

FREE

A WEST PERTH PUBLICATION

the Heronry

Issue Includes

Pat Young: Blooming Where She's Planted

ORDINARY EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE

Connect & Thrive

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

A Scaly Kind of Love

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LOCAL STORIES

Vol. 8

July 2026

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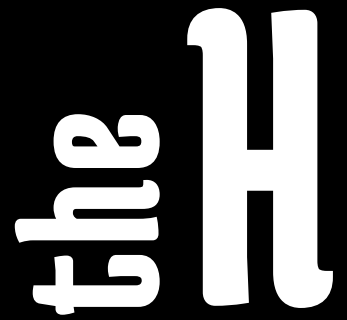
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What is a “Heronry”?

Hérons are often seen standing alone in our waterways but they’re actually communal birds; groups of them come together to raise their young. Various species of herons (and other birds) will often nest in the same area, taking advantage of community benefits, like protection, and foraging advantages. Those communities are made up of hundreds of nesting pairs, and are called “heronries.” Mitchell doesn’t have a colony of herons, but our founders liked the idea of starting a heronry of our own.

Like those colonies, our publication is meant to be a safe and welcoming place for the diversity of people and stories that are found within our community. Each issue celebrates the people, places, and bits of history that make West Perth unique. From resident spotlights, to art features,

and family recipes, this publication is meant to highlight the often-overlooked things—things that, in our opinion, are the bedrock of our community.

Our editor and our growing flock of contributors are local residents who care deeply about this community and want to see it thrive. We believe every small town deserves a voice, and *the Heronry* is ours. It’s a place to share what’s happening, to lift each other up, and to be reminded of what makes living here so meaningful.

Whether it’s through donations, advertising, classifieds ads, or just sharing your love of this publication with your friends and neighbours, we appreciate all the support you’ve given us. Thanks for joining us!

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

We have watched with enthusiasm and appreciation Mitchell’s Heronry magazine evolve since its inception only a few months ago.

As an instrument for community building the publication is nothing short of commendable. The Community Events and Services pages are especially helpful for newcomers and old timers alike in accessing both assistance and entertainment opportunities. The series of articles relating to art and photography are a wealth of information to budding and experienced people

exploring diverse interests. The recent young author who discussed owls and their habits shows us what youth can accomplish: Ask the questions, find the answers and write the article. The scope of topics is infinite. What a way to both learn and share the wonders of the world and become a journalist. In short, you are providing something for everyone.

The Heronry is perhaps the best thing to have happened in the West Perth community in the past fifty years. Keep up the great work.

- David Kemp

SPONSOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We want to especially acknowledge: Colleen Johnson, Audrey Vorstenbosch, Evelyn Adams, Steve (surname unknown), Robert Young, David Doyle, Sue Heatherington, Main Street United Ladies, and the Mitchell Legion. To give so generously, without expecting any kind of advertisement or acknowledgement, is such a blessing. We’ve also had several anonymous donations, which we would like to acknowledge as well. We don’t know who you are, but we are so thankful for your support! With the help of people like you, we hope to keep publishing for decades to come! Thank you for helping us share good things about West Perth!

Note: although the Heronry is its own entity, any donations should be made out to B&V Enterprises Inc as they’re handling our financials until we are better established.



Krek Wa'k Wou

When I was three years old, my parents had a sign that said, “Krek W’ak Wou” (Dutch for “Just what I wanted”). They had moved away from friends and family in Ontario and bought their first house in tiny Carman, Manitoba, and needed something that fully encapsulated the love they had for the house they’d bought. That sign features prominently in my memory, and I treasure the associations I have with it, including the town I grew up in.

I know things weren’t always easy, but my memories of Carman are definitely rose-coloured. I remember running with my siblings back and forth across neighbourhood lawns, helping older neighbours garden, and being rewarded for our labours with cookies and Orange Crush. We’d spend our springs building forts amidst flowering lilacs and nanking cherry bushes, our summers biking to the local pool, and our winters digging tunnels in the snow.

It’s been ten years since my husband and I moved to Mitchell, which shares so much in common with the small towns we both grew up in. Our street is a haven for us and for our children. Our home has become **the** place to play in the neighbourhood. Hordes of children (at least judging by the noise they make) enact stories in the yard; play video games and lego indoors, and bike up and down the street. School is almost out and we’ll be taking advantage of our summer pool pass, going for ice cream at BJ’s and taking our kayaks out on the river. It could almost be a “copy and paste” of the idyllic childhood I got to experience; I’ve even got lilacs that bloom every spring and ordered my own nanking cherry bushes that are finally producing fruit this year.

Despite the amount of separation that many of us experienced during Covid, I see so many good things in our community. Every month I worry that I won’t have enough content for this issue, and every month I end up having more than enough. This month features more than the usual amount of writing by yours truly, but as it’s the ten-year

anniversary of our moving to Mitchell, I figure it’s justifiable. . .

Some of our regular writers are taking a much-deserved break for the summer, and others have decided that writing is just not their cup of tea! (Anyone want to take over the Farm Stand Spotlight?). *The Heronry’s* flock also has some visitors this month; two previous residents are featured: one as a writer and the other as our interviewee. They may not live here anymore, but they’ve contributed to our community all the same! We try not to be too particular about the boundaries between counties and the rules about submissions – if you can find a way to tie them to West Perth, we welcome what you send us!

Our community calendar has grown to a whopping four pages this month! We’re looking for a calendar sponsor for the year so that we can start printing it as a full colour insert, so please reach out if you’re interested!

The longer that we live here, the more I relish living, not just in this amazing house on an incredible street with the best neighbours, but also living in this small town which is truly: *krek v’ak wou*. Exactly, incredibly, just what I wanted.



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July Horoscopes

Aries: March 21 - April 21 The month of July may be spent reworking old projects in or around your home, Aries. If you've been meaning to build a deck or renovate a room indoors, this is the best time for it.

Taurus: April 21 - May 20 July is the perfect month to come back to old projects and passions that keep you feeling fulfilled. Mercury retrograde might mess with your car or mode of transportation this month, so check your oil and give yourself some extra time when travelling.

Gemini: May 21 - June 20 Who are we kidding, you are probably still busy this month, Gemini. When aren't you? However, you may notice the bank account needs some extra attention this month. Maybe it's time to tweak your spending and saving habits.

Cancer: June 21 - July 21 Happy Birthday Cancer! The main focus for you, is you! I'm sure you spend a lot of time tending to everyone else's needs. This month is all about what you need; make sure you take some time for yourself and ask for whatever it is that you really want.

Leo: July 22 - Aug 22 You may be secretly hoping for some much needed silence and solitude, but the month of July has other plans. A much bigger influence shifts into your sign this month possibly causing more attention than normal. Try to take it all in strides to keep from burning out.

Virgo: Aug 23 - Sept 22 Are old friends popping up out of nowhere? Some people from your past could be making a return for what looks to be a social time for you, Virgo. Enjoy it, but keep in mind why these people aren't in your life anymore because you could have an abrupt change when it comes to your reputation.

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 22 A turn of events in your public status or career may need to be dealt with this month, Libra. Not to worry, your natural ability to negotiate and find compromise in sticky situations will come in handy.

Scorpio: Oct 23 - Nov 21 Travel or a vacation may be on your schedule for July, Scorpio. With a Mercury retrograde in the mix, be prepared for setbacks and cancellations. Have Plan B through E available. just in case.

Sagittarius: Nov 22 - Dec 20 Focus this month is on your investments and any transformations that are going on in life. There may be some hindrances along the way, but you should come out of this period of time stronger and better off than ever before.

Capricorn: Dec 21 - Jan 20 Negotiations, contractual agreements and relationships in your life are coming to the forefront, Capricorn. You may have to revisit something that was once an agreement, but has recently turned into a disagreement. A relationship from the past may even resurface.

Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18 It's time to get back into a routine, a diet or catch up on some work you've been putting off. Things may seem like they are all out of order, July is a great time for you to get them all back together again.

Pisces: Feb 19 - March 20 Didn't get to go on that trip, vacation or even the staycation you wanted to? Looks like a fun opportunity is coming back up again, Pisces. Make sure you have extra patience with travel plans, Mercury Retrograde may cause some frustrations.

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





All About Bees!

How do Bees Make Honey?

Well, first of all, the bees have to collect nectar from flowers. Then they take the nectar back to the hive, where they put it into a slot shaped like a hexagon, or, a honeycomb. Then they fan their wings, not flying, not hovering, just fanning. Once the sweet, watery nectar starts to become thick, it starts to turn into honey. Once the honey is made, the bees seal the honeycomb with beeswax to save some for wintertime, when there are no flowers. Did you know that a honeybee's beehive is made completely from dried up honey and beeswax? Honeybees work very hard to make honey and to just make their home in general. Imagine how many bees would be in one hive. A whole lot!

Do All Bees Make Honey?

No, not all bees make honey. Actually, the only bees that make honey are honeybees and some types of bees that don't have stingers. Here are some bees that do not make honey: Carpenter bees, Mason bees, Sweat bees, Cuckoo bees, and Bumblebees! Now that's a surprise. Most people think bumblebees make honey, but they actually don't! Bumblebees just take the nectar straight to their colonies and eat/drink the straight-up nectar without evaporating the water and turning it into honey! How cool is that?

What is The Difference Between Bees And Wasps?

Well, for most people this would be an age-old question. What is the difference? Do wasps make honey? Are they useful? First of all, if you were wondering if wasps make honey, the answer is: Absolutely NOT. Only bees make honey, not wasps. Wasps can be useful for pest control. Another thing that is different about wasps is that they are mostly smooth, while bees are covered in pollen-attracting hairs, making them super floofy. Wasps also have super thin waists, (like, they are super itty bitty)

while a bee's waist is normally pretty thick. Wasps are also normally brightly colored like highlighters, like the yellow jacket wasps. Wasps can also sting more than once, while honeybees can only sting once before dying.

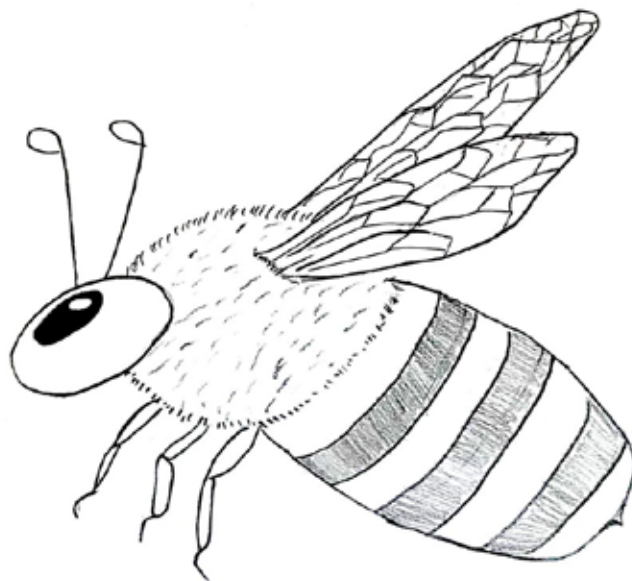
Why Are Bees Important?

Bees are important because without them, we wouldn't be able to survive. Bees pollinate, and pollination means growth. Just think for a moment. Imagine bees weren't real. There would be no fruit to eat, the grass would die, so there would be no meat. All of that equals the same thing: nothing to eat. This is why they are important, why we should start caring more. Bees are some of the most necessary animals for us, and all creatures' survival.

