!) I have a tendency to pile more on my plate as soon as there's a tiny space showing – never mind the fact that it's piled too high already.

Perhaps it would help if I could just stick to the basics rather than doing things that are nice but unnecessary, but the problem is that the necessary things are boring! I'd much rather spend a weekend with an uncle making a new outdoor bench that can turn into a day bed; that's much more exciting than painting one more railing section.

The good news is that *the Heronry* is different every month, which keeps me interested! The excitement that comes with finding artists to highlight, new writers to inspire, and meeting residents who moved away but are coming back to town to visit, keeps me focused.

This summer I got to meet Ted Johns, who might not be *super* famous as far as fame goes, but is well known by the older residents around these parts. He's this month's featured person, but as he's a little too famous to be considered "Ordinary" we've come up with a new series called, "Rural Roots," which is for people who grew up in West Perth and then left our county for new adventures!

One of my favourite aspects of being the editor of *the Heronry* is getting to watch the way its converts are recruiting and contributing to the current and

future success of the publication. David Doyle started out as an artist feature, has shared some musings on art, is switching to creative writing, and then will be focusing on recruiting more artists to share their work with our community! David Kemp contributed to an article about the teacher that shaped the creative journey of Visnja of Mitchell Pottery Studio, and now he's sending greetings to friends, starting a dance club, and writing as well. Cathy Hutson has gone above and beyond her original plan of sharing her reflections and is regularly conducting and writing interviews!

Every month we have new people reach out with ideas for interviews and artist features, and each month I manage to talk at least one person into giving writing a try! The dream of *the Heronry* as a place to showcase the talent that already exists and curate it into a publication worth reading is coming true! Of course it's also important that people who don't see themselves as having a talent for writing are also brought to understand that we want to hear their stories whether they're "high quality" or not!

Angie Moore often writes about making sure the stories of our founding citizens don't disappear; that's exactly what we're trying to do as well. Whether, like Watson Adams, you've collected your history into memoirs that you're willing to let us publish, or you just have a few old photographs that remind you of the way things were, we want to see and share your stories with the community.

Next month we hope to focus on content surrounding our local fair. Fall fairs across Ontario are in danger of fading away and *the Heronry* is doing its part to help keep ours alive! Please support the Ag Society by volunteering at the gates, submitting your items for judging or display, and sending in your fair-related stories and old fair photos before the 15th of August! We can't wait to see them! Exhibit and fair schedule information can be found in this issue on pages 26-27.



August Horoscopes

Aries: March 21 - April 21 Fun summer adventures are top priority this month, Aries. From music festivals and camping trips to water parks. Why not do it all?

Taurus: April 21 - May 20 A project for your community or a renovation at home that you've been putting off may be something that needs your attention in August, Taurus. Not the funnest thing to do, but once it's dealt with you'll feel so much better.

Gemini: May 21 - June 20 Taking a family trip or a road trip to see family? What seems like a big ordeal right now won't be so overwhelming once you get on the road, as long as you take your time to plan it all out.

Cancer: June 21 - July 21 Summer plans may have you digging into your savings account, Cancer. This is a good month to make a budget and get your savings back on track.

Leo: July 22 - Aug 22 Happy Birthday Leo! It's your time in the spotlight and you may feel like taking your party up a notch this year. With an Eclipse in your sign this month, why not go big or go home, right? Your energy will be amplified either way.

Virgo: Aug 23 - Sept 22 Your humble and down-to-earth soul may call for a more holistic approach when it comes to a summer getaway. Why not try a retreat? Somewhere you can slow down, rest, relax and heal.

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 22 August is the perfect month to spend time with friends, groups and community, Libra. Restore balance by making some time for social events and campfires with the people you love the most.

Scorpio: Oct 23 - Nov 21 Good thing you already had a summer vacation, Scorpio. Big things are happening within your career this month and that might just propel you to the top.

Sagittarius: Nov 22 - Dec 20 Wow, you might actually be taking most of the month off to do some long-distance travelling! A backpacking trip through Europe or an excursion around Asia is something you've been dreaming of; now is the perfect time to expand your horizons.

Capricorn: Dec 21 - Jan 20 Of course you would be working on your ambitions in August, Cap. Looks like you're thinking of selling or investing in something that could be life-changing. I don't have to tell you to take your time and be smart about this, because that's what you naturally do.

Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18 Close, one-on-one relationships are your main focus this month. You may get a lot more attention in this area of life which could actually mess with your aloof and independent self. Even if you are uncomfortable, try to enjoy it. If you don't have a partner, you could meet that special someone in August.

Pisces: Feb 19 - March 20 You may be feeling a bit scattered and all over the place this month, Pisces. Try to reestablish some sort of routine or schedule to feel less floaty and more grounded.

Maggie Turner is a local professional astrologer who loves to help heal and support people along their path in life using the amazing tool of astrology. Want to know more or book a personal reading? You can e-mail Maggie at magzturner9@gmail.com or find her on social media @mysticmaggzastro



Happy Birthday
Irma Lannin!



About Daddy Longlegs

Are Daddy Longlegs Spiders?

Lots of people have asked this question. A bunch think they are, and a bunch think they aren't. To figure out if daddy longlegs are spiders or not, we have to look at their features. Spiders have fangs, eight legs, multiple eyes, can spin webs, have two main body parts, and most spiders can regrow a leg when they're young. Daddy longlegs don't have fangs, have eight legs, usually have two eyes, don't spin webs, have one main body part, and can't regrow their legs. So, they only have one thing in common: having eight legs. But does that make them spiders? No, it does not. Yes, they are both arachnids, but they are not both spiders. Spiders are in a group called Araneae, while daddy longlegs are in a group called Opiliones. This means daddy longlegs are not spiders.

Are They Dangerous?

Lots of people think daddy longlegs are dangerous, but they are not. Daddy longlegs don't have fangs or venom, so they can't bite. They are perfectly harmless. Even most of our local spiders would rather run away than bite you, because then they would get squished.

What Do Daddy Longlegs Eat?

Well, since they don't have fangs and are not spiders, what do they eat? Not many people know! Sometimes daddy longlegs will eat small insects like ants, mosquitoes, gnats, caterpillars, and those teeny red mites you see all over the place. They also eat dead insects, decaying stuff, and other rotten or rotting things like old banana peels. When daddy longlegs find food, they grab it with their mouth. They don't use claws, because they don't have any! And they don't always eat their prey alive. When they eat the rotting things it helps return nutrients back to the soil—how cool is that?!

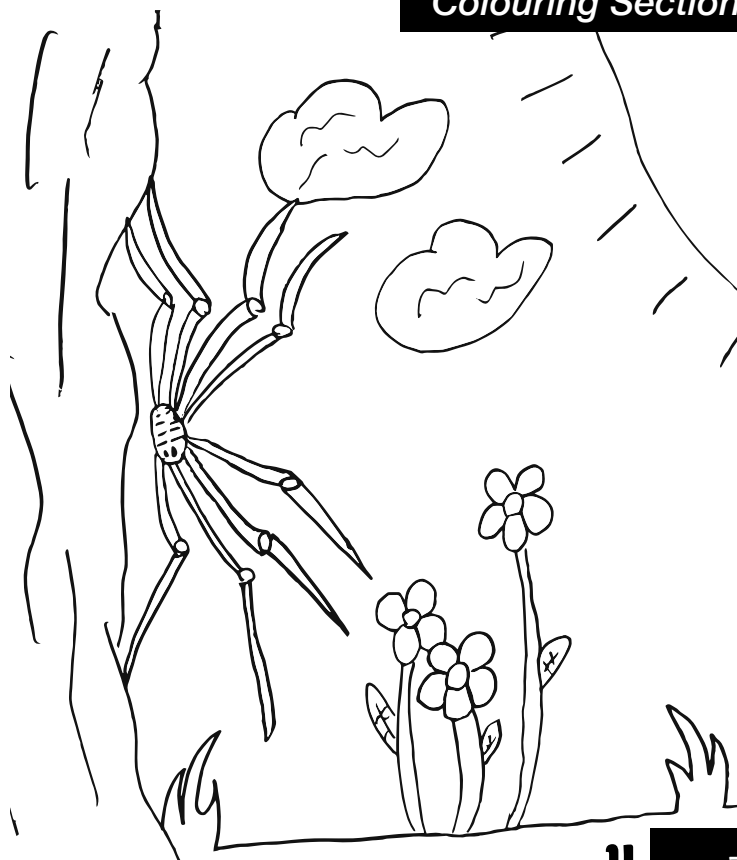
Why Are They Important?

Daddy longlegs are important because they help with pest control. They are also really helpful for if you have a house that is being invaded by ants. That is why daddy longlegs are important and why we should stop killing the poor things.

What Can We Do to Help Daddy Longlegs?

Like I said earlier, let them live! It may really help, unless you have a pet that eats everything and starts to get sick, like mine. But something that would help with that is buying a bug catcher or trapping them under a cup with a piece of paper towel underneath, then releasing them outside. If you have a garden like me, they can help by eating some of those annoying garden pests. We could also leave them alone if we find them outside, and let them live their best life!

Colouring Section





Running for Council

I know a lot of you remember the old town hall. I had not visited it before the day I stopped in to get a candidate's package which only happened after I decided to run for council. I had been living in West Perth for about eight years at that point, over in Staffa. I had been doing farm work, learning how to be married and be a father to one, two, and then three more little people.

Honestly, not a bad little life. For a chunk of that time, I worked at a farm within walking distance of Staffa, and had a schedule of cows, and spent my time cooking for the fam, and going for walks with the kids. We had a bunch of absolutely beautiful summers, full of endless afternoons of swimming and exploring, blackberry picking, and gardening.



The old Town Hall, then highschool, Campbell Collection

Suffice to say, I hadn't just moved here. I lived here, and "here" was now my home. I made my children's childhoods here; I made pie and bread, and a home here. I still missed the hills and forests of the Ottawa Valley where I was raised, but this is where I made my life.

It wasn't enough. I know that sounds crazy. But something inside me needed to be responsible for more, to do more for the world around me.

I have a bit of a background in activism, as it happens. (More than a bit, if you Google my name with the right keywords.) I have always wanted to leave the world a better place when I leave than it was when I got here. I kinda think we should all want that. I had left that activism behind for a few years, and the lack of doing more than was asked was eating at me.

to say that.) I didn't need that job to buy something fun though, I needed it to pay my mortgage and take care of my family. So off I went to the old Town Hall, and I picked up a Candidate's Package and started the process of running for council.

I am glad I did, but I had no idea what I was asking to be allowed to do. I think most of us don't. I hadn't realized how much of everyday life is a council thing. Bridges and sidewalks, garbage pickup and streetlights, water and potholes are all things that the municipality is responsible for. It's the stuff that actually makes up the day-to-day life in our community. Regardless of whatever is happening at the provincial or federal level, our job is here and making "here" as good as we can.

When on council, there is the reading to contend with. Agendas run into the hundreds and hundreds of pages. When you're elected, everything that happens through council is now partly your responsibility as well, and there might be something on page 352, or 678 that you need explained or that you disagree with.

And that's just council. You also get a bunch of other committees that are legislated to have a certain number of council members on them. (This means you!) This results in even more reading, and more legislation for councillors to research.

Along the way, if you happen to share my desire to shape the world into some sort of better, you get invited (due to work and perseverance) into other efforts.

If I can impress anything on you, let it be this next part.

Your life experience counts. It is valid, and in the right circumstances you can find that your viewpoint is actually needed.

If you're a good councilor, you can't skip the work, but you can find the places where what you need to say is what other people need to hear; those are the times you make a difference.

Give me a second to count on my fingers...okay. I'm only on 9 committees or boards at the moment. That's not that bad, and 4 of those are activism-related, not required by my role as a councillor. This is where it gets kind of fun. There are some of you reading this who also think that this job sounds like fun. It is!

Like I said before, there is **a lot** of reading. Be warned. Expect at least one Ice and Fire novel per week for the first bit, while you get used to reading legislation, and learning what questions are needed.

Here's the deal – we work as a community because we have organization. Some decisions belong to some people, some decisions belong to others. Those people are meant to be elected, and that is where we are tripping up.

There are currently no candidates for the School Board positions, and we are three filed candidates short of a Council. This isn't a good sign. We need more people to step up to help our community thrive!

If you got this far in my writing, and still think that much extra everything sounds like fun, (or at least like something you strongly want to tackle) go get a Candidate's Package and run for office.

It's worth it.

