



JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

Making a splash in Miller Park

Fourteen year-old Jami Collins and 13-year-old Paige Hickton take some time to enjoy the splash pad in West Lorne June 12. The splash pad's official grand opening is July 1 at 3:00 p.m



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Music and art festival in West Lorne promotes local talent

Singer/songwriter Sara Westbrook from St.Thomas performed at Miller Park in West Lorne June 21 as part of Music and Art in the Park. Amy Nash and Mikayla Myers came out of the audience to provide some back-up dancing, and Alex and Taya Ostrowalker stood out front. Organizers hope Music and Art in the Park will turn into an annual event.

Music and Art in the Park

The Music and Art in the Park festival in West Lorne June 21 was the first of what some hope will become an annual event.

Music and Art in the Park gave local artists and musicians a platform for showing off themselves. Singers and bands performed on a stage in Miller Park, while artists and vendors had displays of their work set up inside the West Elgin Arena. Proceeds went to support the Center Ice Teen Youth Centre in West Lorne.

Chuck 'Chico' Stafford and his band Hog Wild performed June 21. Stafford helped organize Music and Art in the Park and also sits on the West Elgin Chamber of Commerce. The

Chamber encourages a 'buy local' strategy to strengthen the local community. If Music and Art in the Park can encourage people to buy from local artists and businesses, then so much the better.

"I think we're one of the fortunate ones because we are a farming community, but I think we've got to be very cautious. If we don't support one another, then, yeah, we're going to have some problems," said Stafford. "We really need to draw together with the economy the way it is."

Art displays included wilderness paintings by Paul Stevenson from Dutton, Oil paintings by Tyler Vandenberg from West Lorne, and artwork

on display by students from WESS. Custom jewelry, stain glass art and a number of other displays filled the arena.

Live music was provided by Randy Gray, The New Chevy Blue, Jay Allan Schnek, Leaving Lorne, The Janes, No Liez, Hog Wild, and Sara Westbrook.

Sara Westbrook from St. Thomas is a motivational singer/songwriter who recorded her first song at the age of 11. Westbrook was also the winner of the Most Popular singer/songwriter for the London music awards 2008 and 2007.

Please see Festival, page 2

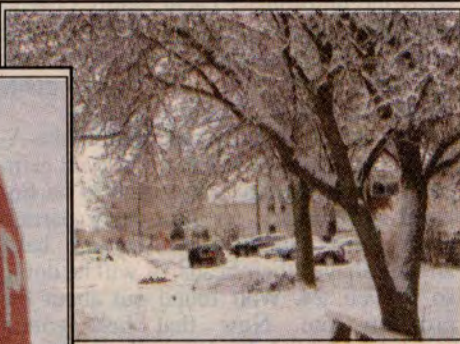
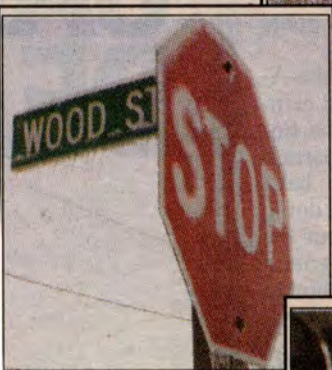


JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

Sunday Skate

Scott Stuart and his 7 year old son Dron had some fun Nov. 2 during the Sunday Skate held at the West Elgin Arena. The Sunday Skate is every Sunday from 1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m.

► A look at West Lorne the day after the ice storm Feb. 6 2008



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Swings in Miller Park

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West Elgin Council meets with transport truck drivers and Munroe Street residents

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Truck driver John Wrobel spoke to West Elgin Council at a meeting in the West Elgin Community complex March 29 to discuss the future of transport truck trailer parking in West Lorne. Arguments were made for and against truck drivers using a parking area along Munroe Street, and alternatives were put forward. West Elgin Council plans to review the situation further at their next council meeting



Truck parking in West Lorne reviewed

Jesse Cnockaert
Staff

West Elgin Council is searching for a solution to the problem of trailer parking in West Lorne, after hearing from transport trucker drivers and Munroe Street residents at a meeting March 29 in the West Elgin Community Complex.

If it's decided truck drivers may no longer park their trailers on Munroe Street, then a suitable alternative spot needs to be found. If trucks can continue to park on Munroe Street, then West Elgin Council needs to find a way to address concerns of Munroe Street residents about noise and fumes created by trucks.

Council plans to take all the information gathered at the meeting and discuss the issue further at the

next council meeting. It was suggested at the meeting on March 29 that a committee should be formed using truck drivers, Munroe Street Residents, and other affected parties, who might be able to find an answer to truck trailer parking. West Elgin Council will consider that option. About 30 people attended the meeting, mostly truck drivers, and a few residents from Munroe Street.

Transport truck drivers wish to continue to use a strip of land along Munroe Street to park their trailers while they stay in town. Local parking allows truck drivers to keep fuel costs down, and gives them a convenient place to rest at night. However, residents who live along Munroe Street have an issue with trucks parking so close by.

They argue that trucks dropping and picking up their trailers is a major noise disruption, and fumes from trucks are a health risk.