What Can We Do to Help Bees?

First of all, we could stop ripping flowers out of the ground. Bees need those to make honey. We could also stop throwing rocks at bee hives! Bees work hard for their homes, like you do! It would also work in your favour. Nobody wants hundreds of bees chasing them!

Colouring Section



Honey Bee: by Grace Reidy



Endra the Ekans: Chapter 1

Year: 2026. Place: Canada. Town: Mitchell.

Once there was an Ekans named "Endra". Endra lived outside on a table with his sister, Endrin, his mother, Arlin, and his father, Crim. You see, in this universe, Pokemon were very small.

Now let's get started. "Wow, it's so windy!" said Endra. "It sure is." replied Endrin.

"Endra! Endrin! Come here. It's time to hunt!" called Crim.

"Not hunting! It's the wooorrsst! Can't you do it for me?" asked Endra.

"No!" yelled Crim.

"Aw man!" whined Endra.

"Wooo! I love hunting!" said Endrin excitedly.

Endra and Endrin set out to hunt.

Endra caught six Pikachus, three Pawmis, and a Togedemaru. Endrin caught a Raichu, twelve Minun, and nine Plussle. Soon they came to a pile of tree branches. "Oooo, what could be in there?" said Endrin.

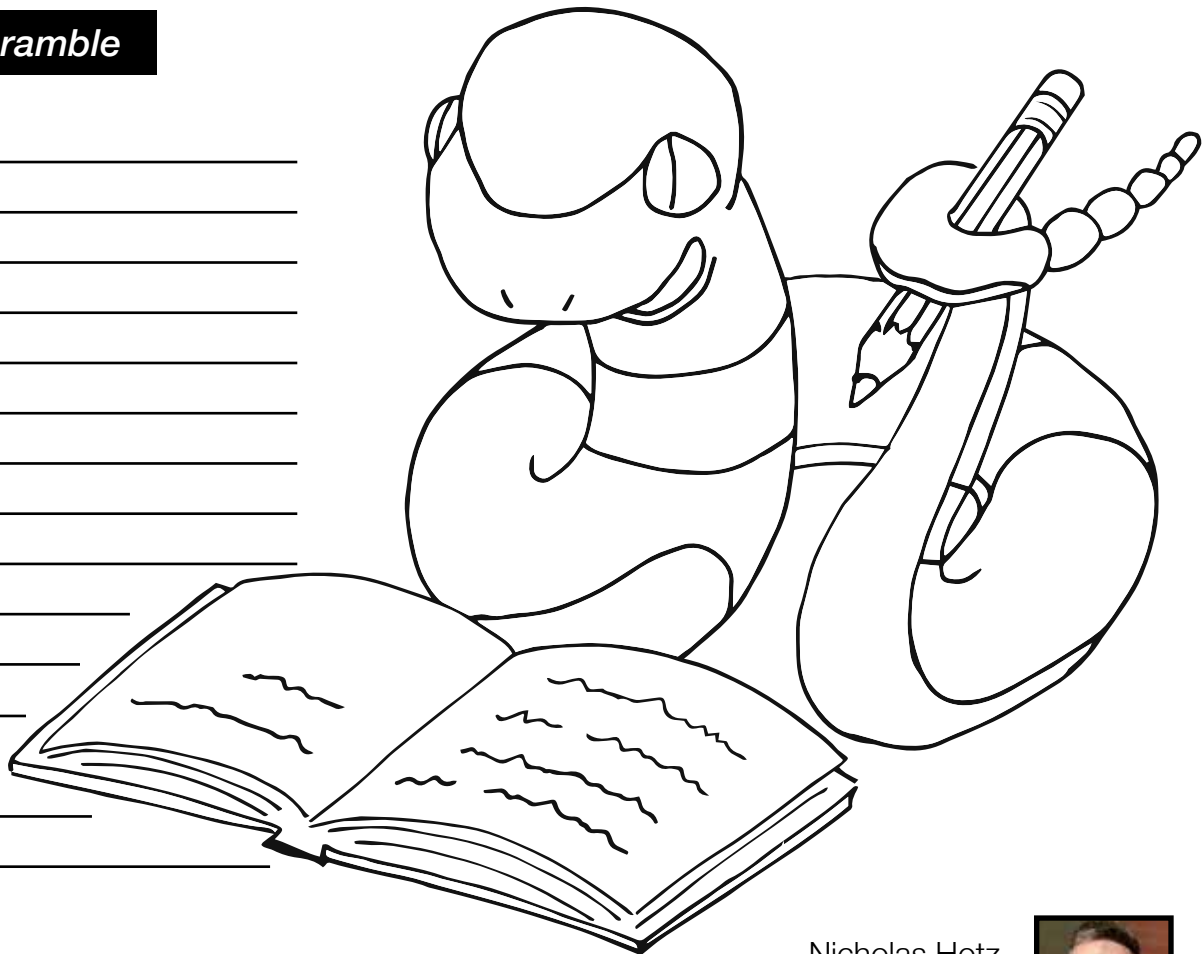
"Don't go in there!" Endra said, but she was too late...

Keep your eyes open for Chapter 2

Colouring Page

Pokemon Word Scramble

ARBURSUBAL _____
 AEOTIBSLS _____
 APHIKCU _____
 FGNOIFK _____
 FUJILGPGFY _____
 LSLPUE _____
 DYAOSAGR _____
 TENGAAL _____
 ALHSDSAS _____
 SANEK _____
 LUAIG _____
 UINMN _____
 RSPAA _____
 CYSANHE _____
 HRADCZAI _____





Connect & Thrive

Have you heard of Mitchell and Area Community Outreach? Do you know what we do and who we serve? MACO is a community-support agency funded by Ontario Health that provides services which help enable seniors and persons with disabilities to remain living independently in the Municipality of West Perth. We have many different programs that run through Mitchell Outreach that are free and low-cost that are open to anyone in the community!

Many people think they are not quite at the level to attend our programs, and there is a stigma about coming to the West Perth Village. While our programming is available to the broader community, some individuals may feel hesitant to participate due to misconceptions surrounding senior's homes being used solely by the people who live there. We want you to know that our programs located in the Ritz Manor Apartment Lounge are for seniors and people with disabilities of all ages and capabilities - not just the ones who live in West Perth Village! We have a great space for programs with an entrance right from the parking lot.

Mitchell and Area Community Outreach provides many activities including: cards and games, dining events, drop-in social programs and book chats.

We also coordinate outings like play trips, lunches, themed activities, sing-a-longs, exercise classes, educational sessions, and health programs like blood-pressure clinics, reflexology, and more. We partner with community organizations for events like Euchrama and dances at the West Perth Community Centre. We'd like to emphasize that many of these events are free, but others have a nominal fee that helps cover the associated program costs.

Our goal is to promote and sustain improved health and quality of life for older adults. We aim to reduce isolation, increase wellness, and provide quality programs that enhance socialization and active living. Many seniors who attend our programs are here for just that -- staying healthy, active, and engaging with others in a fun way. We welcome anyone over the age of 55 or anyone living with chronic disabilities to join us!

If you are interested in getting more information on any programs we offer, call Mitchell Outreach at 519-348-9765 to find out more. Or just stop by a program. Our events can be found on our facebook page, and they are listed within *the Heronry's* community calendar. There are always new friends out there who are just waiting to meet you!

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A French Student's Journey

Bonjour tout le monde!

I am a 19-year-old Literature and Media student from Paris. People don't really expect someone whose nose is in books all day to actually work on a dairy farm, yet, here I am, and I couldn't be happier about it.

Back home in France, my future is still a bit blurred. I am studying media with the hope of perhaps entering the world of journalism one day. But more than anything, I have a passion for travelling around the world, creating new experiences, and stepping completely out of my comfort zone. When a family connection mentioned they knew the Louwagie family and their automated dairy farm in Ontario, Hillmanor Holsteins, it was something exciting that caught my attention. It was a fantastic opportunity, as I didn't just want to visit Canada as a tourist; I wanted to see a new way of living, and would be able to get my hands dirty in the barns.

Coming to the Ontario countryside has been a complete shock to my usual life, even though I'm not entirely a city girl. My childhood home is in the South-west of France; I grew up in a rural town near Bordeaux. My hometown is surrounded by beautiful forests, very close to the Atlantic Ocean, and, of course, it has many world-famous vineyards.

In fact, the closest I had ever come to agricultural work before this experience was helping a relative who owns a vineyard. I remember walking through the vines and helping them harvest grapes. But clipping grapevines is absolutely nothing like working on a Canadian dairy farm!

are incredibly full and also physically demanding. In Paris, my biggest morning challenge is catching the right metro. Here, my days are spent in the barns alongside the family, learning how to take care of the calves. Feeding them has quickly become one of my favorite tasks; it is complicated work, but learning things step-by-step makes it doable, and it is completely worth it.

I am so glad I came here because it allows me to see how agriculture works in another country,



I get to help Anna and Heather with the calves!

and gives me insight into how farming works in general. Seeing how the employees work with such dedication is amazing. The Louwagie farm is automated with robots, which is very impressive, but it still takes a lot of human effort. I feel so grateful that they welcomed me into their space, let me observe how everything functions, and allow me to help them a bit.

Beyond the work, what has struck me the most is the landscape and the people. The Ontario countryside is beautiful, with its vast fields and lakes that feel entirely different from the enclosed forests of my hometown or the stone streets of Paris. But the real heart of this experience is the Louwagie family. From the very moment I arrived, they have been incredibly welcoming, kind, and generous. They haven't just treated me like a seasonal worker, they have truly included me as a member of their family. Every single person I have met in the community so far has been adorable and quick to share a laugh, which means a lot.

I know I will remember this experience for the rest of my life, and I really hope to keep in touch with them after I leave. I want to say a huge thank you to the Louwagie family and their team for opening their doors to me, and to West Perth for being such a good home to them.

Neighbourhood Legacy

Christina tB Hotz
the Heronry Editor



Some articles are more complicated to write than others. I couldn't include this one without a very long pre-amble in which I explain our relationship with the Youngs, and how impactful Pat's friendship has been on our neighbourhood and family.

I first met Mary Patricia Young, who is known as Pat Young by her friends, and "Mrs Young" by most of my neighbourhood, about ten years ago when we moved next door to her and her husband, Sam, in 2016. We were new to town, a young family looking for both affordable housing that was then the state of housing in Mitchell, and the small-town feeling that my husband and I had both experienced in our own childhood homes.

We were still unpacking our worldly goods when Pat and Sam invited us and another neighbourhood family over to dinner — hoping, they said, to get us connected to the community. I'm not sure if it was because of that specific dinner invitation or not, but we definitely connected with them, and with the rest of the neighbourhood as well.

From that moment on, Pat and Sam were a warm presence in our lives. Pat would call me up to invite our three-year-old to come visit the old toys and he'd wander over, play for an hour, and then come home full of juice and cookies. A few years later, when we got our cats (before we made the decision to keep them inside 24/7) even they were welcome to "go for a wander" through the house next door. The cats would eventually come home (likely also filled with treats) but only when they felt like it. That was just the kind of people the Youngs were — happy to share their home with friends, family, and neighbourhood pets.

With a husband who was often away on work trips, it would have been easy for me to get discouraged and overwhelmed, but I was never truly alone. Sam would cheer on my exterior painting efforts from

his own ladder, and Pat would see me gardening and invite me over for my own version of juice and cookies (aka tea and occasionally pie). We'd talk about community, bond over our love of old houses, and discuss ways we could make the world a better place.