Peace,
Andrew

Local Recipes

Soft Sugar Rhubarb Cookies

Kara McNicoll

Alzheimer Society Huron Perth



Dorothy's Restaurant and Bake Shop was once a beloved, local gathering place with traditional Canadian breakfasts and home-styled baked goods in Mitchell. While you may not find Dorothy in the restaurant these days, she continues to be a home baker, always up to trying a new recipe. After harvesting some rhubarb from her garden in the spring, Dorothy made some delicious cookies, that were too good not to share. We hope you enjoy!

SOFT SUGAR RHUBARB BOOKIES

Ingredients:

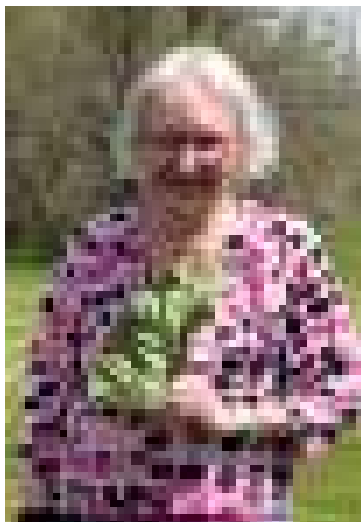
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup softened butter
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 egg
- 1 3/4c flour
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1 cup Rhubarb - chopped small

Directions

1. In a large bowl, mix brown sugar, butter, vanilla, and egg
2. Add flour, cinnamon, salt, baking soda, baking powder and mix together
3. Fold in Rhubarb
4. Drop 1 inch balls of cookie dough onto parchment covered baking sheets
5. Bake at 375F for 12 - 14 Minutes



Fresh Cookies!



Dorothy with Rhubarb



Endra the Ekans: Chapter 2

"Endrin, Come back!" yelled Endra, but Endrin did not return.

"Ugh, now I have to find her." Endra whined as he entered the sticks. "Endrin! Endrin! Endrin, come here! Endra yelled as he searched. "Help!" called Endrin from a distance.

"I'm coming," Endra said, as he slithered towards her.

Endra saw five Nuzleafs surrounding Endrin. "Back off," said Endrin. "Leave her alone."

"Why should we?" asked one of the Nuzleafs.

"Because I have venomous fangs." Endrin replied.

"Oh we're sooo scared." replied another Nuzleaf.

Then, Endra jumped onto one of the Nuzleafs and bit it! One after another he jumped on the Nuzleafs and bit them in order to save his sister. He was going to do the same thing with The last Nuzleaf, but it punched him in mid air.

"You punched me!" said Endra.

"Yea." Said the Nuzleaf.

"Nobody punches a snake!" Endra said back, and bit the Nuzlea - paralyzing it.

"Wow, that was amazing!" said Endrin. "Now, come on. We need to get out of here."

So they set off. As they slithered, they saw a pedestal with an old pot on it. "This place gives me the creeps", said Endrin.

"Ha, it's not like a ghost is going to show up," Endra replied. Then they heard a sound. They turned around and the pot was floating! Then the pot threw a stick at them.

"Gah! Yelled Endrin.

"Don't worry, I've got this! Said Endra.

Just like before, he jumped at the pot and tried to bite it, but nothing happened. So he head-butted it instead and it hit the ground and shattered, leaving a bunch of rings behind.

"Ooo, Sparkly!" Endrin said as she put on the rings. "Excuse me miss?" said a voice.

Endra and Endrin turned their heads and saw a Rowlet.

It turned to them and warned, "I would be careful if I were you. Something around here likes to steal shiny things at night, and you're covered with them."

Next comes Chapter 3...



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A Brief Biography

My (Ted Johns) father, Edwin Johns, and my mother, Gertrude Webster, were living on a farm in Tuckersmith Township in Huron County when I was born at the Seaforth hospital, Seaforth, Ontario on October 18, 1942. That farm is now owned by my cousin Stan Johns and is situated on one of the most beautiful roads in the world.

Later my family moved to a small dairy farm in Fullarton Township in Perth County just outside Mitchell. I attended U. S. S. # 6 (Gould's School) Fullarton where my teacher was Joy Craig (later Joy Kane) before I went on to Mitchell District High School and later the University of Toronto.

In 1958, my family moved into Mitchell where they lived at 177 St Andrews St. This turned out to be the former home of Howie Morenz and is right beside the present day Legion at 175 St. Andrews St. My sister Beth Rose still lives in Mitchell as does my nephew Paul.



Goulds School: Class Picture: Names from Left to Right

Back Row : Joy Craig, Joe Uniac, Roy Fawcett, Viola Marquet, Margery Robinson, Bob Keys, Arden Feltz, Don Snider, Jim Nichols, John Barley.

Second Back Row : Denver Masche, Bill French, Bob French, Ken Thiel, Bonny Gould, Richard Munz, Douglas Thiel, Bill Steinbach, Margery Feltz, Margaret Steinbach.

First Back Row: Eleanor Uniac, Joan Baxter, Elizabeth Thiel, Joyce Baxter, Dorothy French, Elaine Nichols, Ursula Munz, Sandra Gould.

Front Row: David Steinbach, George Steinbach, Ted Johns, Bruce Fawcett, Larry Rowland, Donny Masche, Ken Snider.

I have made my living doing Canadian theatre since 1973 - mainly at Theatre Passe Muraille in Toronto, Theatre New Brunswick in Fredericton, and the Blyth Festival where my wife, Janet Amos, was Artistic Director for nine years.

I have a number of acting and directing credits to my name, but am best known for my plays: The School Show, St. Sam and the Nukes, Country Hearts, The Death of the Donnelly's, Naked on the North Shore, Garrisons Garage, Cricket and Claudette, Jake's Place, The Bootblack Orator, and He won't Come In From The Barn.

I look forward to connecting with friends new and old in West Perth when I'm performing my new play this fall!



Ted, Gertrude, Beth, & Edwin Johns



Ted Johns, Ted Schinbein, & Ernie Zuppinger



Ted and his wife Janet, in 2023

Ted (Teddy) Johns: A West Perth-Inspired Character

Christina tB Hotz
the Heronry Editor



Ted Johns is a character - both in the sense of “an interesting person you should get to know,” but also in the sense that he becomes various characters when he acts!

He’s a local boy who “made good” and who got on my radar thanks to his friendship with David Kemp. The two of them knew each other “back in the day” when they both attended Mitchell District High School from 1956 to 1961. David does a pretty good job of staying in touch with, or at least

remaining aware of, his compatriots, and when he heard that Ted was coming back to Mitchell with another installment of his play series featuring Aylmer

Clarke, he made sure that Ted was connected with *the Heronry*.

A phone call and a couple of emails later and Ted and I were seated in a booth at the Sugar Maple having lunch. Ted was doing his best to focus on his soup and sandwich, while also trying to explain how he ended up as a playwright and actor.

Like many people in the industry, Ted attributes his relative success to a mixture of luck and accident. He never set out to be in the theatre; he wasn’t involved in productions at school, and his university career at the University of Toronto was a double major in Honors History and English. At the time, he thought he might go on to be a schoolteacher, but the history courses were more intense than

he anticipated. The English was no problem, but he only barely managed to scrape through History,

which didn’t bode well for it being a career choice.

University acquainted him with plenty of deep thinkers though. He remembers being in awe of the people that surrounded him, and he enjoyed

soaking in the ambiance of their big ideas. That tendency to hang around interesting people is what got Ted into theatre in the first place. He was roped into holding a spear as part of Paul Thompson’s “Farm Show Tour” and that gave him the opportunity to soak up the theatre world.

Always a gregarious storyteller, Ted would often tell jokes about an uncle, a farmer who wouldn’t come in from the barn. Those jokes got Paul Thompson’s

creative wheels turning and he pitched the idea of the play to Ted.

“Johns! It’ll be like Molière – you know, his obsessives – The Miser, The Misanthrope, Le Malade Imaginaire – all those guys. They can only think about one thing. You’ll be that guy. People’ll come and try to change your mind but you’ll fend them off.”

“It’s about farming, so there’ll be all kinds of complaints. Big complaints, little complaints – everybody’s going to have a complaint! In fact, you are going to be the source of the some of the complaints. We’re going to turn complaining into an art form.”

Of course that was just the premise; it was up to Ted to come up with the answers to all the questions



GRADE 13

Top Row L-R: Dick Frier, Roy Sherwood, Bob Parkinson, David Kemp, Clayton Ahrens, Terry Daynard, Alex Strathdee, Arthur Diegel. Middle Row: Mary Parkinson, Margaret Jean Russell, Dorothy French, Nancy Bowman, Faye McKenzie, Kathy Brooks, Barbara McPherson, Sandra Wilson, Nancy Lannin. Bottom Row: Bill Harmer, Bill McNaught, Ted Johns, Mr. Murtha, Don Benniger, Hugh Scott, Ken Bingham

that would let the play be written. Those questions were answered, problems were solved, and the play was a rousing success. The show turned into a bit of a farce, with live animals—including a cow that would relieve itself on stage every fifteen minutes (in accordance with the physical needs of cows everywhere) and chickens wandering around. Aylmer the farmer just wouldn't come in from the barn, and his list of grievances struck a chord with the audience. In a time when plays usually had a very fast turnover, "He Won't Come In From The Barn" went on a performance tour that lasted five years! There were plenty of ups and downs since then, but Ted's been in the theatre world as a writer and actor ever since.



1994: Rose & Aylmer, Characters from:
"He Won't Come In From The Barn"

About fifty years later, Ted is once again bringing Aylmer to life on the stage. This production isn't the farce that "He Won't Come In From The Barn" was. While it features the same character, "Aylmer's Ghost" is more of a goodbye. Aylmer is surrounded by the echoes of the people he grew up with and the remnants of the farming industry that he loves. Like many older folks, he feels left behind by a world that seems more fixated on what comes next than on the value of what came before.

The Ted who tells a story about something that happened back in university is a very different Ted from the one who acts. Every once in a while, Ted would be telling a story about a character that he wrote, or a play that he acted in, and in order to give it the right oomph, he'd switch into "actor mode."

Even while sitting in a booth, the change that comes over Ted when he acts is truly remarkable. His

eyes focus away from you, and then look though you, and a different look comes over his face. His eyes lose their twinkle, and the voice changes. The man still mostly looks like Ted, but it's not Ted that's looking out of those eyes anymore. It's the soul of the character that Ted is channeling, taking the moment to tell the stories that, without Ted's intervention, no one else would hear.



Ted and I having a lovely lunch at the Sugar Maple

Ted and I spent a couple of hours together, laughing about university shenanigans, drinking coffee, and swapping stories about small town life. It's obvious that his upbringing in West Perth had a tremendous impact on the subject matter of his plays, and the success of many of them. I look forward to seeing him perform in Mitchell in September, and I hope that you'll join me.

Aylmer's Ghost will be on tour across Perth County this fall. Tickets are \$20.00 at the door or via the Blyth Festival box office at 519-523-9300.

Tour Information:

Sept 23: Brussels Legion

Sept 26 & 27: Crystal Palace Mitchell

Oct 30: Kingsbridge Centre, Kingsbridge

Oct 2: Hay Town Hall, Zurich

Oct 4: Good Luck Gardens Firewood, Russeldale

Oct 7: Londesborough Town Hall

Oct 9 & 10: Hawk Theatre (above the library), Lucknow

If you know someone who grew up in West Perth and has had an interesting life, please encourage them to share their stories with us!



West Perth Prepares for a Community-Driven 2026 Municipal Election

West Perth is getting ready for the Municipal Election on October 26, 2026, with a continued focus on community participation. Residents will be able to vote online or by telephone, making it easy for everyone to take part.

Eligible candidates must be Canadian citizens, 18 years old or older, and connected to West Perth as a resident, property owner or tenant, or spouse of one.

Nomination requirements include: Form 1, Form 2 with 25 endorsements, photo ID, proof of residence, and the filing fee (\$200 for Mayor, \$100 for other offices). Papers must be obtained and filed in person at the Municipal Office.

Residents are also encouraged to ensure their voter information is accurate and up to date.

Visit RegisterToVoteON.ca or call 1-888-668-8683 to:

- Confirm voter information
- Update, add, or remove details (additional ID required)
- Register as an absentee voter
- Add your name as a future voter if you are age 16 or 17
-

To confirm your information, you will need your name, date of birth, and property address. After September 1, 2026, any updates or changes must be made directly at the West Perth Municipal Office. Residents may also call the Municipal Office at 519-348-8429 for assistance.



The Municipal Office will serve as a Voter Assistance Centre from October 19 to 23 during regular business hours, and will remain open until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. Staff will be available to help residents navigate the voting process and ensure every voter has the support they need.

Online and telephone voting is available 24 hours a day: October 19th- October 23rd.

Community members interested in shaping West Perth's future are encouraged to consider running for office. Nominations for Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Ward Councilor, and School Board Trustee positions are open until August 21 at 2:00 p.m.

For full election details, visit westperth.com/election2026

Nominations for Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Ward Councilor, and School Board Trustee positions close August 21 at 2:00 p.m.

The hum of wings behind me
 So loud! Like swarming bees.
 Light strikes such flitting beauty,
 nerve-jangling with chaotic speed.
 Bright, quick feathers; green, purple, rust and black,
 beating – oh so fast!
 Reminders of past sightings, long ago,
 in desert days and mountain forays.
 Days of exploration,
 walking in sun on unworn paths.
 Ancient sites with rusted relics
 present themselves to wandering
 eyes in unexpected places.
 And myriad birds wing into sight,
 stop briefly on a branch or wall,
 parade their colours and coquettish tails,
 twitching, dancing from sunrise light to dusk.
 Camera-captured in their brilliant performance,
 they hold a slice of time forgotten.
 I turn around. The hum of wings is gone,
 so too the golden days of travelled exploration.

Let's Dance

By David Kemp

Come with your bunions,
 Your calluses, corns,
 Your arthritic ankles,
 Your shoulder that's sore.
 Bring your new replaced knees,
 Or your sciatic hips,
 It's a marvelous chance,
 We can have a great dance

 Gather with cataracts,
 Or old hearing aids
 Bring your ancient gnarled fingers...

That eternally ache;
 For God's sake don't squeeze them;
 The pain makes me roar.
 But let's get together
 I'm sure we are on!
 We can dance 'neath the stars,
 At least until dawn.

We'll learn a new language,
 And steps that confound
 The old feet,
 Not to mention the mind,
 Hands across, circles,
 Chains of all kinds,
 Bourrels and knots
 All perfected in time.
 Tourbillons, half reels
 For three or for four
 Some on diagonals
 To challenge you more.
 Let's set and rotate
 Or is it set and link?
 Either way you will spin
 Faster than you think.

The Rondelle or Allemande
 Will help you progress
 To a new-found position.
 From there you can cast
 Or do Figure 8's
 But keep up the tempo
 There's no time to wait.
 Set to your corners,
 Your partners as well.
 The dance was a great one;
 It turned out quite swell.



The New Bob Ross

That one line, “A happy little tree” will certainly ring a bell for anyone who grew up watching TV in the 80s. Yes, it is a quote from the one and only Bob Ross, the man who showed us all that anyone can paint. Of course, out of the hundreds of people who watched the show, only a few ever tried to follow along.

Realistically, most of us had other things to do, like work and taking care of the house and family. But now that retirement has come upon us, what are we going to do with all that free time? We have to do something to avoid going stark-raving mad with boredom. Maybe it is time to revisit Bob and start a second career, as an artist! So then we pull out the old VCR and grab those dust covered tapes of Bob. Almost immediately we realize that maybe Bob’s tapes just won’t cut it, they may put us off to sleep instead.

Maybe we need a more modern approach. Bob wasn’t cut out for the likes of YouTube, Instagram or Facebook. These things, for better or worse, have changed the way we view things and altered the speed at which we absorb material. Hence, a new Bob needs to arise, hopefully bringing focus and clarity to new and aspiring artists!

I was thinking about this conundrum and wondered, “Hmmm... perhaps I should type in “edgy Bob Ross” and see what AI spews out?” I was almost afraid to try it. What if I get much more edge than I really can handle? What if he is a serial painter spewing out pabulum to be gently digested, but it turns out to be poison that kills the initiative of everyone who sees it? Isn’t the point of art to struggle through the creative process and isn’t AI antithetical to that?

It’s then that I got a better idea, what if I took up the pen and gave it a go myself? I mean, really, what could possibly go wrong? I don’t take myself

that seriously, so it doesn’t matter if it doesn’t turn out well. I know I can handle the process because

painting for me is always an adventure; there are no tried-and-true conventions that always work for me. Heck, half the time I just dive into a project and learn as I go; who says creative writing needs to be any different?

Reminding myself how writing, like painting, is meant to be “play time” rather than all serious and stuffy, is just what I needed. I will give it a go, exercise my creativity in another area, and see how things work out!

This is part one of a four-part short story about a character named Roger and his adventures following a New Bob Ross’s Painting Series.

First up: “Roger Goes Shopping.”

It had been a few months since Roger had retired from the CNR and he was bored. While he’d never been the artsy type, that was more due to a lack of time than inclination. Way back in the dark ages he’d actually watched a couple of Bob Ross Art Show episodes, and swore that “One day, he’d give that painting thing a try.”

After doing some digging on the internet, he managed to find some old Bob Ross episodes online and began watching them - waiting for that spark of inspiration to take hold.

At sixty-something years old, Roger was used to needing the odd nap during the day and went to bed by about 9:30 each night. But by the time his computer registered that he’d viewed several Bob Ross episodes, Roger realized that he had slept through 90% of the content.

“Surely” he thought, “There must be something more current out there, something with a bit more “bite” to it?”

He began searching and the initial results were less successful than he had hoped. He found several young ladies who seemed to know what they were

doing, but Roger seldom understood a word they said. The ladies spoke too fast, too soft and used a language that sometimes barely passed for English.

He was getting discouraged until he came across The “New Bob Painting Series” online. This “New Bob” was an older fellow who spoke slowly and clearly. He seemed to use recognizable English - none of this new fangled “Gen-Z” slang, and explained things clearly. This was someone interesting, but not too intimidating!

“New Bob” had a list of supplies that he suggested all aspiring painters buy. The list was simple enough. A painter required an easel, paints, brushes, palette knives, a paint palette, and canvases.

“New Bob” was keen on his prodigies buying the best quality supplies. “This”, he said, “would help his students achieve their goals. Cheap materials would only frustrate them.”

Fine and dandy! Armed with this information, Roger promptly set off to the local art-supply store to get his equipment. He figured a couple hundred bucks should do it.

He arrived at the store and upon entering immediately felt out of place. The customers resembled 1970’s hippies, Bohemian folk stars or some kind of circus act; whatever they looked like, there certainly wasn’t anyone else that resembled him. Perhaps he should have dug out his old bell bottom jeans before coming?

While he stood around looking dazed, the clerk, a nice young woman who was dressed an awful lot like a young Joni Mitchell, came to greet him. Roger told her what he needed and she said, “I know that list and will get you set up right away.” It seemed like things would be ok.

Her next question was harder to answer, “Would Roger be painting inside or plein air?” Not knowing what “plein air” meant, Roger said “Inside”.

“Would he be standing or sitting while painting?” “Standing, I think,” answered Roger. “Okay, then you will need a studio easel.”

“Acrylic or oils?” was another question. She told him that acrylics seemed to be the choice for ease of use, so Roger chose acrylics.

She next explained that the New Bob’s list included nine base colours. Then came palette knives and brushes. The brushes came in three levels: hobby, aspiring and pro. Roger liked the sound of “pro” and decided to treat himself to the fancy ones.

Finally came the canvases. The clerk suggested “gallery style” and that he start large, since “Painting small is more difficult.” Next thing he knew, she was handing him a 18”x 24” and a 16”x 20” canvas. “These,” she said, “Are nice sizes to start!”

His cart was full and Roger was buoyed by the prospect of becoming an artist. Everything was assembled at the counter and Roger watched as she began ringing in the total.

He started to get concerned when he saw that each tube of paint was well over \$25! The studio easel alone came in at just under \$400. Roger was in for a big surprise: “The total today is \$1504.50. Would that be cash or Visa?” Reminding himself that “New Bob” said cheap supplies were a waste of money, he took out his credit card and promised himself that this would all be worth it.

The ride home seemed to take forever. Roger wasn’t looking forward to admitting to his wife that he’d just spent \$1500 on a starter kit for painting. When he got home he didn’t even try to sneak the goods past her; after all, it sure didn’t look like \$1500 worth of supplies, so why bother hiding it?

As the shock of the expense wore off, Roger set things up in the basement. “I have to think of this space as my studio,” he reminded himself. “It’s only a matter of time before I impress the neighbours with my skills.”

Content with his purchases, he settled down for another nap; tomorrow he would begin his journey of learning to paint with the New Bob Ross...



What Floats Your Boat?

How about gliding along the beautiful Thames River in a kayak on a warm, sunny day? In these busy summer days of deadlines and commitments, yard work and laundry, it's so important to fill your cup with the moments that recharge us for tomorrow. It's easier now than ever, even if you don't own a kayak, thanks to the Rotary Club of Mitchell. We have recently installed a shack (built by Nick Reeve and Dinnette Rose), that houses six new kayaks that are available to the public to borrow at no cost. Between the date the kayaks were made available (June 29) and July 13, we've already had 86 bookings to reserve the kayaks. We are thrilled at the response so far!

How did this happen? Our Rotary Club meets regularly on Tuesday morning at 7:15, and often invites guest speakers. Several months ago, we invited David Price to come and speak to us about his involvement with the Light Up The Night events in Stratford. This led us to investigate the launch and kayak borrowing system in St Marys and made us think, "Why couldn't Mitchell have this?"

After consulting with the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) and the Municipality of West Perth, we were able to move forward with fundraising. With our Paddles 'n Pints dance, where the community showed impressive enthusiasm and generosity, as well as a grant from Rotary District 6330, we had the resources to get this program off the ground and onto the water.

The structure and kayaks, along with the paddles, life jackets and safety kits, are all securely located near the entrance to the Mitchell Lions Park. The

borrowing process is not difficult and can be done online through the West Perth website. westperth.com/community-recreation/facility-rentals Once you follow the instructions for kayak rentals, you will either sign in or create a Rec Desk Account. You click through facilities, rentals, then on to kayaks, then choose a date and time to book a kayak. It is expected that you arrive 15 minutes prior to your booked time at the West Perth Lions Pool, with photo ID, to sign in and pick up the key to access your kayak and equipment. The key is returned by you to the pool staff at the end of your kayaking experience.

There have been some generous sponsors who have earned naming privileges of some of the kayaks. There are still a few not yet named. If you wish to sponsor and name a kayak, please notify the Rotary Club at 274-0544. Our next goal is to work towards an accessible kayak launch, much like the one in St Marys. This project will also be in conjunction with the UTRCA and West Perth. If you wish to donate to either the kayak borrowing program or the launch program, you may e-transfer to this address: rotaryclubofmitchell@gmail.com.

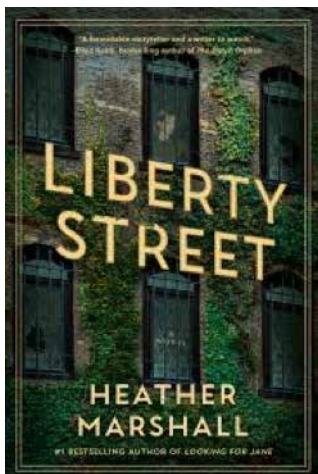
We strongly encourage you to make use of our new borrowing program as well as the kayaks and launch in St Marys. We think you'll find the benefits of fresh air, enjoying nature and simply winding down are all worth the effort. Summertime is busy. Make sure you find the time to discover what floats your boat!



Cindy & Dylan McLeod were two of the first people to borrow the kayaks



Perth County Reads



Perth County Reads is back for its third year, and we are thrilled to announce that our 2026 pick is *Liberty Street* by Heather Marshall!

Inspired by Ontario history, *Liberty Street* is a dual-timeline historical fiction novel set in Toronto and Huron County. It tells the story of a young female journalist in 1961 who goes undercover in the Mercer Reformatory in Toronto to uncover the terrible conditions and the abuse of women permitted by the unjust Female Refuges Act, which allowed judges to incarcerate women for being “incorrigible.” In the second timeline, a detective in 1996 investigates an unidentified body found buried outside Clinton, which seems to have links to the Mercer Reformatory.

As the story moves through both timelines, it explores the relationships of women with each other, with mental health, and with the societal structures that work to control and limit them. Throughout the fall, Perth County libraries will offer programs related to *Liberty Street*. Visit <https://perthcountylibraries.ca/pcr2026> to learn more, and put a hold on “*Liberty Street*” to join the discussion!