That friendship blossomed to the point that after Sam passed away and Pat realized it was time to move closer to family, it was agreed that the Hotz family would take over the legacy of the "Youngs' House." Pat told us that she and Sam had seen the care that we had put into restoring the century home where we lived next door, and knew we would love this home as much as they had.

Since then, we've had several big adventures on the property, and an abundance of small ones. It's been three years since we moved in, but we've stayed in touch, and

been supported and cheered on by the extended Young family. And of course it goes both ways! A family wedding dress was stored in one of our upper closets for over a year — waiting for the day that it was needed by Barb's daughter, and when we happen across old family photographs and papers tucked in hidden spaces, we always keep them safe until someone comes through Mitchell and collects them.

Pat now lives in Elora, but her daughter Barb will often drive her back to Mitchell. When in town, she's often able to pop by for a visit; now it's our turn to fill her up with tea and cookies! Half the neighbourhood will often show up to visit with her as well. Her impact on our street was so positive that almost everyone comes over to say hello.

Although Pat is no longer a resident of West Perth, she and Sam will forever be a key part of its history. As such, she is July's "Ordinary Extraordinary Person."



Pat and Christina visit on the porch in 2026

Patricia Young: Blooming Where She's Planted

Christina tB Hotz
the Heronry Editor



Pat Young, born Mary Patricia Linke to Catharine and Henry Linke in 1938, has been transplanted many times over her life. She grew up in Kapuskasing (and in Smokey Falls during WWII) Ontario. Kapuskasing was a small town where the local paper mill that employed her father (who worked as one of its first electrical engineers), provided most of the local jobs to the townspeople. Surrounded by spruce trees, Pat grew and played in that remote area until she braved the journey that was necessary for her to follow in her mother's nursing footsteps.

In Kingston, Ontario, 800 miles away from her hometown, Pat completed her five-year degree, started working as a nursing instructor, and met and married Sam Young. Sam was a high-school language teacher who specialized in Greek and Latin and had dreams of a PhD. Those dreams took them across Canada – all the way to Vancouver BC – where Pat once again poured her energies into teaching.

Dreams don't always turn out the way we hope, and after finding out that the school he was planning to attend wasn't going to offer Latin in the PhD program for a while, Sam decided he needed to get back into teaching. Back to Ontario they went, and Pat started serving again in the community in Preston (now Cambridge). The family grew to three children, and Pat stayed home to look after them.

As time went on, Latin and Greek were falling out of favour with students and rules about what enrolment was required to run classes were changing. Sam had to start teaching English in order to stay employed, but he wasn't enjoying teaching at a

large school. City schools were being amalgamated into mega schools, and he wanted to teach at a school where he knew the name of every student walking down the hall. That just wasn't going to be possible in Cambridge. Mitchell District High School ended up being the solution to the problem.

When house-hunting in Mitchell, Pat and Sam fell in love with the house that had been the home of Marjorie and Adair Campbell. A conditional offer was made, but the Youngs' house in Preston just wouldn't sell. Marjorie convinced Adair to give the Youngs more time to sell their home and he wrote them a letter informing them that the Campbell home would be taken off the market until the Youngs were ready to buy it. Sam commuted to MDHS for the entire school year and the next spring, the house in Preston finally sold. "The Campbell Home" became "The Young's House" in 1972.



Pat as a young girl

The Campbell Home had a prominent place in the Mitchell community, and together, Pat and Sam worked hard to honour and continue that legacy. Pat redid all the wallpaper and decorated, a back shed was replaced with an addition, and year after year, Sam repainted a section of the extensive amount of exterior woodwork.

Like the Campbells, Pat and Sam valued family and community. They invited any visiting Campbell relations back to their wrap-around porch, and hosted many family and friend gatherings of their own. Marjorie and Adair had moved to an apartment in town, and Pat would welcome Marjorie back to their home, happy to reminisce with the woman who had so generously insisted that THIS family be the one to buy their ancestral home.

The neighbourhood went through the regular kinds of changes when the children were small; families moved away, and more replaced them. The children grew up enough to go to school themselves, and much too quickly those children turned into teenagers who thundered up and down the stairs. All the while, Pat and Sam's house became known more as 'The Youngs House' than 'The Campbell Home', as they put down roots and gave back to the community.

They joined a local church, and Sam developed a reputation as a tough-but-fair teacher at MDHS, while Pat returned to her love of the outdoors and got involved with the local Girl Guides chapter. She'd take the local troop on camping trips, happy to do whatever she could to make sure the local girls could experience the joys of things like Winter Camping. She went on all the school trips, taking advantage of her role as "stay-at-home" parent to support her children, as well as the children of other parents who didn't have the flexibility that she had.

While she didn't work as a registered nurse any more, she still put her skills to use by volunteering at local nursing homes, sitting on the family council at the Ritz Villa, and on the board of Stratford General Hospital for thirteen years. When the kids were at school, she found time to help out around the community however she could.

After her children had all grown up, Pat's volunteering and travels took her on international trips to places like the Dominican Republic and Australia for weeks at a time, but always she'd return to Mitchell and the home they'd made there. Pat was always thinking about other people. Whether it was hosting the neighbourhood kids, or hiring them to mow her

lawn and pick up walnuts, she was always keeping an eye out and considering their needs.

In 2016, a young family moved in next door, and Pat and Sam watched with pleasure as the Hotz

family worked on restoring the 100-year-old Ontario Cottage beside them. As the years rolled along, every once in a while Pat would drop hints about how the Young House would, "One day need a nice family to take over," and "Wouldn't it be convenient to move next door?" and every time the Hotz family would laugh at the idea. They loved their home, and couldn't envision moving to one twice the size!



Sam and Pat on their Wedding Day, Oct. 6, 1962

Sam passed away from heart failure in 2021, much to the sadness of his family and the entire neighbourhood. Sam was a character, and the lack of his presence was sorely felt. The long winters and the isolation that came with Covid and Sam's passing made it clear to the extended Young family, and to Pat herself, that it was time to consider

moving closer to family. A retirement community in Elora, close to her daughter Barb, was determined to be the best option. In November of 2023, that next-door family that had laughed at the idea of moving, with trepidation, and much back-and-forth of timelines, furniture, and boxes, took ownership of the home that had been in the Youngs' hands for fifty years.



The Young Family in 1989

Since then Pat has been living at Heritage River in Elora, Ontario. Her suite is full of mementoes, books, and art gathered over a lifetime. When packing up eighty+ years of living, she insisted on saving all the stacks of papers and files that had been not only the accumulation of her own lifetime, but also that of

her and Sam's parents. Now that she's not as busy travelling, she's finding the time to go through a box at a time, making sure that nothing of historical or personal value is thrown away. (Thankfully the boxes live in a storage locker so that she only has to go through one at a time!)

The rest of her time in Elora is spent visiting with her daughter Barb, getting involved in her residence, and doing whatever else comes to her attention. Pat serves on the Food Council, helping to make sure that the residents stay in contact with the kitchen staff, the Newsletter Committee, and writes many letters to the government in which she advocates for more nursing home spots to be made available. Her position in a retirement community has given her an up-close view of what happens when needed care is inaccessible.. The affordability of elder care, or lack-thereof' is a big concern of hers, and an issue she's trying to change.

Pat's care for her community goes with her wherever she goes. She has a list of the birthdays for each resident in her residence. There are 120 of them and the list is always changing as residents move in and out of the building. They have a birthday party each month for all the people born in that month, but that wasn't enough for Pat. She writes a birthday card for each resident. She takes her walker around the residence every month and slips a card into the slot on their doors, making sure that each person gets a card for their birthday.



Pat outside her home in Heritage River, Elora.

I asked her what motivated her lifetime of service and community building. She told me that she believes that, as a Christian, this is what she's called to do. Whether it's making a home where the neighbourhood children feel safe playing, volunteering at the school library, or saving her juice cartons so that the local kindergarten class can make birdfeeders, everything comes back to her faith. She looks at her community, sees needs, and does her best to live as she is called to, loving her neighbour and even her enemies (though I'm not sure she has any of those) with all her might. She might have been transplanted many times throughout her life, but she always finds a way to bloom wherever she's planted.

Enjoy These **FREE** Music Events Presented by
the **Municipality of West Perth**



Country Versatiles	Elysha Vorstenbosch	Bob Lauze
Wednesday, July 1st	Sunday, July 19th	Sunday, August 23rd
2:00 pm Mitchell Lions Park	2:00 pm Keterson Park Tim Hortons Pavilion	2:00 pm Keterson Park Tim Hortons Pavilion
Join the Rotary Club & Lions Club for music, food, and fun!	Food Booth will be open at Keterson Park	Food Booth will be open at Keterson Park



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Visiting the Goderich Gaol

In the middle of June, I visited the Goderich Gaol in Goderich, ON as part of my research for my solo harp album, *Tales of the Huron Tract: The Whispers That Lie Dormant No Longer*. Having wandered through on a self-guided tour last year with my parents, there were new and different details that stuck out to me on my guided tour with Sinead Cox.

The way sound carries in the gaol is quite distinct. Upon entering the gaol doors, you're guided through a large, wide-open hallway towards the entrance of the main building. With every step towards the inner door the walls gradually cave in around you until you feel as if you're trapped with no escape. Although this hallway was designed to create a sense of dread and entrapment to those who enter, it has the loveliest acoustics! The sound bounces off the walls and is so reverberant. Not only the hallway, but the main building of the gaol itself is so reverberant that the sound travels loud and clear across the building.

One of the common crimes that many Goderich Gaol inmates were incarcerated with was "vagrancy", the "crime" of being homeless. I'd come across this crime during my visit last year, but it wasn't until I chatted with Sinead that I began to understand the complexity of this "crime". For these homeless individuals, the Gaol provided shelter from the harsh outdoor elements as well as provided free meals and medical care. So, while some prisoners wanted to escape, there were some who wanted to be in the Gaol and never made an attempt to escape as the conditions were better for them inside the gaol than outside.

The Gaol was often the fullest in the winter months. There are a total of sixteen cells in the Goderich Gaol, four cellblocks each with three cells spread out on the first and second floor plus four holding cells on the third floor. Each of the cellblocks had their own day room, a common area for the inmates of a cellblock to hang out outside of their cells. Each common area had a door or stairwell that led to their designated courtyard. Sometimes, the gaol was overcrowded with more inmates than there were cells. In these instances, there were accounts of cellblock inmates

making makeshift beds in the day room to sleep. Not only that, heating stoves were only located in the day room. The cells were far enough away from the stoves that they were freezing cold. Despite these conditions, for many inmates it was much better to be in the Gaol than to directly face the bitter winter weather outside.

Many children passed through the walls of the gaol and some of the youngest inmates were infants born in prison.

The cupola, the dome-like structure atop the roof, was struck by lightning twice and caught fire multiple times. Despite giving the impression it's made with solid stone, the Goderich Gaol is primarily built with timber, which made it highly susceptible to fires, especially when heating stoves and lamps were lit. The cupola used to have a catwalk for guards to walk around to each of the windows and watch the inmates below in the courtyard without being seen. The concept for this design was to instill compliance in the inmates as they would never know when they were being watched.