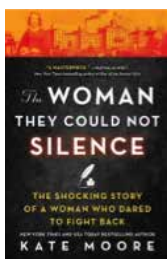


Small Things Like These

by: *Claire Keegan*

This exquisitely written novella follows a coal and fuel merchant in Ireland in 1985, who must grapple with whether or not to intervene in the abuse he discovers at the local convent, while reflecting on

how a similar choice impacted his own childhood and life.

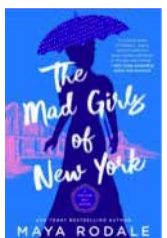


The Woman They Could Not Silence

by: *Kate Moore*

A gripping nonfiction account of Elizabeth Packard, whose husband committed her to an asylum in 1860 to silence her disagreement with his religious preaching. After three years

in the Asylum, Elizabeth was released and spent the remainder of her life fighting for women’s rights and freedom of speech.



The Mad Girls of New York

by: *Maya Rodale*

The main character in *Liberty Street* is inspired by the stunt reporting of real-life journalist Nellie Bly. This historical fiction novel follows Nellie herself as she goes undercover at the Women’s Lunatic

Asylum on Blackwell Island.

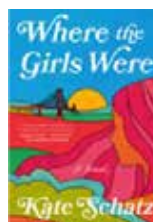


Rosemary: The Hidden Kennedy Daughter

by: *Kate Clifford Larson*

A tragic biography of JFK’s sister. Intellectually disabled, Rosemary was hidden from the public eye by her powerful family, and eventually subjected

to a lobotomy at age 23. The truth of what was done to her was discovered by her siblings years later, and inspired them to direct government attention to the struggles of developmentally and mentally disabled individuals.



Where the Girls Were

by: *Kate Schatz*

In 1968, 17-year-old Elizabeth is excited to head to Stanford in the fall and pursue her dream of being a journalist. Everything changes when she gets

pregnant and finds herself trapped in a home for unwed mothers. Shamed by society, deprived of freedom, and fearful for her now uncertain future, Elizabeth bonds with the other girls there and fights to find her voice in a society that wants her to be silent.

For details about our programs, please visit our website: westperthpl.ca, visit the library, or call the desk at 519-348-9234. Keep an eye out for our monthly events calendars, and let us know if you have any ideas for programs!

West Perth Community

Most of these events are open to the general community though some have age restrictions. A diamond ♦ is for persons 55+ or living with disabilities/chronic health conditions

August 1 - Saturday

Fair Exhibit Registration Opens | ALL MONTH | mitchellfair.com

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

Men's Breakfast | 8:30am | 101 Restaurant

August 2 - Sunday

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

Free Family Swim(SouthEasthope) | 3:00-4:45 PM | Lions Pool

August 3 - Monday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool

Outdoor Play & Learn | 9-11am | West Perth Animal Park

Baby Time | 1-3pm | West Perth Public Library

\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

Free Adult Soccer | 6:30pm - 8:30pm | Behind UTES

\$ Aquafit | 8-9pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 4 - Tuesday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool

STEM with Asha (Age 4-7)* | 10:30am | Lions Park Pavilion

*Mitchell Foodbank | 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St

STEM with Asha (Age 8-12)* | 1pm | Lions Park Pavilion

Mahjong Drop-In | 1pm | West Perth Public Library

♦Farkle | 1:30-2:30pm | Manor Lounge

Crafter's Circle | 2pm | West Perth Public Library

\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Aquafit | 8-9pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 5 - Wednesday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool

♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church

Progressive Euchre & Fun Pool | 1pm | Mitchell Legion

\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Aquafit | 8-9pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

♦Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge

♦Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge

*Intermediate D&D (Age 12-16) | 2-5pm | W.P.P. Library

Junior Explorers (Age 6-12) | 6:15pm | Fullarton Ball Park

Open Archery | 6:30pm | 3317 Perth Road 163

August 6 - Thursday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool

♦\$40 Reflexology* | 9:00am-12:00pm | Manor Lounge

♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church

♦\$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life

♦\$12 Euchre w/ lunch | 10:00am-3:00pm | 160 Wellington

*ART with Asha (Age 4-7) | 10:30am | Lions Park Pavilion

*ART with Asha (Age 8-12) | 1:00pm | Lions Park Pavilion

Drop-in Mental Health Support | 1-3pm | WPP Library

♦Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge

\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Aquafit | 8-9pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 7 - Friday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool

Play & Learn | 9-11am | Brodhagen Community Centre

Mitchell Foodbank* | 9:30-11:30am/1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland

♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church

♦ Wii Games | 2pm-3pm | Manor Lounge

\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

Cornhole | 4:30pm | Mitchell Legion

\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

Courtyard Markets | 5-8pm | Poppy Lane, Mitchell

August 8- Saturday

Sharks Swim Team Meet | 8am-1 pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

Read to the Animals-All Ages | 11am | Lions Animal Barn

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

Open Mic | 1-4pm | Mitchell Legion

Free Family Swim(Lions Club) | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

Free Open Swim (Optimists) | 5pm-6:45pm | Mitchell Pool

\$30 Lions Fish Fry | 4:30 - 6:30pm | Lions Park Pavilion

August 9 - Sunday

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 10 - Monday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool

♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church

Outdoor Play & Learn | 9-11am | West Perth Animal Park

\$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life

EarlyON Babytime | 1-3pm | West Perth Public Library

♦Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge

Free Events: August 2026

Conditions, An asterisk* means pre-registration or an appointment is required. A "~" indicates join-up is seasonal. A dollar sign or price indicates the event is not free.

\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
Library on Location | 6pm | Mitchell Vet Clinic
Free Adult Soccer | 6:30pm - 8:30pm | Behind UTES
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
♦Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Aquafit | 8-9pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 11 - Tuesday

Free Yoga (BYO Gear) | 6:30 - 7:15am | End of Willow Ln
\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
STEM with Asha (Age 4-7)* | 10:30am | Lions Park Pavilion
STEM with Asha (Age 8-12)* | 1pm | Lions Park Pavilion
Mahjong Drop-In | 1pm | West Perth Public Library
Blood Pressure Clinic | 1-3pm | West Perth Library
Crafter's Circle | 2pm | West Perth Public Library
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8-9pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
Mixed Cards | 7pm | Brodhagen Community Centre

August 12 - Wednesday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
Tales & Tunes (Age 0-3) | 10:15am | WP Public Library
Board Games w/ Asha (Age 8-12) | 12-3pm | WPP Library
Progressive Euchre & Fun Pool | 1pm | Mitchell Legion
Autism Support | 1-2pm | W.P. Municipal Office
♦Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
♦Sing-a-Long | 2:30-3:30pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
♦Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Aquafit | 8-9pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
Open Archery | 6:30pm | 3317 Perth Road 163

August 13 - Thursday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
♦\$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
*ART with Asha (Age 4-7) | 10:30am | Lions Park Pavilion
*ART with Asha (Age 8-12) | 1:00pm | Lions Park Pavilion
♦Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

*Paws 4 Stories (Age 6-10) | 4pm | WP Public Library
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8-9pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 14 - Friday

RSVP Deadline for ♦ Seniors Delivery Meal on Aug 20
RSVP Deadline for ♦ Pie Social on Aug 17
RSVP Deadline for ♦ BunchNBrunch Aug 18
\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
Mitchell Foodbank* | 9:30-11:30am/1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland
♦Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
♦ WII Games | 2pm-3pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 15 - Saturday

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
Free Family Swim (JF Skinner) | 3-4:45pm | M Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 16 - Sunday

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
Free Family Swim (Bentley's Inn) | 3pm-4:45pm | Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 17 - Monday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30am | Mitchell Lions Pool
Outdoor Play & Learn | 9-11am | West Perth Animal Park
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦\$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
EarlyON Babytime | 1-3pm | West Perth Public Library
♦Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
Pie Social* | 2:30-3:30pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
Library on Location | 6pm | Murphy Bus Lines: 15 Arthur St
\$ Aquafit | 7-8pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
♦Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
Free Adult Soccer | 6:30pm - 8:30pm | Behind UTES

August 18 - Tuesday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
Junior Club Championship | 8am | Mitchell Golf Club
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30am | Mitchell Pool
Continued on next page

August 18 - Tuesday continued

♦\$11 Brunch n Bunch* | 10:30am | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
STEM with Asha (Age 4-7)* | 10:30am | Lions Park Pavilion
STEM with Asha (Age 8-12)* | 1pm | Lions Park Pavilion
Mahjong Drop-In | 1pm | West Perth Public Library
Mitchell Foodbank* | 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St
Crafter's Circle | 2pm | West Perth Public Library
\$ Family Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 7-8pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 19 - Wednesday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30am | Mitchell Lions Pool
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦Community Edu Coffee Hour: Advance Care Planning:
Rotary Hospice | 10:30-11:30am | Manor Lounge
Progressive Euchre & Fun Pool | 1pm | Mitchell Legion
♦Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
*Intermediate D&D (Age 12-16) | 2-5pm | W.P.P. Library
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
Junior Explorers (Age 6-12) | 6:15pm | Fullarton Ball Park
Open Archery | 6:30pm | 3317 Perth Road 163
\$ Aquafit | 7-8pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
♦ Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge

August 20 - Thursday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30am | Mitchell Lions Pool
♦\$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
*ART with Asha (Age 4-7) | 10:30am | Lions Park Pavilion
♦G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦\$15 Dining for Seniors Delivery Meal* | 11:30am | Delivery
*ART with Asha (Age 8-12) | 1:00pm | Lions Park Pavilion
♦Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
*Paws 4 Stories (Age 6-10) | 4pm | WP Public Library
\$ Open Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 7-8pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 21 - Friday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30am | Mitchell Lions Pool
Mitchell Foodbank* | 9:30-11:30am/1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
♦G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦\$40 Reflexology* | 9:00am-12:00pm | Manor Lounge
♦WII Games | 2-3pm | Manor Lounge
Cornhole | 4:30pm | Mitchell Legion

August 22 - Saturday

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
The Wicked Ride | ALL DAY | Huron & Perth County

August 23 - Sunday

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 24 - Monday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30am | Mitchell Lions Pool
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦\$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
Outdoor Play & Learn | 9-11am | West Perth Animal Park
Senior Book Chat | 11am | Ritz Manor Apartments
EarlyON Babytime | 1-3pm | West Perth Public Library
♦Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
Free Adult Soccer | 6:30pm - 8:30pm | Behind UTES
♦ Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Aquafit | 7-8pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 25 - Tuesday

Free Yoga (BYO Gear) | 6:30 - 7:15am | End of Willow Ln
\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30am | Mitchell Lions Pool
Yahtzee | 10:30am | Manor Lounge
Family Services- Drop-In | 12:30-2:30pm | W.P.P. Library
*Blood Pressure Clinic | 1-3pm | Manor Lounge
Mahjong Drop-In | 1pm | West Perth Public Library
Crafter's Circle | 2pm | West Perth Public Library
\$ Open Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 7-8pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 26 - Wednesday

Senior Men's Invitational | ALL DAY | Mitchell Golf Club
\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30am | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 7-8pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
♦Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
Crafty Summer Treats- All Ages | 10:30am | W.P.P. Library
Newcomer Services Drop-In | 1-4pm | W.P. Public Library
Progressive Euchre & Fun Pool | 1pm | Mitchell Legion
Open Archery | 6:30pm | 3317 Perth Road 163

August 27 - Thursday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30am | Mitchell Lions Pool
◇ \$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
\$ Open Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 7-8pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
◇ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
◇ Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
Employment Services: Drop-In | 1-4:30pm | W.P.P. Library

August 28 - Friday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30am | Mitchell Lions Pool
◇ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
Mitchell Foodbank* | 9:30-11:30am/1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland
◇ Wii Games | 2-3pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 29 - Saturday

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

Event Submission Link



Submit your community event to the Heronry and expand your reach! Submissions are due by the 15th of the month prior to publication!

West Perth Events only! Club meetings, sports sign-up, and fundraisers welcome! Not for general promotion.

August 30 - Sunday

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool

August 31 - Monday

Club Championships | ALL DAY | Mitchell Golf Club
\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30am | Mitchell Lions Pool
Outdoor Play & Learn | 9-11am | West Perth Animal Park
◇ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
◇ \$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
EarlyON Babytime | 1-3pm | West Perth Public Library
◇ Active Wellness - Level 2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:46pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
Free Adult Soccer | 6:30pm - 8:30pm | Behind UTEs
◇ Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge

**New Classes
starting September
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mitchellpottery.com



Best Wishes to
**Brad Smith &
Brooklyn Rodwell**
on the occasion of their
August Wedding



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Compass Directions

In a few moments of reflection the other day I realized that this year, this month of August 2026 is a bit of a milestone for me. Now, marks an exact half way point in my life as far as my residential locations. So far, I have lived 36 years in the North half of Ontario and 36 in the South. While reflecting on this time line, my thoughts became flooded with the remarkable differences there are between our Northern and our Southern lifestyles! I think, since I have now spent equal time in both these situations, it qualifies me to be able to share some of the interesting contrasts not only pertaining to geography but also to the “ways of life”.

The first thing that comes to mind for me is the “pace” of life itself. Having grown up on the Upper French River (I will call this upper mid North), I experienced a side of life that was very quiet for seven months of the year, save for the antics of my two sisters and brother. The remaining five months when we would cater to the needs of tourists coming to our fishing camp were a busy and social time, but all ran on a pre-determined schedule.

Living remotely, with no winter road access, we were home-schooled by my Dad. We learned the skills needed for the lifestyle: hunting, fishing, cutting and storing ice and of course firewood for the long winters.

After leaving home as a young teenager, I ended up living almost 20 years in the Hearst area (I will call this the far North). Here spring comes in June, summer in July and half of August while September ushers in eight months of winter. This is the kind

of winter where your truck seat feels like a frozen cement pad when you jump in!

Those years were my formative times as far as homesteading! Owning a small farm was still a quiet undertaking, even though it involved growing, raising and processing all that was needed to sustain life. Nothing accomplished was done at a hectic pace. Busy, yes, as services for farmers in the far North at that time were not like those in the South, but more relaxed all the same.



Cathy enjoying her porch.

I raised a few cattle for beef, had a goat for milk, a couple of pigs, and just about every form of poultry out there. There were no veterinarians, no butcher shops, and no farm & feed supply stores! We needed to learn breeding, butchering, processing, growing and preserving whatever the harsh climate allowed us to produce. Logs were cut from surrounding forests to use as fence posts and rails, everything done the old-fashioned way with stone

boats and sleighs used to haul the goods home.

There were no stores to shop in and minimal help for hire. Roads, as is typical in the North, were few and poorly maintained. No one traveled far. Life was tough but the pace of life was a healthy one. There wasn't much to compete with except nature itself.

One day, my compass needle turned. It began to point South! A few years after remarrying, the roots that my husband had grown in the southern part of Ontario began calling. We agreed that there would be more opportunity for our children as they grew, with more options for education and a future with more choices than logging or mining. 1989 marked the year of change.

No moving companies existed in the far North, and no U-Haul trailers were available to rent, making the

move somewhat more difficult. The first half of my lifestyle had prepared me well for remote Northern living. Packing and attempting to move every salvaged “necessary” article for sustaining life up there was not appropriate for the 750 mile journey!

My naivety in the availability of such things in the South was showing up big time. As the miles of quiet old two lane highway 11 fell behind us, I was getting an “eye opener”. Roads were paved, smooth, multi-laned with traffic much faster and much more of it. There were traffic lights, signs, restaurants and even street lights. There were many routes one could take leading to the same destination.

Shortly after settling on the edge of the small town of Embro in Southwestern Ontario I would give birth to our third child at the Woodstock Hospital. This was a very different experience from giving birth in the tiny remote medical facility run by French Catholic Nuns in Hearst. Better? I would say just different: reflecting the abundance of services but also the somewhat hectic pace that I was witnessing.

It took only a few months to realize that the Embro village lifestyle proved not to be to our liking. So, in 1990, we moved to our rural property in West Perth. My compass had steadied in the direction of the South.

Over the next 36 years, we have succeeded in raising or growing most of our food, albeit much easier with access to farm stores, feed specialist, veterinarians, butcher shops and always the great roads to and from all. Stores selling grocery staples, farm stands, lumber, fence posts, wire, equipment for farmers, businesses for building fences, sheds, barns, fixing broken vehicles...it is all here! Public schools, post secondary educational facilities, job opportunities...all here. The weather patterns were nothing like in the North, where we usually had a few weeks notice if any wind or storm was coming as it would take this long to arrive from the West. Temperatures were extreme up there but wind was rare, no lake-effect snow squalls, no thaws until spring came permanently. We had to learn what driving on black ice was like, and how to navigate the wild swings of weather. Did having access to all of these things make life easier? I would answer:

different, not totally contrasting but certainly not the same as in the far North. There is a marked difference in the “pace” of life itself.

In the remote North, there isn’t much sense of competition: only that governed by nature, survival of man and beast. It takes a steady pace governed by the harsh seasons and one’s own physical strength to sustain the lifestyle. The goal: survival. My observance of the Southern lifestyle is that it is led with a competitive undercurrent. We have so much more but we want more! Days seem like a race: more choices to make, more wealth to attain, more of everything to fit in and seems like less time to do it in. Progress is a constant goal.

Do I prefer the Northern lifestyle or the Southern one? Having now had equal time to sample both, my compass hovers in the centre between the two. Thankful for the experience of both, I conclude that life is full of ups and downs no matter where we choose to live it. Likely best to seek a middle ground.



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MITCHELL FALL FAIR 2026

Online registration begins August 1st. Visit our website for more information.

EXHIBITOR INFORMATION

Exhibitor tags, prize books and entry forms are available at Mitchell Office Pro, 51 Ontario Road, Mitchell. Pre-Register online to save time!

EXHIBIT DROP OFF & PICK UP

Drop off Times:

- Wednesday, Sept 2nd: from 6pm to 8pm
- Thursday, Sept 3rd, from 8am to 11:30am

Exhibits should be dropped off at their corresponding display locations

The Crystal Palace

Antiques, Fine Arts, Hobby Crafts, Floral, Food, Needlecraft, Women's Institute, Golden Age, Prize-Book Cover Competition

Arena Community Centre

Elementary School Art Display, Junior Fair, Perth County 4H, Wood n' Steel, Photography

The doors to the Crystal Palace and the Community Centre close 1pm to 4pm on Thursday for Judging.

The doors to the Crystal Palace and the Community Centre close 3:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Sunday to prepare exhibits for pick up.

PLEASE DO NOT TRY TO ENTER
DURING THESE TIMES

Pick up Times:

All exhibits are to be picked up on Sunday, September 6th between 4pm and 5pm.

MIDWAY PASS:

\$25 if purchased before Noon on Friday, Sept 4

Available at: Mitchell Office Pro & BMR

Or E-transfer to reserve: secretary@mitchellfair.com

\$35 if purchased at the Fair

FAIR DAY-PASS

\$10 per day for Ages 14 and up

Under Age 13 gets in free!

EXHIBIT VIEWING HOURS

Friday: 10am - 10pm

Saturday: 9am - 10pm

Sunday: 10am - 5pm

FAIR GROUNDS HOURS

Friday: 10am - 1am Saturday

MAGICAL MIDWAY: 2:30pm

Saturday: 9am - 1pm Sunday

MAGICAL MIDWAY: Noon

Sunday: 9am - 1pm Sunday

MAGICAL MIDWAY: Noon

FOOD VENDORS

- Dirty Squeeze
- Canoli Cheesecake Tacos
- Ed's Fries
- Crazy Gator Hot Sauce
- All Fired Up
- Why Not Cookies
- Mitchell Legion
- 41 Tudor Lodge
- Hutchy's Booth

FRIDAY - SEPT. 4TH 2026

MAGICAL MIDWAY | 2:30 - 11pm | Grounds

Tractor Pull | 5:30pm | Track & ⬆B

♪ Elysha Vorstenbosch Harpist | 5:45pm | Arena

KidZone | 6-9pm | ⬆D

Skyline Studios DJ | 6pm - 12am | Ponderosa

Inflatables & Little Tracks Petting Zoo | 6-9pm | ⬆D

Mitchell Legion Band | 6:15pm | Arena

Fair Opening Ceremonies | 6:45pm | Arena

Little Heron/Ambassador Program | 7:15pm | Arena

PAZ The Sports Guy | 8pm | Ponderosa

The Silver Starlets | 8:45pm | Arena

Crowning of 2026 - 2027 Ambassador

SATURDAY - SEPT. 5TH 2026

4H Dairy Show | 10 AM | Tim Horton's Pavilion

Antique Tractor and Car Show | 10am | ⬆D

Parade | 11am | Starts at UTES

MAGICAL MIDWAY | 12pm - 11pm | Grounds

Birds of Prey | 12:15 / 2:45 / 4:15 PM | Arena

Mitchell Horse Club Speed Show | 12:30pm | Track

4 Paws Flying Dog Show | 12:30 / 3 / 7pm | ⬆C

PAZ The Sports Guy | 1pm / 4pm | Ponderosa

Farm Safety | 1-4pm | Arena Conference Room

Kidzone | 1 - 7pm | Arena

Mitchell Legion Cornhole Tournament | 1pm | Ponderosa

The Silver Starlets | 1pm / 6:30pm | Arena

Inflatables & Little Tracks Petting Zoo | 1-7pm | ⬆D

Bentastic Magician | 1:45pm / 3:45pm / 8pm | Arena

♪ Skyline Showcase | 2pm | Ponderosa

♪ Elysha Vorstenbosch | 2:15 / 5:15pm | Arena

Fun Foam Show | 2:30 / 4:30pm | Outside Arena

The Silver Starlets Circus Workshop | 2:30pm | ⬆D

♪ Amelia McFarlane - Piper | 3:25pm | Arena

Smoked Pork Chop Dinner | 5pm | Arena

PAZ The Sports Guy (Juggling Workshop) | 6pm | ⬆D

♪ Crackerjack Palace Band | 7pm | Arena

Canadian Championship Wrestling | 7pm | Track

♪ Max Smith | 9:30pm | Ponderosa

SUNDAY - SEPT. 6TH 2026

4H Breakfast | 8:30am | Ponderosa

Church Service | 9:30am | Arena

Heavy Horse Show | 9:30am | Track

PAZ (Juggling Workshop | 9:30am | Ponderosa

Antique Tractor Show | 10am | ⬆C

Farm Safety | 1-4pm | Arena Conference Room

Birds of Prey | 10:45am / 1:30 / 4:30 PM | Arena

The Silver Starlets Circus Workshop | 10:15am | ⬆D

Baby Show Registration | 10:45am | Arena

Baby Show | 11:15am | Arena

Pet Show Registration | 11:30am | Arena

Pet Show | 12pm | Arena

4Paws Flying Dog Show | 11:30am / 2 / 4:30pm | ⬆D

MAGICAL MIDWAY | 12pm - 11pm | Grounds

BentasticMagician | 12pm / 2 / 4pm | T.H's Pavilion

The Fun Foam Show | 12:30 / 3pm | Outside Arena

♪ Elysha Vorstenbosch | 12:30 / 3pm | Arena

PAZ The Sports Guy | 1 / 2:30pm | ⬆D

Inflatables & Little Tracks Petting Zoo | 1-7pm | ⬆D

The Silver Starlets | 1pm/3:30pm | Arena

KidZone | 1pm - 7pm | ⬆D

Beef Show | 1pm | Tim Horton's Pavilion

♪ Colby Quast | 2:30pm Arena | 4:30 Ponderosa

Power Wheels | 6pm | Track

Impact Derby | 6:30pm | Track

♪ Skyline Studio DJ | After Derby | Ponderosa





The Fourth Furrow: Following the Trail of the Markey Family

Thomas and Catherine Markey measured their successes by each cleared acre on Lot One, Concession Three of Logan Township. When they arrived in the dense bush of West Perth between 1843 and 1845, Thomas and Catherine were in their early thirties. Behind them was an Ireland on the brink of the Great Famine; ahead was a wall of timber and swamp. Their property wedged them snugly between Edward Lynch, on Concession Two and Patrick Collins, on Concession Four, establishing a strong and reliable front line of Lot One neighbours.



The layout of the first farms in Logan County
1-1: Francis Seibart, 1-2: Edward Lynch, 1-3: Thomas Markey, 1-4: Patrick Collins, 1-5: William Flynn

the family's time line. Listed as born in Ireland, she was an infant when her parents crossed the Atlantic. Their next child, sixteen-year-old Mary (b.1845?), is recorded on the same census as born in Upper Canada. Providing us with a solid clue, and locking their immigration date between 1843 and 1845. The census lists other children born after their arrival: Michael (1847-1885), Margaretha (b.1849), Catharina (b.1851), Frank (b.1853), Richard (b.1856), Rosanna (1858 - 1943), and Thomas (1860 - 1936), grew up knowing only the sights and smells of the Canadian forest as they took their first steps.