Typically, there were three full-time staff at the Goderich Gaol with a doctor called in as necessary:

1. The Gaoler: the official in charge of the Goderich Gaol who lived onsite with his family.
2. The Gaol Matron: the female official in charge of managing the female inmates. This role was filled by the wife of the Warden or, in the case he didn't have a wife to fill this role, a female family member, such as his daughter.
3. The Turnkey: the guard in charge of locking and unlocking the cells.

As I start writing the music, I'm inspired by the unique reverberant sound quality of the building, the stories of the inmates and staff who walked the gaol halls and the history of how the building withstood the passage of time and incidents. I hope the piece I create captures the history and stories that have passed through and live in the walls of the Goderich Gaol.



Roots and Wings

There are many popular sayings that talk about parents providing “roots” for their children so that they can later have “wings” to fly in life. My parents, Pat and Sam Young, definitely did that! They gave me and my siblings very strong roots. And from there we were able to dream, develop our wings, and fly. But my parents did not do this all on their own. The whole community around us was part of providing those roots.

I grew up in Mitchell. We moved to Mitchell in 1972 when I was 2 years old. It is the only home I knew as a child and youth. I went off to university in 1989 but continued to return to my hometown to work at the Mitchell Lion’s Pool in the summers until 1992. I believe the community I grew up in (along with my parents) gave me the roots to be who I am today.

My wings took me away; First I “flew” to Kingston in Eastern Ontario, then Hornepayne in Northern Ontario, and now Elora in Southern Ontario, but I have never forgotten my roots from West Perth.

These strong community roots taught me to...

Value the people that are the community around me.

My mom used to say “I am just nippin’ over to Staffen’s.” In other words, she was just going to the local grocery store to get a few items and wouldn’t be gone too long. Well, my siblings and I quickly learned that “nippin” could take a long time! Why? Because our mom would meet up with people and have conversations (and she would always come home with more than what was on her list!).

Most of my adult life I have lived in other small towns like Mitchell. I too have learned to give more time than needed when running errands, going for walks, going to appointments. Why? Because I never know who I will meet up with and what wonderful conversations we will have. My Mitchell roots taught me to value people more than time.



Barb's Grade 10 Photo from MDHS

Having roots in a small community also taught me to say “hello” when I pass people on the street, whether I know them or not. It taught me to get to know my neighbours, check in on them, invite them over for a meal, drop off some muffins, or host a street ice cream party.

My Mitchell roots taught me that the little things we do can bring joy to others. My dad was a long time English

teacher at Mitchell District High School. He knew a lot of people! He would say that he would learn something from everyone he met. These are very wise words from someone who taught so many youth and knew so many people in the community. I hold onto these words as I encounter different people in my life. My Mitchell roots taught me to value people more than our differences.

Invest in my community

Growing up in a small town gave me a lot of opportunities to be involved, to volunteer, to contribute. The adults around me encouraged this. They invested in me as a child and youth. As someone who has worked with children and youth all my life, I see the importance of encouraging the kids in our communities. Small town life provides opportunities to show up at events such as music, drama and sport events and show your support. And in a small community there are countless ways

to get involved and be part of building community.

Small town life also taught me to get to know and value those who serve our community. I have learned the importance of shopping local and getting to know those who serve me. My Mitchell roots taught me to invest in my community. We are stronger together.

Pray for my community

When I was young, there was a community siren (an old air raid siren) on top of the Stacey's facility that would ring when the fire trucks needed to go out for an emergency. (It also had a test ring on Fridays at 1 pm). The whole town knew when it went off that there was an emergency somewhere. My family would often fear that a barn was in flames. A fire is always bad but a barn fire is a family's livelihood. I learned when I hear a siren (any siren) to stop and pray. In a small community you may know who is need, and you may also know those who

are responding to the emergency. I don't need an emergency to pray for my community though. My Mitchell roots taught me that prayer is another way I can value the people around me and be open to ways I can invest in my community.

I am thankful for the strong community roots that formed me. I may not live in West Perth anymore but I do come back for visits. Every time I visit my roots soak up a little more encouragement, a little more love, a little more joy and I remember who I am.



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Animal Friends

Our Wonderful Wizard

On May 4th we celebrated our puppy's first birthday with his best buddies, our neighbours, the Heide children. There was much running, jumping, and ball catching outdoors before the pizza, cake and ice cream. Wiz enjoyed his meat toppings from the pizza as a treat. A birthday gift from his buddies was an adorable hat and coat, giving him a classy look, similar to Paddington Bear! A big thank you to Eli, Kaitlyn, Jonah, Abigail and Alicia for all the fun we had together!

We bought our puppy from a breeder on Kijiji after we fell in love with his looks and breed. Wizard's mom is a purebred Corgi, (our favourite), and his dad a purebred miniature poodle. The breed is known as a "corgi-poo", the result of the pairing

is our small, crazy-hair, sable-coloured cutie with white markings who hardly sheds any hair.

Wizard is totally into kids, which is great for our aforementioned neighbours! He is also smart and therefore easy to train, which is great for us. He loves his walks and he greets everyone — usually dancing on his hind legs! We know he is a wonderful Wiz — if ever a Wiz there was!

Janet Emmerson

Mitchell Resident



Wizard at his birthday party with the Heide children.

If you have an animal friend, please reach out to wp.heronry@gmail.com with photos of you and them and tell us about how wonderful they are!

West Perth Commun

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 co

July 1 - Wednesday

Rotary's Soap Box Derby | 8am - 1pm | Mitchell Lions Park
♪ Country Versatiles | 2pm | Mitchell Lions Park
Free Swim | 1:30-2:45 pm | Mitchell Lions Pool
Kids Bike Parade | 4pm | Route: Town Hall to Lions Park
Family Games & Music | 4:30 - 6:30 | Mitchell Lions Park
\$ Hotdogs & Burgers | 4:30 - 6:30 | Mitchell Lions Park
Fireworks at Dusk | 6:30pm | Brodhagen Hall: 6708 Perth
Line 44 - Rain Date: July 3

July 2 - Thursday

♦\$40 Reflexology* | 9am-12pm | Manor Lounge
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦\$12 Euchrama & Lunch | 10am-3pm | 160 Wellington St
♦ \$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
Mental Health: Drop-In Support | 1pm-3pm | W.P.P. Library
♦ Active Wellness - Lvl2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 7:15-8:15pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 3 - Friday

Mitchell Foodbank* | 9:30-11:30am, 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦WII Games | 2:00-3:00pm | Manor Lounge
\$Family Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$Open Swim | 7:15-8:15pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 4 - Saturday

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
Free Swim (Gaffney) | 3:00-4:45 pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 5 - Sunday

Canada Celebration & Potluck | 12pm | Avonbank Community Church
\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
Vacation Bible School | 6:30pm | Grace Lutheran Church

July 6 - Monday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦ \$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
EarlyON Baby Time | 1pm | West Perth Public Library
♦ Active Wellness - Lvl2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge

\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
Meet TLC Alpacas | 6pm | West Perth Public Library
Free Adult Soccer | 6pm - 8pm | Behind UTES
Vacation Bible School | 6:30pm | Grace Lutheran Church
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
♦ Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 7 - Tuesday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
STEM with Asha (Age 4-7)* | 10:30am | Lions Park Pavilion
STEM with Asha (Age 8-12)* | 1pm | Lions Park Pavilion
Mahjong Meet-Up | 1pm | West Perth Library
♦ Farkle | 1:30-2:30pm | Manor Lounge
Foodbank* | 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St
Crafter's Circle | 2pm | West Perth Library
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
Camp Day Library Storytime | 6:30pm | Tim Hortons
Vacation Bible School | 6:30pm | Grace Lutheran Church
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 8- Wednesday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦ Active Wellness - Lvl2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
♦ Sing-a-Long | 2:30-3:30pm | Manor Lounge
Tales & Tunes | 10:15am | West Perth Public Library
Progressive Euchre & Fun Pool | 1pm | Mitchell Legion
Dungeons & Dragons* | 2pm | West Perth Public Library
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
Archery Nights | 6:30pm | 3317 Perth Road 163
Vacation Bible School | 6:30pm | Grace Lutheran Church
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
♦ Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 9 - Thursday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦ \$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
ART with Asha (Age 4-7)* | 10:30am | Lions Park Pavilion
ART with Asha (Age 8-12)* | 1pm | Lions Park Pavilion

Community Events: July 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.

◇ Active Wellness - Lvl2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
Vacation Bible School | 6:30pm | Grace Lutheran Church
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 10 - Friday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
Mitchell Foodbank* | 9:30-11:30am, 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St
◇ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
◇ WII Games | 2:00-3:00pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
◇ **RSVP Deadline** \$15 *Dining for Seniors Delivery*
◇ **RSVP Deadline** *St Jacobs Trip: ♪ Return to Grace*

July 11 - Saturday

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
Free Swim (JF Skinner Builders) | 3-4:45pm | W.P. Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Chicken BBQ | 4:30-7pm | Brodhagen Community Centre

July 12 - Sunday

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
Free Swim (Gaffney) | 3:00-4:45 pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 13 - Monday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
◇ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
◇ \$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
◇ Chat Topic: Previous Jobs | 10-11am | Manor Lounge
◇ Active Wellness - Lvl2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
Library On Location | 6pm | Delta Power- 5458 Line 34
Free Adult Soccer | 6pm - 8pm | Behind UTES
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
◇ Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
West Perth Council Meeting | 7pm | 160 Wellington Street
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 14 - Tuesday

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

July 15 - Wednesday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
◇ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
◇ Coffee Hour: Grief & Loss | 10:30-11:30am | Manor Lounge
Board Games | 12- 3pm | West Perth Public Library
Progressive Euchre & Fun Pool | 1pm | Mitchell Legion
◇ Active Wellness - Lvl2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool Archery
Nights | 6:30pm | 3317 Perth Road 163
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
◇ Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 16 - Thursday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
◇ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
◇ \$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
ART with Asha (Age 4-7)* | 10:30am | Lions Park Pavilion
◇ \$15 Dining for Seniors Meal* | 11:30am | Delivery
ART with Asha (Age 8-12)* | 1pm | Lions Park Pavilion
◇ Active Wellness - Lvl2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 17 - Friday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | Lions Pool
◇ \$40 Reflexology* | 9am-12pm | Manor
(contined on next page)

Mitchell Foodbank* | 9:30-11:30am, 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦ WII Games | 2-3pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | W.P. Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | Lions Pool
♦ **RSVP Deadline** \$11 *Brunch n Bunch*
♦ **RSVP Deadline** \$4 *Pie Social*

July 18 - Saturday

Read to the Animals | 11am | Lions Park Animal Barn
\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
Free Swim (Monteith Ritsma Philips) | 3-4:45 pm | Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 19 - Sunday

\$ Open Swim | 1-2:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
♪ Elysha Vorstenbosch | 2-4pm | Keterson Park Pavilion
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 20 - Monday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦ \$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
EarlyON Baby Time | 1pm | West Perth Public Library
♦ Active Wellness - Lvl2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
♦ \$4 Pie Social* | 2:30-3:30pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
Library on Location | 6pm | West Perth Village
Free Adult Soccer | 6pm - 8pm | Behind UTES
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
♦ Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 21 - Tuesday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
♦ \$11 Brunch n Bunch* | 10:30am | Manor Lounge
STEM with Asha (Age 4-7)* | 10:30am | Lions Park Pavilion
STEM with Asha (Age 8-12)* | 1pm | Lions Park Pavilion
Mahjong Meet-Up | 1pm | West Perth Library
Mitchell Foodbank* | 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St
Crafter's Circle | 2pm | West Perth Library
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 22 - Wednesday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church