When I decide whom I want to research, the process begins. For these stories, I had located a list from 1845, providing the names of the residents of Lot One of Logan Township, for Concessions 1 through 5. Once you have a name and an approximate date, that is all you need. From that point, I look to the same sources each time, as the information is available in only a few locations. I begin with the Census records. I find these through free searches on Familysearch.org, carefully watching for name variations or misspellings.

These censuses provide the names and ages of the children, an address, details on occupation, religion, and location of birth. If you are lucky enough to find the family on multiple records, you can watch how the family evolves through time. The 1861 census captures the Markey family's progress. Thomas, then 48, and Catherine, 46, were living in a log cabin with nine children.

Their last name Markey makes the process a little easier than most. A unique name with few variations, (possibly Markie or Marky), will limit the number of options available to a researcher and confirms the probability that the names denote the same family. This assumption is based on the fact that very few, if any, other families of the same or similar names resided in the same area at the time. I then will turn to findagrave.com and search the memorials to find the family members that remained in the area. As I spend time reading the obituaries, details and notes, I uncover more information and systematically find the order of their life.

At this point I begin to build the story. Comparing censuses will tell you if the family members at that residence change. But they don't tell you if a family member died, married or moved. For this I search the same free website for birth, death and marriage records. The more details you can provide, the better your results. Remember, the spelling and date ranges may be different on all sources. Also,



What's in a Name?

Our Family:

Garnett Chester Adams: May 11, 1891 – February 18, 1966
 Mary Anne James: August 29, 1893 – September 2, 1982
Married: June 14, 1917

Children:

Kathleen Mary: June 14, 1918 – June 20, 1918
 Pansy Aldeen: March 13, 1919 – Nov. 9, 2018
 Donna Maud: April 23, 1921 -
 Harry Garnett: October 15, 1926 – February 10, 2022
 Sidney John Franklin: July 16, 1929 – January 29, 2012
 Watson James (That's me): July 30, 1931 -
 Darrell Glenn September 3, 1933 – August 14, 2011



The Adams Family 1943 or 1944
 Back Row: Pansy, Harry, Donna, Sid
 Front Row: Mary Anne, Watson, Darrell, Garnett

Not many people have two surnames as given names. Watson is my grandmother Adams' maiden name, while James was my mother's maiden name. Watson, as a first name, has been a challenge all my life. During my school years most of my friends called me Jim. As an adult I have been called Jim, Jimmy, Wats, Wat, Watty, Dr. Watson (several reasons) and Mr. Watson. When I pick up a prescription, it often can't be found under Adams. I'll then suggest looking under the W's and there it is. It happens regularly at professional offices, labs, etc. I have had fun with it and often it starts a conversation. I'm told it is a very distinguished name.

customer of mine at A&P in the 60s was Watson Smith; we became great friends. A man named Watson Garbett lived in the Mitchell area, and I also knew of an A&P employee in the north with Watson as a first name.

An Introduction

For a guy that never thought he would amount to much in life, I realized long ago I have much to be thankful for. Having two academically-minded older sisters, who for the most part stood at the top of their classes in school and went on to be teachers, made life more difficult for me! A few of my teachers referred to my sisters, commenting on how smart they were, and implying that I should be a better student.

I did take two grades in one in public school, which I believe was a mistake. I remember when sister Donna was in Normal School (Teachers' College) and she spent a week in my class when I was about nine. She chose my class as the one where she would assist the teacher. I was sick in bed for the whole week which was a disappointment to us. She went through my desk. She found that the work I did was very well done, but that I rarely finished anything. I did a lot of day dreaming!

I entered High School when I was thirteen and was pushed through to the end of Grade 12 without writing my final exams (that would have been the only year I would fail), as I started full time at DOMINION in June 1948.

In Grade 9, the principal, a slob, taught chemistry class in which I had no interest. He, for the most part, just sat on the front of his desk in tight pants. I sat in the front row, right in front of him. We had a dislike for each other.

One day he asked some of his favorite students what they wanted to do after they finished school. They all told him what he wanted to hear, that they wanted to be things like doctors or lawyers. He then

said "ADAMS what do you want to do?" My answer was, "I don't know, Sir." He belittled me in front of the class – an educator belittling a student! I made up my mind then that I would prove him wrong, but I was basically wasting my time until June 1948.

I had an old-fashioned Commercial Class teacher that took a liking to me. I was very good at filing, detailed accuracy and record keeping. She found I had poor marks in Chemistry so she helped me on the QT (on the quiet) with the subject. I know I am a procrastinator of many things and appreciated her keeping me focused. Many years later I found that I had a more successful career than many of the top students in my classes. To the best of my knowledge most of them are now deceased.

Long into my adult years I had an educator who helped me learn MS Publisher, so that I could use it to publish four-page bulletins on my computer for a club I belonged to. She seemed amazed how I learned; apparently I learn in a different way from

the norm! I used the skills she taught me to publish regular bulletins for the Ontario A&P Retirees' Club and two Shrine Clubs over the course of many years.

I started paid, P.T. (part-time) employment at age 11 on a farm, at Dominion (a grocery store chain) at 14 and moved on to full-time employment which lasted from 1948 to 1991. I was recruited as a P.T. Consultant in 1992, retiring again in 2017 at age 86. I currently produce a four-page monthly Shrine Club Bulletin and at age 95 am the oldest active member of our Stratford Club.

I have never applied for employment or asked for a pay raise. I have been told by superiors I was one of the highest paid store managers at A&P (another grocery store) and the highest paid District Manager. I loved what I did in life as it involved working with people!

Accessibility News

Jessica Lawson

ASHP Public Education Coordinator



A Dementia-Friendly Space

The Alzheimer Society Huron Perth is proud to recognize the West Perth Public Library as the first Dementia-Friendly Community Supporter in Perth County. Through dementia-friendly education, library staff have strengthened their understanding and learned practical ways to better support people living with dementia, their care partners, and families, while helping create a more welcoming and inclusive community.

"We are committed to building the skills and knowledge needed to better support all individuals within our community," said Laura Bere, CEO of the West Perth Public Library.

Becoming a Dementia-Friendly Community Supporter reflects West Perth Public Library's commitment to ensuring everyone feels welcome and supported when accessing the library.

Libraries play an important role in promoting

literacy, lifelong learning, social connection, and brain health. West Perth Public Library's leadership demonstrates how local organizations can make a meaningful difference by creating environments where everyone feels valued and included. The Dementia Friendly Community Supporter Program, offered free by the Alzheimer Society Huron Perth, provides practical education for businesses, organizations, municipalities, faith groups, and community groups looking to better support people living with dementia.

Interested in becoming a Dementia Friendly Community Supporter? Contact the Alzheimer Society Huron Perth at 519-271-1910 or info@alzhp.ca to learn more about bringing this free education to your organization and helping build more Dementia Friendly Communities across Huron and Perth counties.



Community Resources

Municipality of West Perth

Phone: 519-348-8429

westperth.com

Emergency Services

Perth County OPP

132 St George St. Mitchell, ON N0K 1N0

Administration: 519-348-9700

Emergency Services: 9-1-1

Non-Emergency Services: 1-888-310-1122

West Perth Fire Hall

170 Wellington St, Mitchell, ON N0K 1N0

Non-Emergency Services: 519-348-9031

Fire Safety Question: 519 595 2800 Dial 4

Local Hospitals

Stratford General Hospital

Stratford, ON

Phone: 519-272-8210 Website: www.hpha.ca

Seaforth Community Hospital Seaforth, ON

Phone: 519-527-8404 Website: www.hpha.ca

St. Marys Memorial Hospital St. Marys, ON

Phone: 519-284-1332 Website: www.hpha.ca

General Health Information

Huron Perth Public Health

Address: Stratford ON

Hours of Operation: Mon - Fri: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Toll-free: 1-888-221-2133

www.hpha.ca

Health Care Connect

A free program connecting Ontarians without a healthcare provider to providers accepting new patients.

Phone: 1-800-445-1822

Health811

Immediate health advice 24/7 from registered nurses.

Phone: 1-866-797-0007

Unattached Care Clinics

Non-Emergency Care for individuals who are without a family doctor

Stratford Family Health Team:

Phone: 226-766-0510

Bluewater Area Family Health Team,

Exeter Medical Clinic,

Maitland Valley Medical Centre

Phone: 519-870-9034

Listowel-Wingham and Area

Family Health Team: Phone: 519-291-4511

Mental Health Supports

Ontario Structured Psychotherapy

Provides support for Ontarians age eighteen and over with depression, anxiety, or related symptoms.

Phone: 1-833-944-9966

Mitchell & Area Community Outreach

Providing supports to enable disabled or elderly people to continue living independently

Phone: 519-348-9765

City of Stratford: Social Services Department

Phone: 519-271-3773 ext. 200

211

A helpline that easily connects people to the social services, programs and community supports they need.

Call or Text: 2-1-1

www.211ontario.ca

United Way, Stratford, ON

519-271-7730 / Toll-Free: 877-818-886

www.perthhuron.unitedway.ca

Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline

Phone: 1-833-900-1010

www.canadianhumantraffickinghotline.ca

Farmer Wellness Initiative

24-hour support for farmers and their family members.

Phone: 1-866-267-6255

www.farmerwellnessinitiative.ca

Good2Talk

Free, confidential support services for post-secondary students in Ontario.

Phone: 1-866-925-5454

Text 'GOOD2TALKON' to 686868

www.good2talk.ca

Huron Perth Helpline and Crisis Response Team

Phone: 1-888-829-7484

www.hpha.ca/mentalhealth

Kids Help Phone

Phone: 1-800-668-6868

Text 'CONNECT' to 686868

www.kidshelpphone.ca

One Stop Talk

Phone: 1-855-416-8255

www.onestoptalk.ca

Optimism Place

24/7 Support Line: 519-271-5550

Toll-Free: 1-800-265-8598

After-hours: 519-272-2294

www.optimismplace.com

Counseling Services**Alcoholics Anonymous**

If you want to drink, that's your business, if you want to stop, that's ours.

1-800-706-9833

Meeting locations found at web@aad4.org

Alateen

Support for teenagers with alcoholic adults

Online meetings every Wednesday on Zoom

HopePrevailsAlteen@gmail.com

Huron Perth Centre

Accredited community-based mental health centre for children and youth.

Stratford Office: 519-273-3373 ext. 2221

www.hpcentre.on.ca

Medavie Health Services

Mobile mental health program offering immediate help and referrals for people dealing with mental illness.

Phone: 1-877-872-6350

Email: ontariommh@medaviewhs.com

Family Services Perth Huron

FSPH provides individualized counseling, support services, advocacy, education and referrals.

Phone: 519-273-1020 / Toll-free: 1-800-268-0903

www.familyservicesperth-huron.ca

Shelterlink

Phone: 519-272-2294

Email: info@shelterlink.org

www.shelterlink.org

Victim Services

Phone: 519-600-4108

www.victimserviceshuronperth.ca

Canadian Mental Health Association

(CMHA) Huron-Perth

Phone: 519-271-6819

Toll-free: 1-888-261-9350

www.cmhahuronperth.com

Senior Services**Alzheimer's Society Huron-Perth**

Phone: 519-271-1910

www.alzheimer.ca/huronperth

Mitchell and Area Community Outreach

Phone: 519-348-9765

Email: maco@ritzlutheranvilla.com

One Care

Phone: 1-877-502-8277

www.onecaresupport.ca

West Perth Village

Phone: 519-348-8612

www.westperthvillage.ca

Local Food Banks

Mitchell Food Bank

80 Rowland St, Mitchell ON (Upper Thames Missionary Church building)

Phone: 519-703-4880

Email: mitchellcfs@salvationarmy.ca

Hours: Fridays: 9:30am - 4:30pm

Appointments preferred

Monkton Food Bank

Delivery Only - Independently Run

Phone: 1-780-222-5050

Email: tiggerdigrr@gmail.com

St. Mary's Food Bank

Phone: 519-284-2760

Email: st.marys@salvationarmy.ca

220 Queen St. E, St. Marys, ON

Stratford Food Bank

Phone: 519-271-2950

Email: stratfordcfs@salvationarmy.ca

230 Lightbourne Ave, Stratford, ON

The Heronry Distribution

Our distribution locations are always expanding! If a distribution location is out of copies, please text Amelia at: 519-955-3210 so we can deliver some as soon as possible! You can also find us online at theheronry.ca and wpheronry.substack.com

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|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Mitchell Office Pro | • West Perth Village |
| • Wieterson's Country Store | • The Sugar Maple |
| • West Perth Public Library | • Eidt's BMR Express |
| • Stratford Perth Museum | • Culligan's Real Estate |
| • Edward Jones Financial | • Dental Hygiene Clinic |
| • Van Bakel Homestead Meats | • JMS Auto |
| • Goettler of Dublin | • Dublin Mercantile |
| • Mitchell Pottery Studio | • YNCU |
| • Dublin's Family Restaurant | • Monkton Diner |
| • Home Town Variety | • Deck Dentistry |
| • Cartwright Chiropractic | • Farm to Family |
| • Deep Roots Collective | • 101 Bar and Grill |
| • Koertland Auto Care | • Kirkton Market |
| • McDonald's Independent | • Ontario Gun Shop |
| • Black Donnelly's Brewing Co | • Mitchell Legion |
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62 Ontario Road, Mitchell, ON

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Scottish Country Dancing

Thank you to everyone who has expressed interest in exploring the possibility of enjoying Scottish Country Dancing in Mitchell. For many years I have done Scottish Country Dancing in many places –in several Ontario centres, Victoria, BC, Nunavut, and even in Scotland itself. Now I am hoping to share the excitement that learning a dance form which will be new to many, and the thrill that success can bring to those who participate.

There are three components involved in embarking of a Scottish Dance journey:

Language: the terms that apply to the movements

Geography: the movements that go together to make an 8-bar formation

Footwork: the four basic dance steps: Setting and travelling steps in Jig/Reel Time or Strathspey Time

Dances are based on 8-Bar dance formations linked together - usually four and sometimes five, which are put together like Lego blocks to create a dance of 32 bars. They involve two, three, or four couples and sometimes even five couple sets.

It's hard to explain a dance without showing it. I have asked *the Heronry* to create a QR code so that you can use your phone to travel to a video for demonstration purposes. If you use your phone camera to "look at" the code, a link should appear. If you click on it, the link should take you to a page with videos.



You can also go to "The Scottish Country Dancing Dictionary" website and look up "The White Cockade."

The White Cockade's components are:

- Three couples set and cross
- Set and cross back: 8 bars
- Down the middle and back: 8 bars
- Cast off to second place and do four hands around to the right with third couple: 8 bars
- Rights and Lefts with the second couple who have moved up: 8 bars

My intent is to have a series of maybe ten or so classes during the fall, beginning on the Friday following Labour Day. The classes will take place in the hall at Knox Presbyterian Church in Mitchell.

Depending on the group's time preferences it may be possible to arrange for a different day and time for the sessions. The cost will be a donation to Knox to cover the use of the hall.

No partners are required and people of any age are welcome. I will share videos of the formations and dances both ahead of time and afterwards to reinforce the learning.

There are many wonderful resources to facilitate learning and I can't wait to share them with you. If you have further questions, please contact me: kdavid96@yahoo.com

Whirl Creek Scottish Country Dance Club

**Dance Your Way To A
Healthier Heart
Happier Outlook
Improved Coordination
New Friendships
And Fun!**

Starting Friday Sept 11
7pm to 9ish
at Knox Presbyterian Church, Mitchell

For more information contact David Kemp

kdavid96@yahoo.com

519-345-2208



Crazy Gladness!

A delightful kind of “gladness” is spreading its way, not only across West Perth, but much farther and wider. As a matter of fact, we are just now getting into the peak season for this unique rainbow of happiness to spread into our homes, our churches, our wedding venues, our cemeteries, and to add colour to many of our special events!

About 20 years ago, “The Crazy Glad Lady” came up with an idea. Laura Good, being born with a spirit of kindness and generosity that is still so evident today, started on a journey. Her journey was unique but also aligned with her roots. Laura and her husband, John, were dairy farming locally on the acreage his ancestors had acquired from the Canada Company. With their third child being almost one year old and family farms being what they were, Laura thought the timing was right for her to stop working “away” from home. She wanted to devote more time towards helping to farm, and also to be present for their growing family.

Around that same time, Laura was witness to her mother-in-law’s dedication to providing an abundance of incredible flowers for display on “decoration day” at their local Avonbank Church Cemetery. This led her to begin formulating a plan for her idea. The flowers used to decorate were expensive to purchase as well as not always being the easiest to access.

extra value was placed on any dollars they spent. Since Laura and John had just purchased a new farm, it was the perfect time to set aside a two-acre plot of land for Laura to grow something very special. Her spirit of kindness and generosity, that inherent desire to help out, came through in the crop she decided to grow. Gladiolus it was! These fabulous flowers would help her family beautify the everlasting resting places of all their ancestors at Avonbank and those of so many more.

As she had hoped, the beauty, the joy, and the happiness those glads spread became contagious. Nineteen years ago, the Crazy Glad Lady grew and sold 2000 glads. These she planted by hand and tended with a garden hoe. As of last year (2025), adding many years of experience, the original two acres had expanded to three acres and she now grows 40,000 glads! Mind you, she now has a couple pieces of specialized equipment: a specific type of rototiller and a glad corm planter.

If this sounds like an “easy” road to success let me disabuse you; there is a steep learning curve when it comes to becoming one of the most successful commercial gladiolus farmers in Ontario. Glads are a tropical flower! This means great care must be taken in corm selection and

purchase. Laura’s corms come directly from Holland to a distributor, LM Bolle in Norwich, Ontario. They are not a bulb or a seed. They are a corm. They are a crop that requires weekly spraying, as they are



A field of Gladiolus



Buckets of Glads waiting to be sold.

prone to thrips, which, if left uncontrolled, would ruin the harvest.

Throughout the years, Laura has learned that gladiolus corms require deep planting; at least nine inches of soil cover is required to provide sturdy stocks that remain upright in all weather conditions. They also need to be “hilled” - much like a potato crop. The crop is tricky and needs to be nurtured, requiring successive plantings of the corms for five weeks every spring in order to have an abundance of flowers for peak season - which is generally two months long (from late July to later in September). The corms must be pulled out and discarded every fall in order to keep the highest quality of flowers for sales. The crop area must be rotated yearly and every seven years the corms need to be moved to a completely new location due to soil depletion.



The “Crazy Glad Lady” at her road-side stand

They’re “Not a crop for everyone;” however, “the happiness, the sheer enjoyment, and what these cheerful beauties add to our lives is all well worth the effort,” Laura says. This year, (2026) there are 44 varieties available; they include every color and shade one can dream up, in bud and ready to spread their gladness!

Many of Laura’s customers have been coming from afar for years now. Tourists from the big cities heading North and West to cottages regularly stop at her roadside stand to buy dozens of the flowers to brighten their spaces while they vacation. Often they’ll stop again on their return journey to buy more for the same purpose back at their homes. During Covid years, city dwellers would drive the distance, some buying up to eight dozen glads at a time to take back and cheer up their enclosed spaces.

Laura is very particular and specific when it comes to harvesting. It’s important in order to keep her flowers in the “top spot.” Those glads which are being sold at the roadside and markets are hand-picked when three florettes appear on the stalk. Those being ordered ahead for a special occasions

must have five open florettes, while those going quickly to weddings, funerals and such must show eight open florettes. This ensures the most “bang for your buck” so to speak! The flowers are guaranteed to be at their most gorgeous peak for your needs.

If you are wondering about the name, “The Crazy Glad Lady” (which is certainly a standout title and quite memorable), the creation of that was simple.

Laura was out one morning at the roadside of her farm fixing up the same thirty, five-gallon pails of glads she sets out daily, when a customer stopped by and began chatting. They noticed the mile-wide smile which is only one small aspect of the happiness that emanates from this local glad farmer. Laura is just crazy about the whole package when it comes to the “glads”: the corms, the selection, growing, harvesting, and particularly

what their beauty brings to all of those who witness their glory. She is a testament to how their cheerfulness is contagious. Call it CRAZY! These flowers can make one crazy with gladness. So, the name is fitting!

The glad business is a passion for this local farmer. She speaks of the flowers much like one of us would speak of our favorite people. They have qualities that are special and one-of-a-kind for each and every bloom. Their breathtaking beauty inspires joyfulness! Every Saturday morning, in season, the glads and Laura are at the St. Marys Farmers Market. Every day from now until frost hits, there is an impressive line-up of buckets along the road at: 4667 Perth Line 20, St Pauls. Hard to miss this rainbow of colour. One can check out #thecrazygladlady on her Facebook page and on Instagram, all with timely progress reports on the whole business. Of course, for a special order e-mail: crazygladlady@gmail.com.



A Motherly Rooster

Caleb, the four-year-old bull, had always respected Merlin. Not because Merlin was wise, or particularly intelligent, or even remotely calm. But because the rooster possessed a level of confidence that could only be described as aspirational. He gazed over his kingdom, assured of his ability to dominate every creature present.

Then came Chick Month. It started innocently enough; one hen hatched a few chicks, then another, then another. Before Caleb knew it, the farm had somehow produced over thirty tiny fluffy creatures that looked like they had been designed by someone who had only a vague understanding of chickens.

And Merlin? Merlin immediately decided he was their father. All of them. Every single one.

Caleb first noticed something was wrong when he saw Merlin trying to escort thirty-three chicks across the yard. The chicks had other plans: five were chasing bugs, three were sleeping, two were standing in a feed pan, one appeared to be eating dirt recreationally. The rest were simply running in random directions.

Merlin was losing his mind, “THIS WAY, CHILDREN!”

The children did not go that way. The children went every OTHER way. Caleb watched from the pasture as Merlin sprinted back and forth trying to gather them. The rooster looked like a feathered kindergarten teacher on the verge of a nervous breakdown.

The next day Caleb watched Merlin discover that chicks have absolutely no survival instincts. One chick climbed on top of a bucket and couldn’t figure out how to get down. Another got separated from the group and immediately began screaming as though it had been grievously injured. A third

somehow became trapped behind a board, despite there being no actual obstacle preventing escape.

Merlin spent his entire day solving problems that the chicks had created for themselves.

By the end of the week he looked exhausted. His tail feathers were crooked. His proud strut had become more of a stressed-out jog.

Then came The Great Hawk Incident. First, a shadow passed overhead. Instantly every chick panicked, but instead of running for cover together like sensible creatures, they scattered in thirty-three different directions. Caleb watched Merlin’s soul leave his body.

The rooster was everywhere at once: Herding, flapping, yelling, counting, recounting, counting again. Caleb was fairly certain Merlin had counted the same chick three times. By sunset everyone was accounted for. Well...almost everyone.

Caleb happened to glance down and notice two tiny chicks standing happily on his back. He wasn’t entirely sure how long they’d been there. One appeared to be taking a nap. The other was pulling on his tail.

Across the yard Merlin was frantically counting, “thirty-one, thirty-two, thirty-three.”

Caleb looked at the two chicks on his back, then at Merlin, then back at the chicks. Technically the count was wrong, but the rooster looked so tired that Caleb decided not to mention it.

By the time the chicks were three weeks old, Caleb noticed something remarkable. Merlin had stopped caring about looking important; he had other things to deal with. By this time, Caleb had watched Merlin break up an argument between a toddler, three chicks, and a hen. Nobody knows what the argument was about, not even the participants, yet somehow Merlin handled it.

Another day he saw the rooster leading a parade consisting of four children, seven chicks, a

confused duck, and a deeply embarrassed barn cat. The rooster's determination to keep the small creatures safe would not be overcome.

Merlin wasn't the rooster he had been a short time ago. He no longer strutted. He no longer posed dramatically on fence posts. He no longer challenged puddles to combat. Now he was spending his days checking on chicks. Protecting chicks. Finding chicks. Losing chicks. Finding the same chicks again.