Newcomer Services | 1pm-4pm | West Perth Public Library
Progressive Euchre & Fun Pool | 1pm | Mitchell Legion
♦ Active Wellness - Lvl2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
Dungeons & Dragons* | 2pm | West Perth Public Library
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
Junior Explorers on Adventure | 6:15pm | Dublin Pavilion
Archery Night | 6:30pm | 3317 Perth Road 163
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
♦ Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 23 - Thursday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦ \$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
♦ \$105 Trip ♪Return to Grace* | 10:00 AM | St. Jacobs
ART with Asha (Age 4-7)* | 10:30am | Lions Park Pavilion
ART with Asha (Age 8-12)* | 1pm | Lions Park Pavilion
♦ Active Wellness - Lvl2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
It's Ok Not to Be Ok | 7-9pm | 155 Wellington, Mitchell
\$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 24 - Friday

Mitchell Foodbank* | 9:30-11:30am, 1:30-4:30pm | 80 Rowland St
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦ WII Games | 2:00-3:00pm | Manor Lounge
\$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
Movie in the Park: Zootopia 2 | 7:30 PM | Lions Park
\$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 25 - Saturday

Free Swim (Zehr Insurance Brokers) | 1-2:45pm | Lions Pool
Legion Open Mic | 1pm-4pm | 175 St Andrew St
\$ Family Swim | 3-4:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
\$ Open Swim | 5-6:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 26 - Sunday

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

July 27 - Monday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
Vacation Bible School* | 8:45am-11:30am | Knox PC
♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
♦ \$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
♦ Senior Book Chat | 11am | Ritz Manor Lounge

EarlyON Baby Time | 1pm | West Perth Public Library
 ♦ Active Wellness - Lvl2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
 \$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 \$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 Library on Location | 6pm | JNB Heavy Haul
 Free Adult Soccer | 6pm - 8pm | Behind UTES
 \$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 ♦ Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
 \$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 28 - Tuesday

Free Yoga (BYO Gear) | 6:30 - 7:15am | End of Willow Ln
 \$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
 Vacation Bible School* | 8:45am-11:30am | Knox PC
 STEM with Asha (Age 4-7)* | 10:30am | Lions Park Pavilion
 ♦ Yahtzee | 10:30am | Manor Lounge
 Family Services | 12:30-2:30pm | West Perth Public Library
 ♦ Blood Pressure Clinic* | 1-3pm | Manor Lounge
 STEM with Asha (Age 8-12)* | 1pm | Lions Park Pavilion
 Mahjong Meet-Up | 1pm | West Perth Library
 Crafter's Circle | 2pm | West Perth Library
 \$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 \$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 \$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 \$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 29 - Wednesday

Vacation Bible School* | 8:45am-11:30am | Knox PC
 \$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
 ♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
 Board Games | 12-3pm | West Perth Public Library
 ♦ Active Wellness - Lvl2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
 ♦ \$5 Senior Dance | 1:30-3:30pm | Mitchell Community C.
 \$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 \$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 Archery Nights | 6:30pm | 3317 Perth Road 163
 ♦ Cards | 7pm | Manor Lounge
 \$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 \$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 AG Society Meeting | 7pm | Crystal Palace, Mitchell



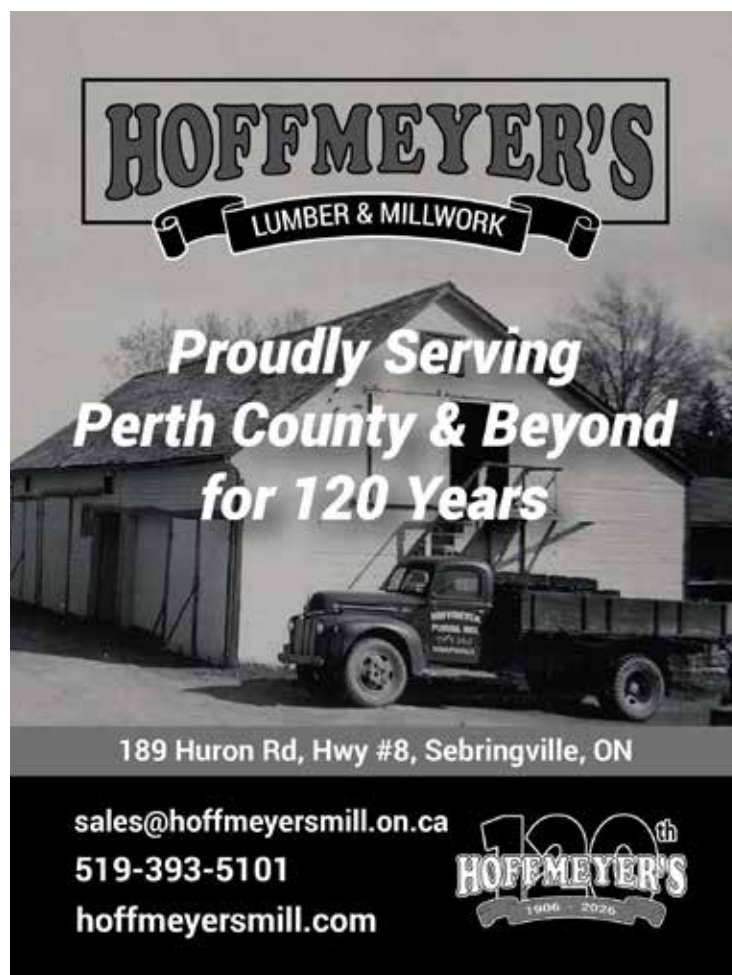
Whirl Creek
 Scottish Country Dance Club
Coming to Mitchell September 2026
 For more information contact David Kemp
 kdavid96@yahoo.com 519-345-2208

July 30 - Thursday

Vacation Bible School* | 8:45am-11:30am | Knox PC
 ♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
 ♦ \$10 Drop-In Yoga | 10am | Live Well 4 Life
 ART with Asha (Age 4-7)* | 10:30am | Lions Park Pavilion
 ART with Asha (Age 8-12)* | 1pm | Lions Park Pavilion
 ♦ Active Wellness - Lvl2 | 1:30-2:10pm | Manor Lounge
 Agilec Employment Support | 1-4:30pm | W.P.P. Library
 \$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 \$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 \$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 \$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool

July 31 - Friday

\$ Lane Swim | 7-8am | West Perth Lions Pool
 Vacation Bible School* | 8:45am-11:30am | Knox PC
 ♦ G Exercise - Lvl3 | 9:30-10:30am | UT Missionary Church
 ♦ WII Games | 2:00-3:00pm | Manor Lounge
 \$ Open Swim | 2:45-3:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 \$ Family Swim | 4-5pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 \$ Open Swim | 6:30-7:45pm | West Perth Lions Pool
 \$ Aquafit | 8:30-9:30pm | West Perth Lions Pool



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Sharing Our Stories

It is midsummer in rural West Perth and it feels like the “Dog days of Summer.” On many days, the air is still, humidity hangs in that way that can suppress our energies. The trees, the grass, the flowers are not growing vigorously but just existing in their maturity. Crops are slowing their growth and letting energy ebb slowly towards harvest. After our busy spring season of cultivating, fertilizing, and planting, now we can sit back a bit and observe, wait and rest up as we cruise towards a busy fall season of harvest.

To me, these warm and still summer evenings are a cherished time for stories. Should we tell our stories? Do we care enough to listen to the stories of others?

We have all heard the proverbial ancestral tales: “When we were young, we walked five miles to school, through waist-high snow, uphill all the way and some with no boots on their feet!” Along with tales such as this though, we have heard the generational stories of wars, the Great Depression, the dust bowl, ocean crossings to new beginnings, grain threshing gatherings, barn raisings and so on. Stories help us to share generations, to shape new ones that will carry forth wisdom from those prior. They preserve the memories and more importantly keep those memories alive. The stories shared by ancestors, neighbours and friends keep us feeling connected.

When we purchased and moved our family into this old farmhouse in 1990, as a younger and certainly naive couple, we experienced some things that can now be told of as “stories.” “Naive” being the operative word here; we purchased this three story century home with a very steep, high roofline, without conducting a careful inspection of the actual roof shingles.

One midsummer evening in July of that year, we experienced a typical Perth County thunderstorm: rather sudden, severe, a true downpour! Hydro power went off, trees bent down, laden clouds opening up to pour down gallons of water.

After a brief time, winds abated, the drone of the rain ceased and quiet settled over us. Sitting downstairs, feeling quite safe and dry within our brick walls, we could hear an odd, strange but constant sound. It was sort of a “plink, plink, plunk, plunk... very regular and seemed to be originating from somewhere up on the third floor. “Well”, said my husband, “We had better take a look in the attic!”

We climbed the steep staircase, pushed open the old wooden door with the creaking hinges and took a peak. The pine floor up there was littered with metal “cooking pots!” Amazingly enough, the numerous pots were strategically placed to catch the steady drips coming down through the rooftop. Quite a sight! Quite a realization for new home owners! Obviously this was not a recent problem as the placements and various sizes of pots were working perfectly to collect the leaking rain water.

Quick! Get out the Quadro phone book and check the “Yellow Pages” for roofing contractors. Remember, this was 36 years ago; no-one owned a cell phone or a computer, let alone knew what “Google” was!

As the song goes: “The itsy bitsy spider went up the water pipe, down came the rain and washed the spider out. Out came the sun and dried up all the rain.” Life went on; a new roof was installed and all was well. There is a lesson to be learned from this story though; always slow down and take a look before you sign on the dotted line!



Friend gathered around the table, sharing stories.

I operated a bed and breakfast accommodation business here for seven years (from 2011 to 2018). My favourite thing about this was the stories that were told around the breakfast table. At times, we would have up to eight guests in house, often from different geographical locations, of different ages, backgrounds and ethnicity. It amazed me how everyone would have a story to tell and how the words could bring everyone to a common ground. The sheer enjoyment, the awe, and sometimes the surprise, could fill the room.

When you hear a good story, will you laugh, cry, learn, understand or remember? Please listen; please tell. Don't let your stories remain untold.



Happy Canada Day, from the team at Deck Dentistry!

Service Clubs

Opti-Challenge Baseball

Sharon Flanagan

Mitchell Optimist Member



The crack of the ball or the very quiet drop of a ball off a tee; The words, "I'm going to be (insert favourite Blue Jays player's name) tonight and hit a homer!"; "Which bat should I use?" along with words of encouragement from the fans and buddies.

These are things you might hear if you were at Keterson Park on Sunday nights in Mitchell from May until the end of July. These are the sounds of the Mitchell Optimist Challenge Ball.

It was adapted from the Byron Challenge Ball League of London. Everyone has been on board since day one and support continues in our community. The extra good news is that we celebrated our 10th Anniversary last year!

Players come from all corners of Huron and Perth. Some have been participating since the beginning and some are new each year. All they have to do is show up with enthusiasm. If they wish to use their own bat and glove they can, but bats, balls, and a tee is provided.

How do we play? That's easy. Every player must have a buddy. There are two teams. Everyone gets

to bat, but not just 3 chances. We wait until they make a hit. The players run or are pushed by their buddy in their wheelchair.

The exciting part is the bases will honk when they're stepped on. So the player or their buddy does their best to make each one honk the loudest as they go around. As they go around the bases there are high-fives from the other players and buddies. It's really a social thing as they go around.

If there is a tournament and no local diamonds are free, we go swimming instead! Also we sometimes have a Fun Day during the winter.

There are no "outs," no score keeping, and only 2 rules: Be safe, and you must, must have fun. Of course the players always do.

While their children are playing, parents get to network with each other. It is a win-win. It is a very cohesive eclectic group of youth who have cognitive and physical disabilities and we've seen their friendships and confidence growing each year. For more information contact us by email: mitchelloptimist@gmail.com.



The Third Furrow: The Heavy Clay of Edward Lynch

There is a heavy scent that rises from a freshly turned field in West Perth just after a spring rain. It's the smell of a dark, stubborn clay that clings to your boots and resists the plow with a quiet, ancient weight. When we look out over the sweeping

concessions of Logan Township today, driving at 80km an hour, it is easy to view this scenic agricultural tapestry as soft and compliant. To understand its true transformation, you must look past the

modern green crops and search for the men who stood completely alone in the black muck and ancient roots when the forest was actively fighting back. In those earliest days, Edward Lynch was the solitary muscle that pressed the very first furrows into the Logan Road.

Born an Irish Catholic in 1801, Edward inherited a world of systemic hardship and tenant farming where owning land was a beautiful impossibility. When news of the Canada Company's grand experiment filtered across the sea, it offered a desperate, daring lifeline. Trading the familiar green hills of his youth for a terrifying, unmapped wilderness, Edward gambled everything on the promise that a lifetime of blistered hands would finally buy a piece of the earth to call his own. Pushing into Logan Township in the mid 1830s, he possessed only a stubborn refusal to starve and a willingness to swing an iron axe until his hands bled. He dragged his early homestead out of the cedar swamps log by agonizing log, laying the corduroy foundations for civilization to follow.

as seen above. Top of the list is Edward, beside his name, the count of males (2) and females (3). Both males and one female over sixteen years of age, and two girls under sixteen. Most likely, Edward, his wife, eldest son and 2 daughters.

Names of Heads of Families.	Over Sixteen.	Under Sixteen.	Over Sixteen.	Under Sixteen.	Deaf and Dumb.	Insane.	Church of England.	Church of Scotland.	Church of Rome.
Edward Lynch	2		1	2					5
Thomas Mackay	1	2	1						1
Patrick Collins	1	2	1	1					5
William Flynn	1	2	1	1					5
Francis Sweet	1	2	1	2					1

Names of the Heads of Families

For those who try to trace Edward through the archives today, his legacy doesn't yield pages of bustling family life. Instead, his story is recorded in the quiet, stark language of early census schedules.

In the 1861 Census for Logan Township, Edward appears entirely alone; a single man clearing the heavy timber by his own grit. By the 1871 Census, (below), a raw, deeply human complication drops into his record. At 70 years of age, Edward is found on Concession Two, Lot One, living in a solitary cabin with a rare, handwritten notation explicitly scrawled in the column, "separated from wife." Although missing from the previous census this is the first actual acknowledgment that they are clearly not together and she did not pass away.

In a 19th century Irish Catholic community, legal divorce was an absolute impossibility, a separation was more common and reveals the brutal strains of the Logan Road weren't just physical. Whether his wife returned across the Atlantic, lived on a separate regional plot, or the demands of frontier had simply fractured the relationship, the intrigue is real. This single line of faded ink reminds us that Edward wasn't a bloodless statue of endurance. He was a real man carrying real, quiet fractures, ultimately carving out a solitary space for himself to grow old on land that was completely his own.

Lynch Edward	Age 70	Catholic	Irish	Farmer	Separated from wife
Lynch Francis	Age 68	Roman Catholic	Irish	Farmer	

This census from 1871, list Edward again, this time at 70 years old. Occupation Farmer, Religion Catholic, Nationality Irish. Far off to this right we see two marks, one in each column, these marks are personal. These columns were designated “Over 20 unable to Read” and “Over 20 unable to Write.”

census, this time he is 80 years old, still living alone, but on the same ground he worked so hard to break. Today, Edward Lynch rests in the sacred grounds of St. Vincent de Paul Cemetery in Mitchell, a permanent passenger in the earth he spent his adulthood taming. You won’t find a headstone to photograph there today; his original marker was likely a simple wooden cross that rotted away, or soft local limestone that succumbed to the harsh Ontario freeze-thaw cycles.

This loss underscores a quiet crisis in our historic yards: without proactive stone preservation and care, the physical touchstones of our history face a silent, inevitable erasure. When a pioneer’s marker crumbles and drops beneath the sod, it takes more than just dates with it; it buries the physical anchor of their existence.

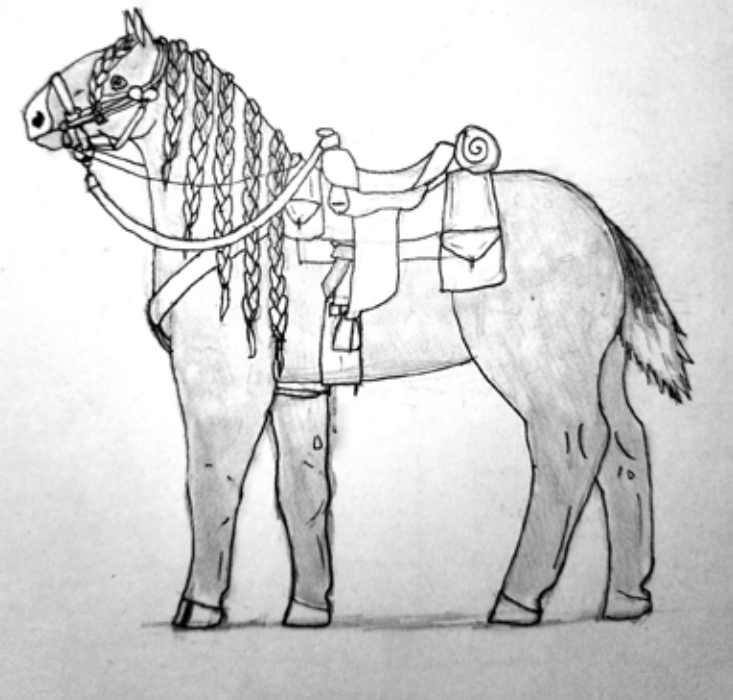
Yet, Edward’s presence in this soil remains anchored by the faded missionary logs of the London Diocese and early cemetery transcriptions. No marble

statues stand in a public square for Edward Lynch, but as the afternoon sun sinks low over West Perth, you realize his monument is the very road beneath our wheels, and the rich, dark soil that continues to feed the community he helped breathe life into.

For a man like Edward, who lived a solitary life on the frontier without a traditional family tree branching out to carry his name forward, this loss is doubly profound. It reminds us of the fragile nature of memory. When a pioneer leaves behind no descendants to inherit their grit, their stories completely stop the moment there is no one left to tell them. They rely entirely on us, the living, to dig into the archives, preserve their remaining resting places, and speak their names aloud. That’s the least we can do.

Young Artist Highlight

Nola Harbinson



Nola Harbinson
Local Resident (Age 16)



I like that with art you can create whatever you want, and that you can use a lot of different mediums to make it.

I usually start with a reference or make a clear image in my head of how I want a piece to look. Then I lightly sketch it out and change anything I don’t like. After that I will make the lines more defined and add colour if I want to.



Finding Home

I didn't intend to move to the country (let's leave aside the discussion of what 'the country' is). Like many things in life, this one just happened at an opportune moment.

The pandemic hit many of us hard, and it was a struggle for everyone. I weathered it shut up in a small condo in Burlington with no access to my friends' circle (they all had kids and were bubbling with their own families), any family other than my elderly parents (who thankfully lived nearby), or my usual coping mechanisms (hobbies). After two years of rolling lockdowns, bubbling, and constant anxiety over my parents' health, I was proverbially (literally) climbing the walls.

An offhand comment from a friend ["I think I might buy a house?"] seemed harmless enough; it's always good to dream. Except she meant it. What's more, she meant she wanted me for a housemate.

I left the whole thing in her capable hands. I knew she wanted to look at rural communities, being from one herself. I knew that meant quite a way from 'the city'. I knew we needed that distance to make it affordable anyway. I also knew I was at the point that an off-the-grid cabin in the backwoods sounded pretty delightful, and I was confident she'd find something significantly better than that.

I had never been to Mitchell before we moved here. I had to look it up on a map when she said she'd found the perfect house. I had no idea about what the town was known for, how old it was, who lived here, what amenities there were...nothing. I'd been to Stratford numerous times, but West Perth was a completely foreign concept to me. I grew up in Oakville; a small town it is not (though it likes to pretend to be).

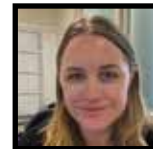
But growing up I did have something that many did not, which was access to a cottage on the edge

store, had a regular order at the bakery, knew and trusted our neighbours, had a community to rely on and – ultimately – a sense of belonging I never once felt growing up in the suburban sprawl of the GTA. I missed that. I'm 42 and though unmarried and childfree (and no plans to change either of those things) that doesn't mean I don't crave a place to call home. A small condo in a high-rise in commuter-focused Burlington was never going to be that.

This house was built in 1895. It doesn't have a single straight wall or 90-degree angle anywhere. It is in desperate need of painting and floor refinishing. The kitchen is c.1952. But it has a stained-glass window seat that gets the afternoon sun (where I write this from), a big yard (from a city girl's perspective), and it's a short walk to main street. It has the kindest neighbours I've ever met. The ladies at the post office know us on sight, the LCBO carries my favourite whisky, I know all my neighbours' pets' names (and their kids' names too!), I know exactly who to ask for a specific power tool or screw, I have a favourite order at the Sugar Maple, I'm in a constant war with the squirrels who occupy the shed rafters, I have – mostly – learned how to garden, we host games night and cookie parties during the holidays, and there's a least one little boy that lives around the corner that is convinced we are witches (but the good kind).

So here we are, two forty-somethings who met in undergrad, went in wildly different directions in the interceding decades, now making a home here and building a community and that is – nearly entirely – because of how welcoming and friendly Mitchell has been. This is a good place to live; I'd recommend it to anyone. We might not have major sporting events, or big-name musicians, or every box store imaginable within a short drive, but I think the community and trust we have here is more important now than ever before.

And you can't find that in the city.



Summer Reading

With summer here, we are thrilled to have Asha here adding to our programming offerings! We hope to see you at our many programs and events, or stopping in to borrow a pool pass for the Mitchell pool! This season we have both a family pass and an individual pass! We also hope everyone is finding time to enjoy a good book. If you're looking for something to read for yourself or your kids, check out one of the summery options below, or ask library staff for a suggestion tailored to you!

KIDS



Summer: A Solstice Story

by Kelsey Ebben Gross

Woodland animal friends gather up gifts from nature to celebrate the longest day of the year in this beautifully illustrated picture book.



Journey Through the Seasons: Summer by Annabel Griffin

This nonfiction title for young readers explores the changes that take place in nature during the summer.



Shaping Up Summer

by Lizann Flatt

Want to keep math skills sharp over the summer? This title uses nature to introduce concepts of geometry and spatial reasoning.