One evening Caleb watched as all the chicks settled into the coop. The yard was finally quiet and

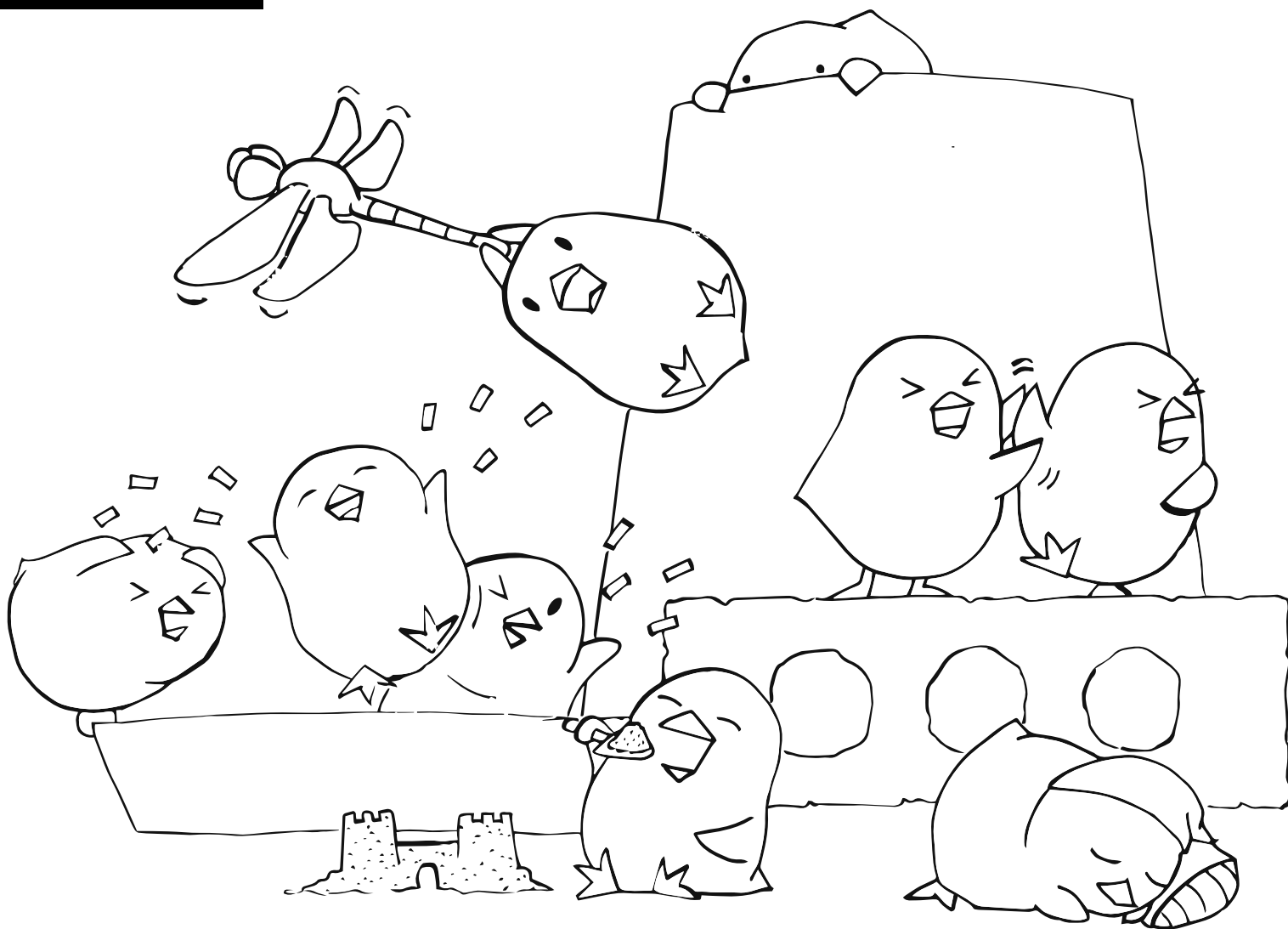
Merlin stood at the door counting heads one last time: "thirty-one, thirty-two, thirty-three." Good, everyone was safe.

The rooster let out a tired sigh and climbed onto his perch.

Meanwhile, two chicks were again asleep on Caleb's back. The bull smiled and decided not to say a word. After all, sometimes personal growth means a change from enormous confidence, to enormous responsibility. Merlin had grown, and tonight he deserved all the rest he could get.

Follow @henhouseconfessions on facebook!

Colouring Page



Nicholas Hotz

Local Resident



For the Love of Chicken

Less than a week ago, I picked up 120 day old chicks from the hatchery. They were transferred to a brooding area with fresh shavings, water, chick food and heat lamps. Realistically, it's an incubator for chickens which will keep them safe and warm until their soft yellow down is replaced by white feathers. This is our seventeenth round of raising broiler chickens (chickens for meat production) over the past nine years and there has been lots of learning over this time. We have strived to become experts at chicken husbandry but raising chickens on pasture can add elements and variables that affect our final weights and outcomes.

We made some rookie mistakes during our first summer of keeping chickens. We opted to raise a slower growth heritage breed meat chicken. It was a purposeful thought with the hopes that its genetics would be a more natural choice. We raised the chickens in the barn that year and they grew well. We planned to keep birds for ourselves, and the surplus were spoken for by friends and family. A few weeks went by and we knew that we needed to have the chickens processed at a government inspected facility to ensure that it was legal to sell to others. What we did not anticipate was the difficulty of finding a processing facility that could accommodate our time-lines.

We discovered that the small backyard abattoirs no longer existed and processing dates were scheduled months or years in advance. We had literally put the cart before the horse, so to speak, and struggled to find a place that could accommodate us. Our chickens were giants that year because they got to live a few weeks longer than

we had planned. Our customers were slightly overwhelmed at their small turkey-sized chicken but were gracious. We sampled our chicken. While I had an appreciation for cooking a more traditional bird, I think others were disappointed at the smaller chicken breast and texture of the meat. It was not what we were used to after cooking and eating grocery store chicken.



A batch of chicks settling in their brooder and enjoying their first food and drink.

There were some big changes after that summer. We found a local abattoir and scheduled our processing dates for the following year. We decided to double down and grow two batches of chickens over the spring and summer months. We also made the decision to grow the standard grocery store chicken, the Cornish Cross which is known to be a fast growing, broad-breasted bird with more tender texture. The following year would also be

our first attempt at growing the chickens on pasture which meant that we needed to invest in having appropriate outdoor chicken housing that could be moved once or twice a day. Thankfully, my partner is a very capable construction, and mechanically-educated person and he was able to design and build two 'chicken tractors'.

These portable chicken cages are tall enough that we can walk in them, spacious enough to accommodate 60-65 chickens and has wheels that are detachable to be able to move the cage in all directions. The frames are built of electrical metallic tubing (EMT) and wire mesh to keep the structure light. The base is angled steel to keep the tractor on the ground and predators outside. It is covered in white tarps to provide shade and shelter from the weather and have long feeders made from PVC piping cut in half. With relative ease, one person can move the chicken tractor on to new grass twice

daily, which gives the birds a new area to forage and keeps the birds clean of feces. Another huge benefit; they naturally fertilize an area of grass with notable results within a week.

Since moving to the chicken tractors, we haven't looked back. We love the results. It feels good to give the chickens a more natural environment and have an additional alternative food source. It doesn't take long for the chickens to start scratching and foraging on insects, broad leaf plants and grass seed. We have found that in the spring months especially, the chickens consume less food purchased from the feedstore as they focus on available plant leaf and seed.



Young chickens under shade in one of our "chicken tractors"

After securing fixed processing dates, our next challenge was to figure out the correct growing time for our chickens. Commercial chicken barns typically keep their chickens for six to eight weeks to grow the birds to the appropriate size. Growing pasture raised chickens meant that we needed to factor in the weather and environment as this would not be consistent. Our processing dates were in early June and the end of August. After a few years of observation and looking at our feed conversion costs, we discovered that our spring batch would be consistently a pound or two heavier than our summer birds despite having the same amount of growth time. We summarized that this was likely due to the cooler outdoor growing temperatures which provided more available forage and encouraged the birds to eat. After all, no one likes to walk around and fill their stomachs during the hot summer months of July and August.

We decided to lengthen the time we kept our summer batch of chickens from approximately eight weeks to ten weeks. We have also recently changed our summer processing date to the end of September so that we can keep the birds during some cooler weeks of the year.

We are a small producer. Currently, we grow 250 pasture raised broiler chickens per year. We keep enough to feed my family of four year-round and sell the surplus. We made the choice to keep our chickens whole to keep the cost down for our

customers and to ensure that we are not left a surplus of less desirable chicken cuts. I was never one to buy and cook a whole chicken before moving to the farm. It seemed intimidating and required more meal planning. What I learned is that while cooking a whole chicken takes more time, it actually gives back three-fold; a delicious meal, plenty of leftovers for a second easy meal later in the week, and bones to make a nutritious broth that you can freeze for soups and cooking

(just two hours in your instapot on soup mode with a one-hour decompression time).

Growing chickens has become something that we are very proud of. Providing my family with a protein source, from farm to table, was part of the country dream. I feel good knowing where my food comes from, that the animal had a life that was close to its natural habitat and that I can use all parts of the bird. Nothing goes to waste. I have come to respect the chicken for all that it provides.

Follow our shenanigans on Facebook or Instagram: @The Square H



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- **Submit your art, poetry, and stories!** We're here to share the good things that are all around us but it's much easier when we have a bank of submitted content to choose from! Encourage your friends, family, and neighbours to submit their good things too!
- **Talk about our publication!** Whether discussing it with your friends and family, sharing and commenting on our social media posts, forwarding emailed articles, or tagging us in selfies of you holding up the magazine when you're on vacation - every part helps!
- **Take out an advertisement or write a sponsored column.** If you're a business owner or someone who has a side-hustle, you can contribute to good things in your community by becoming a regular submitter of content or advertisements. Our readership

is constantly growing and residents love to see local businesses celebrating the good things and people found in West Perth.

- **Donate directly to the Heronry!** We've enabled donations on our online substack (scan the QR code to be taken to our donation page), but like all online payment services, a cut of the substack payments goes to the service provider. The best way to donate will be to send or bring your donations directly to Mitchell Office Pro.



We want to thank every person who has called or written to let us know how much they enjoy *the Heronry*! Your support is so encouraging and we appreciate every one of you!

Previous Puzzle Answers

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



PUT YOUR MESSAGE HERE!

Submit your birth announcements, birthday greetings, anniversary celebrations, or special events to *the Heronry* today!

Pricing details are on our website!

Submissions are due by the 15th of each month!





Every Board has a Story

I've always believed that wood has a story to tell. Every knot, grain pattern, and natural imperfection is part of that story. My job isn't to hide those characteristics—it's to bring them to life. That's what led me to fractal burning.

Also known as Lichtenberg burning, fractal burning is one of the most fascinating—and one of the most dangerous—forms of woodworking. The process uses electricity to create branching patterns that resemble lightning striking through the wood. While the technique requires careful planning, experience, and respect for the risks involved, it also has an element that cannot be completely controlled. The electricity chooses its own path. That's what I love most about it.

No matter how many boards I make, no two are ever alike. Every burn is unique, which means every finished piece is truly one of a kind.

When I begin a new project, I spend time selecting the wood. Each species has its own personality, colour, and grain, and these characteristics influence the final design. I also consider the shape of the board and how the fractal pattern will complement the natural beauty already present in the wood. Once the burn is complete, I fill the channels with resin.

Choosing the resin colour is another creative decision that can dramatically change the appearance of the finished piece. Sometimes I want the resin to make a bold statement, while other times I prefer it to enhance the natural grain quietly.

The finishing process is where



patience becomes just as important as creativity. Every board is carefully sanded through progressively finer grits until it reaches a smooth 5000-grit polish. Finally, I apply food-safe butcher block oil, bringing out the wood's richness while protecting it for years of use.

Although my boards are designed to serve food, I think of them as functional art. They're meant to be used, admired, and shared with family and friends around a table. Whether they're displaying artisan cheeses, fresh bread, or holiday appetizers, I hope they become part of people's memories and celebrations.

One of the things I enjoy most is creating custom pieces. Customers can choose the wood species, board shape, and resin colour to create something that's uniquely their own. It's rewarding to know that a board I make today may become a family heirloom or a meaningful gift for someone special. I've also done custom work on paddles, axe handles, and a one-of-a-kind wizard's staff, which was a lot of fun.

Working with wood constantly reminds me that nature doesn't strive for perfection. The beauty is found in the individuality of every piece, and that's something I try to honour in my work. Rather than forcing the material to become something it isn't, I work with its natural character and let it guide the design. Every board is an opportunity to create something that has never existed before—and never will again. That's what keeps me coming back to the workshop; every board has a story. I'm simply fortunate enough to get to help tell it. *Look for us on Facebook! @BoldWoodCreations.*



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