TWEENS/TEENS



Summer Vamp

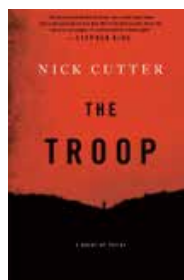
by Violet Chan Karim

In this graphic novel, Maya is anticipating a fun summer of cooking at culinary summer camp, only to discover that she is the only human at a camp full of vampires!



Summer of Rocks by Jenna Greene

It's the summer of 1990, and Amy, Beth, and Marion are on a road trip vacation into the Canadian wilderness, where they'll explore rock quarries, escape bear attacks, and fight over the Gameboy in the back of the car. It'll be a summer they never forget.



The Troop by Nick Cutter

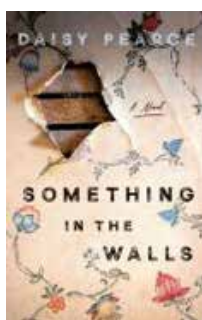
A Boy Scout troop on a camping trip to an uninhabited island off the coast of Atlantic Canada encounter a bioengineered horror.

ADULTS



Chasing Summer by Frankie Scott

Elise is a screenwriter who has moved to Prince Edward County. Over the course of the summer, she finds herself torn between her feelings for two men; Ben, the star of the show she works for, and Dave, her first love.



Something in the Walls

Set in the English countryside during a summer heat wave, child psychologist Mina comes to the village of Banathel to investigate a teenager who claims to be haunted by a witch. But the town has a dark history, and their own ways of dealing with problems...

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, services, or materials you would like to see! You can also find us on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok.

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

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



Pinball Game Room

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Art as Experience

As humans, we have the need to create but not all of our creations are valued in the same way. Creative minds have given us all kinds of things. These vary from things we value because we use them every day to items that hold a different kind of value. Rather than being useful or functional, they are more pleasing or thought provoking.

This rather sums up the difference between “art” and “fine art.” The artisan who is creating a quilted bed cover or a wooden table is making objects to be used. The creations have a function, a purpose that is obvious to the viewer. The fine artist is a different kind of animal. He or she is creating something that is not designed to serve any function. Usually, this person is creating art for art’s sake — making something that expresses an emotion, makes some kind of statement, or is just simply pleasing.

The debate over “what is art” or the difference between art and fine art is often academic. Some of us “ordinary souls” will take the word of the experts and accept something as fine art or something other, according to what they say. On the other hand, how many of us view a so-called “masterpiece” and say “A child could have made this!” and thus conclude it isn’t art?

So, what's the problem here? Is it simply the difference between academic posturing and the everyday guy's view of something unfamiliar to them? Maybe the art world is just as confused about this issue as we are. For me, art is art. A turned bowl is equally as valid as an oil painting. Human creations are fantastic. My training is in the fine arts, so that is going to be my focus when I try to explain how I view things.

Looking at fine art doesn't need to be confusing. First off, it is okay to say “I like this,” or “I hate this.” Fine art is supposed to invoke some kind of a reaction from the viewer. Your reaction to a work of art is as valid as anyone else's.

If you are close to my age, you may remember the National Gallery's 1989 purchase of Barnett Newman's 1967 Painting “The Voice of Fire”. A lot of people were up in arms over the National Gallery's 1.8 million dollar purchase of this painting. For many it seemed outrageous. Even some experts in the art

world were critical. It is a very large canvas, 45.3' x 20.3', originally commissioned for Expo 67. The painting consists of three equally sized vertical bars, with the outer two painted blue and the centre bar painted red. It was formidable, almost overpowering when viewed.

I have had a chance to see it on a number of occasions and each time I do, I come out of the experience feeling fulfilled and inspired. When there, I also make sure I go to the Mark Rothko room. Rothko was a Latvian born American abstract expressionist. He would also be grouped with Newman as a minimalist painter. Rothko used very different colours, not bright cheery ones, his were dark and somber colours. He was a troubled soul and it came out in his work. Coming out of that experience gave me pause to reflect on life and all its challenges. I categorize his and Newman's work as “Fine Art”, it is expressionistic with no obvious function except to evoke emotion from the viewer. I highly recommend the experience.

I also love more traditional forms of art, and one of my favourite places in the world, the McMichael Art Gallery in Kleinburg holds the key to the inspiration of almost every painting I have created. Tom Thomson, the Group of Seven and other painters of that era fascinate me. Today, they are seen as one of the pillars of the modern art movement in Canada, but in their day they were not always understood nor accepted. This talented band of painters changed the way Canadians saw themselves and the landscape around them. They understood that the rugged Canadian landscape could not be properly painted using old European techniques. This landscape demanded a bold expression which included brilliant flashes of colour and heavy application of paint. One critic at the time labelled them the “Hot Mush School of Painting”!

Whatever form of art you like, it is a good idea to get out and look at a variety of things. Try to challenge your perception by stepping out of your usual comfort zone. When doing this, the hard part is keeping an open mind. There is something for everyone in all art, but for all of us, sometimes it is difficult to find. Keep practicing! Sometimes confusion is just another part of the art experience!



Jessica Daltrey

A Skilled Artist

Someone with a very special skill and an outstanding list of accolades resides right here in our own neighbourhood in rural West Perth. She is humble, remarkably talented, highly successful.

This is proven not only by the incredible work she turns out but also by her awards won in competitions over the last few years.

Jessica Daltrey is a small town girl, born and raised in Thorndale, Ontario. She is now the owner/operator of Franklyn's Paw Spa located in Thorndale. How did Jessica's life evolve to this point? I believe she got to where she is today with an abundance of hard work and sheer dedication.

Her original plan started with enrolment in pre-health sciences at Fanshawe College in London with the goal of becoming a paramedic. Following this she moved on to enrol in a two year veterinary technician program at Ridgeway College. While there, Jessica developed or more accurately, nurtured her love for animals. She then worked as a veterinary assistant at an animal clinic in London, Ontario. While grooming, mostly dogs, pretty well full time there, she was falling in love with that type of work and with dogs in general!

It had been a long road. She had participated in numerous co-op programs along with taking several courses in canine confirmation, show grooming

and dog obedience training. To say the least, she enjoyed the work, the dogs, and her own hidden talent was

becoming more evident every day she did this. She expanded into teaching grooming courses at Conestoga College. Many of these steps, whether or not she realized it at the time, were heading

towards what would one day make her a successful business owner and a winning competitor in the canine world.

In September of 2024," Jessica's ship came in". She celebrated a global victory! She travelled with two of her own dogs and teammates to an international dog grooming

competition (Groomania) in Belgium. Here, she and the dogs represented Canada against 400 groomers from 55 countries. Under a panel of 11 professional judges, she won a silver medal for her team (a team of 4 top ranked groomers). She also went on to win

the "Best in Show" award as an individual competitor with her own second dog! Way to go Jessica!

This, I found amazing and it led to some questions about the dogs themselves. Yes, indeed, she shows her own dogs: "Braz" is her Kerry blue terrier with whom she won the individual best in show, while "Tyra" was her contribution to the team win for the silver medal. Braz is 5 years old while Tyra is a 7 year old wire

fox terrier. Both of these dogs are owned, raised and trained by Jessica herself. The breeders from whom she originally purchased the dogs have been in business for over 30 years and there is pretty



Some well-deserved recognition!



Jessica shares a treat!

much a 100% guarantee on the breed genetics of these canines. One originated in Quebec and the other in California. Today, Jessica breeds a few top quality show dogs who most often end up being co-owned as they start their careers as stars!

This hard working young individual can be found 5 days of the week at her shop, Franklyn's Paw Spa at 198 King Street in the town of Thorndale. One can look her up on Facebook or Instagram to learn more. No doubt, her graduation from pet grooming school in 2015 has served her well.

The fox terriers take 6 to 8 hours per week just to keep up their show coats. The Kerri blues are similar. It requires dedication for sure to stay in the game! Jessica uses a "hand stripping" method to keep all the layers in the dogs coats where they should be. This is very labour intensive and from our chat and a close look at these beautiful canines it is truly an "art" form.

When Jessica is not at Franklyn's Spa, she is busy keeping up her numerous animal skills at the home farm where she resides with her partner, Kevin. They are an active couple.

I was lucky enough to get a tour around the farm to visit all the animals. There are cattle, one of which (her favourite) massaged me with a big juicy kiss! There are two mini horses who happily pull a wagon around our neighbourhood. There are two larger horses for riding as both Jessica and Kevin enjoy the odd trail ride and she has been a part of a local quadrille team with her own thoroughbred. There are numerous goats, chicks of all descriptions, a pot bellied pig, many shapes, sizes and colours of cats and of course the dogs. Jessica's original Duck Tolling Retriever keeps an eye open to all that goes on around the yard. She is the sweetest greeter! Oh and then there are the hounds who have jobs to do with serious hunting in the area.

Observing Jessica interact with the various animals, one thing is very clear, these animals do not have to win her affection. It comes from her naturally and they know it! They bring her joy; her quiet confidence, her dedication to their care, is clear communication to them, subtle but so evident. The relaxed contentment one feels in the barns, the

pens and the pastures can be seen, felt and soaked in! Good for the soul.

Five long days a week at her spa job, endless chores to be tended to in the early mornings and evenings can make life stressful but Jessica's demeanor is one of control and Contentment.

I have seen the evidence that her grooming is an expression of art. The animals are the inspiration. It is refreshing to meet someone who has obviously turned her love for dogs into a full time career, now an area she can use to show the world what a great artist she is.

Sudoku Puzzle

Fill in the grid with digits so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box have the digits 1-9 (no repeats allowed).

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



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Introducing Our Author

There's a woman somewhere in rural Ontario currently being held together by sourdough, caffeine, and pure agricultural rage.

Nobody knows her exact location.

But if you listen carefully near a feed store at dusk, you may hear her whisper: "If one more animal escapes today, I'm selling everything and living in the woods."

She is a mother. A baker. A farmer. A woman who has said the sentence: "Please stop licking that!" more times than medical science can explain.

She spends her mornings collecting eggs like a tiny exhausted peasant from the 1400s and her evenings Googling things like: "Can chickens be depressed?" and "Why is my cow yelling at me like I owe her money?"

At any given moment she is: reheating the same coffee for the sixth time, carrying a baby, emotionally negotiating with poultry, or trying to remember why she walked into the barn in the first place.

The children on the hand, have fully adapted to farm life.

Other kids have toys. Her kids? They play with potatoes. Not pretend potatoes. Not nicely cleaned grocery store potatoes. Actual muddy farm potatoes.

One of them carried a potato around for three days like it was a beloved family pet. Another child tucked one into bed under a blanket.

At this point she's pretty sure if she put googly eyes on a rutabaga, it would become part of the household permanently.

The animals do not respect her authority.

The rooster watches her struggle with the quiet confidence of a man who contributes absolutely nothing financially.

The ducks move like unsupervised toddlers at a waterpark.

The cows operate like enormous emotionally unstable roommates.

Meanwhile the sourdough starter sits on the counter like a needy Victorian child demanding constant attention and emotional support.

And despite all this?

People still say things to her like: "You're so lucky to live this simple life."

Simple?!

Please.

Yesterday she pulled hay out of her hair, broke up a goose fight, cleaned mystery slime off a toddler, realized she'd forgot laundry in the washer for two days, and found a potato in her coat pocket that nobody can explain.

Nothing about this is simple.

Still, every night she somehow survives.

The children are fed.

The animals are alive.

The bread occasionally resembles bread.

And somewhere under the dirt, feathers, exhaustion, and emotional damage...

She secretly loves this ridiculous little life.



AI: The Debrief

Welcome to the surprise sixth installment in *the Heronry's* series on Artificial Intelligence. After finishing up part five, I realized that I still had a few things to say, and also that quite a bit has changed in the world of AI since we started this back in December.

I won't lie: I was kind of hoping that in the time it took us to publish all these articles, the bubble would have burst or we would have all come to our senses. Unfortunately, AI seems easier, the path of least resistance, and that makes it harder to stand against. Coupled with the relentless marketing campaign in AI's favour and all the money governments (including our own) are spending on it, it can seem impossible to turn the tide. Even the Pope has weighed in*, and if the Catholic Church can't guilt someone into developing ethics in a decade, what chance do we have?

The truth is that I don't know what chance we have, I only know we have to take it. Because Google is making their search engine fully AI, and small businesses (ie people who can't buy Google coverage) are already feeling the pinch+, not to mention it drastically increases the amount of false information a search returns. And governments at every level are approving data centres in Canada, without thought to the environmental consequences.

So here is what we can do:

Stay current. This is a challenge, because things can happen really quickly in the tech world, but it's important to try.

Know what's happening locally. How is AI being used in our schools? Our municipal offices? Our grocery stores?

Write to your MP or MPP when AI announcements are made, and say that you would like to register your concerns about them. Ask your municipal reps what local plans are.

Keep asking questions. Don't just accept AI as inevitable. As the show "Hackers" recently said, "[AI] is like when a diner puts out a sign saying 'Best Waffles'. Who decided that? The person selling you the waffles."

Over the course of our history, there have been endless debates about what makes us human. I don't think it's any one feature, necessarily, but my archaeological background has led me to think that our ability to make stuff is pretty high on the list. Not just tools and furniture and complicated sandwiches, but art in all of its forms. If you've ever seen art from 100 years ago (or 100,000 years ago), or read a poem from Dickinson or Sappho, or been in the audience for a Shakespearean play, you know that you can feel a connection, not just to the object itself, but to the maker. Someone thought about that. And then someone did it. By using AI generated "work" (commonly called "slop"), we're not only subtracting the "doing", we're subtracting the "thought".

But we don't have to. We can incorporate technology without losing the fun parts of being human.

*<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2026-05/pope-leo-xiv-encyclical-magnifica-humanitas-ai.html>
+<https://www.npr.org/2026/05/22/nx-s1-5829915/google-search-box-ai>



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Ready. Set. Garden!

Victoria Day weekend had come and gone and everyone was asking if my garden was planted yet. I laughed and said no. I am not a master gardener by any means. My knowledge comes from mostly hands on experience over several decades of digging in the dirt. Living on the farm gave us the opportunity to grow food for our family. Our goal was to grow, preserve and save food for the entire year so that we could subsidize our grocery needs while providing healthier food for our family. Farm to table, year-round.

We have three gardens on the farm. We grow large amounts of food which means it requires a substantial amount of time and dedication to be productive. Over the years, we have implemented some strategies so that we can increase our yield and attempt to reduce the physical burden on our bodies. With the rising cost of food and general inflation we are all feeling these days, a garden is an excellent way to reduce stress, reduce your grocery bill and feel a sense of pride in your accomplishments at the dinner table. Here are a few gardening principles that we work by to keep a handle on a large family garden.



Before the ground is even worked, plan your garden layout. Make sure you give your plants enough room to grow without overcrowding other plants. Space each of your tomato plants accordingly, and factor in appropriate spacing between rows. It often feels like there is a lot of space between your plants and rows when you first plant your garden, but by summers end, if the garden is not spaced out correctly, overcrowding will lead to disease and poor yields due to competition for light and resources. I like to keep a book dedicated to my garden plans.

I record the spacing of my plants, where they were planted and the amount and type of plant I grew. I will make notes along the year as to the yield of each crop, what grew well together (companion planting) and what I should change or keep for the following year. This method also allows me to make sure that I can rotate the location of my plants from year to year. What one plant uses from the soil one year, another will give back to the soil the next.

When I am planning my garden, I will also consider light and water needs. I will take advantage of taller growing, sun loving vegetables like corn, to provide shade to my less heat tolerant plants like lettuce and cucumbers. Providing them with shade from the mid day sun, lengthens the time that they are productive before they bolt to seed.

High yields really rely on soil health. Soil is a living thing with networks of mycelium that digests food, connects ecosystems, and recycles nutrients. We do our best to add to our soil health by adding compost, keep plants growing through the seasons, and disturb the soil as little as possible. Two of our three vegetable gardens are large in size and we have opted to keep one as a tilled garden (once in the spring) and the other as a permanently rowed, no till garden.

The tilled garden is by far easier to prepare. In the spring, we remove the plastic weed barrier, add compost, and rotor till the garden before planting. I use this garden to plant potatoes (which require a large space between rows for hilling), corn, garlic (which was planted the fall in the year prior) and vine vegetables like cucumber and winter squash. These plants take more space and do better there then in a permanent 2ft wide garden row. The downside to having a tilled garden is the amount

of weeding it requires. Think of all the walking rows that give space for weeds to grow.

Our no till, row garden requires more energy to prepare but needs less weeding time and likely has better soil health. Our rows are 24" wide with 18" paths. By applying cardboard to the walking paths and then a heavy layer of mulch, this will provide a weed barrier. We redo our rows with cardboard and mulch every two years. In the spring, the rows require a board fork to loosen the compacted soil and an application of compost on top. There is no need to mix the compost into the soil, just plant into the new layer of compost. I have noticed that over the past few years we have had this garden, that there is less soil compaction and high vegetable production. This garden alone usually takes me about a week to plant, but the amount of energy required to weed it is substantially less.

Finally, I must give a shout-out to the gardening tools that make my life easier. The stirrup hoe is a huge time saver. The loop will cut through the top

layer of soil and unroot any new weed before it is able to grow to a substantial height. I can move through my walking paths relatively quickly with this tool. I have handheld loop hoes as well which allow me to get closer to my plants. For larger weeds that get by you or ones that are too close to the main vegetable, I will often use a garden knife and simply cut the weed at the base, close to the soil. Not only is this easier than pulling, but it prevents the disruption of the vegetable plant roots.

With the garden now planted, I am enjoying the rains we are getting. The seeds are up and now is the time to weed. Good garden maintenance over the next month will give your vegetables a chance to get ahead of the weeds which means less work for you later in the summer. Remember, gardening is a marathon not a sprint. Pace yourself.

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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!



A Scaly Kind of Love

I have always loved snakes. Back in the 70s, I was the kid who checked out reptile books from the elementary school library. I brought a baby wild snake home which I acquired from a schoolmate who had a bunch of babies born in his back shed. Snakes have interested me since then, but I didn't get a pet snake of my own until 6 years ago. I didn't realize they were so easy to take care of, since they are obviously exotic pets.

Corn snakes, which are the ones that I raise, stop growing anywhere between 3-5 feet long, depending on their genetics and nutrition.

Corn snakes have delightfully calm personalities, although they are more active than ball pythons, for example. Just like temperament varies within breeds of dogs, all corns and all snakes come with their own individual personality as well.

Ginny, one of my pet snakes, is beautiful, but it is her personality that has made her my favourite. She loves to climb on branches within her enclosure. She is super friendly and always pops her head out (and usually comes out) when I open up her tank. She loves to explore, inside her tank or out!

The only corn snake that I have ever owned that wasn't calm when handled was one that I bought from a professional breeder, rather than a hobby breeder, like myself. My theory is that professionals probably don't handle them much, since they have hundreds to look after. This "professionally bred snake" of mine (Charlie) is coming along; as he grows and gets handled every week, he's learning to trust his humans. Although corn snakes are not affectionate, they do know their owners from strangers

and enjoy trusting relationships. *Note: A lot of people think snakes are slimy. This is not true at all! Their scales are dry and smooth, soft to the touch. I love the feel of them and handle mine frequently.*

Corn snakes are perfect for beginners, as they don't require high humidity like the jungle snakes. Corn snakes are native to the warmer parts of North America, like Georgia and Florida. They need a warm area in their enclosure (approx. 28/29

degrees C), as well as one that is room temperature. This is easy to achieve with either a heat lamp or "under tank" heating pad (similar to ones used for raising seedlings). A thermostat is important so they don't get burned.

Corn snakes love to burrow in their enclosures, which can be as simple as aspen shavings or a fancy live setup with soil and plants. They need at least two places to hide in their enclosure: one on the warm side and one

on the cool side of the tank. They cannot regulate their own temperature and need to be able to go somewhere to warm up or cool off (this is called being cold blooded).

You can purchase reptile terrariums or simply convert an old aquarium, by adding a mesh-type lid. I have homemade ones and purchased lids, made for each size of aquarium. You can purchase caves that look cool or simply use empty plastic containers for their "hides."

Corn snakes eat once a week, on average. When they get older, you can feed larger meals less often. So if you have an adult snake, you only need to feed it every 2 weeks, giving you lots of time to go on holidays! You just need to make sure they have lots of water. They eat frozen mice, thawed in warm



Handling Corn Snakes feels wonderful!

water, which you can order from B&B Pet Supplies, downtown Mitchell. The babies start on pinky (newborn) mice and move up in size, as they grow. Because they only eat once a week, they only poop once a week! You can clean their messes out of their tanks weekly and only need to change their bedding when it gets stinky (most of my tanks get a full cleaning yearly).

As snakes grow, they shed their skins regularly. When they get older and grow less, they shed less often. Their colours turn dull when they are preparing to shed and then they are bright right after shedding!



An amelanistic tessera! Meaning it lacks melanin (dark pigment) and has this special pattern. It's pink now but will grow up to be orange

I find corn snakes beautiful, with all their colours and variety of patterns! If you like black and shades of grey, "anery" is for you. Short for anerythristic, this means the snake is lacking the red pigment. They will often have a bit of yellow along the neck but are definitely less colourful! The "amel" (short for amelanistic) lacks the black pigment so has only pink/orange colouring, with white, off-white or yellow. A "snow" lacks both (black and red) and has shades of white, often with a touch of yellow along the neck. They still show their patterns but if you want a plain white snake, you can look for a "blizzard." The so-called, "normal look" for corn snakes, is a beautiful deep or burnt orange. These babies start out brown but add more and more yellow, as they grow and shed their skins, getting to their full colour near the end of their first year. Ginny is this colour. Their patterns range from the common saddle to stripes, and variations of these.

For example, tessera has stripes down the back but markings along the sides that are similar to those on the sides of the common saddle.

I have 6 corns, right now, and my daughter has one. I also have lots of eggs (from Ginny) that will be hatching in July! Breeding corn snakes has become an exciting hobby for me! When they are eating well, they will be looking for homes (hint, hint)!

I love talking about corn snakes so if anyone wants more information, please email: hlouwagie@gmail.com!

Previous Puzzle Answers

Cryptogram:

Community creates us and sustains us right back.

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

Crossword:

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. PLANTS | 5. HIBERNATION |
| 2. AMPUTEE | 8. PEONY |
| 3. BERNADOODLES | 11. HOMESTEAD |
| 6. WALKER | 12. GREENHOUSE |
| 7. FEEBE | 13. LIBRARY |
| 9. ASTROLOGY | 14. SPRING |
| 10. OATMEAL | 15. GARDENS |
| 4. BUTTERFLY | |





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