At the March 29 meeting, Munroe Street resident Shaun Dowling argued that the area adjacent to Munroe is zoned OS for Open Space. An OS zone is designated for use as a cemetery, forestry use, or as a private or public park, but not commercial truck parking.

"Nowhere does that zoning state that it is allowed to put a commercial truck in. Past council may have put the lot there, but it was done without proper zoning amendments," he said.

West Elgin Council also needs to consider how truck-parking factors into plans to revitalize the downtown area.

Please see Truck1, page 2

Truck Committee looks for Munroe St. alternative

The West Elgin Truck Committee is scrambling to find a parking area for transport trucks with the cut-off for parking on Munroe Street just over a month away.

It has been decided by West Elgin Council that Munroe Street in West Lorne won't be allowed as a parking area for transport trucks after August 22. Although truckers have been parking on Munroe Street for years, it isn't actually zoned to allow commercial parking. Now that council will be enforcing the by-law to keep commercial trucks off Munroe, truck drivers are left with the difficult task of finding somewhere new to park their trailers.

The West Elgin Truck Committee was formed in late March and includes truck drivers, residents of Munroe Street, and members of West Elgin Council. The committee is in charge of finding a new parking spot for transport trucks. The committee has been having regular meetings since April 26. They have a long list of potential spots, but nothing definite. The committee's most re

been to ask the Thames Valley District School Board if they would allow temporary truck parking behind West Elgin Secondary School.

Another solution suggested by Mayor Graham Warwick at a committee meeting July 5 was a lot beside the 401 highway exit onto Furnival Road near Rodney. One advantage of that area is that it is already properly zoned for commercial trucks.

"The Rodney exit... that's all zoned appropriately for truck parking," said Mayor Warwick. "It's easier than some of the swampy stuff we're looking at over here."

High fuel prices have made many truck drivers highly opposed to any parking outside West Lorne. Councilor Jonathan Wolf said at the meeting that parking in Rodney may not be an ideal solution, but it's at least better than having to park in St. Thomas or London.

"I think everyone is conscious of fuel prices, but if we can find something in our municipality we can have a consolation," he said. "We need a spot

that's zoned properly. We have to address financial issues and management issues."

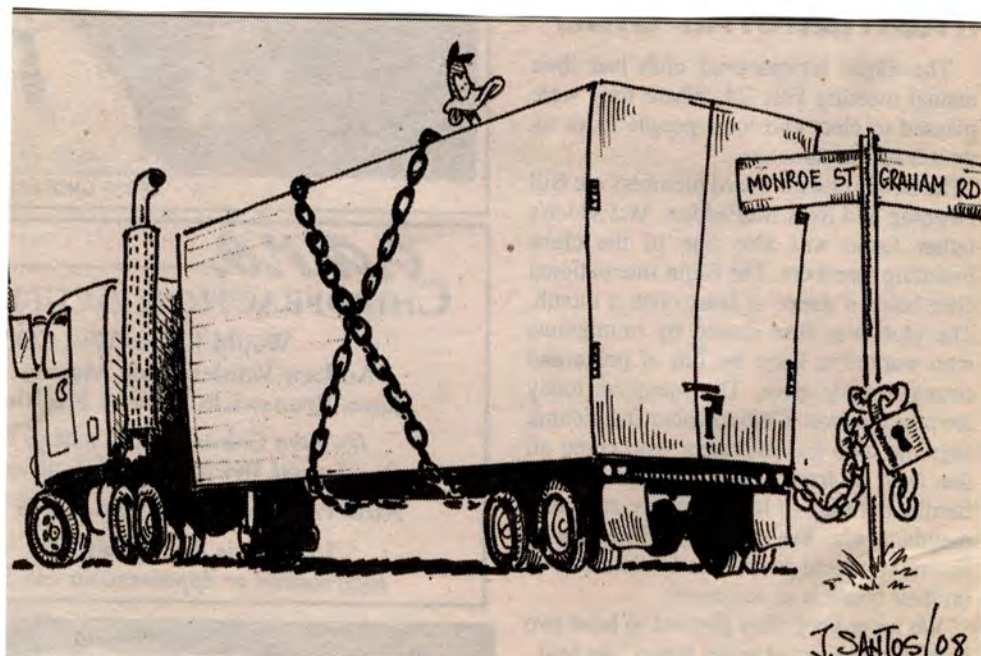
At the meeting it was mentioned that some truck drivers are moving away from West Lorne since they can no longer park their trailers on Munroe. This raises concerns that if a convenient spot for truck parking isn't found, truck drivers may start avoiding West Lorne.

"It may not have an impact on the number of people going, but it certainly might have an impact on people coming into town," said John Wrobel, a West Lorne truck driver.

Chuck Stafford, a member of the West Elgin Chamber of Commerce and the West Elgin Truck Committee, voiced concerns at the July 5 meeting about the dangers of losing truck drivers.

"We've still got to strive for keeping this community alive and keeping our truck drivers around here. We don't want to lose them. We don't want to lose anybody," he said.

The committee will meet again July 26. 108



J. SANTOS/08



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No commercial trucks on Munroe

As of Aug. 22, West Elgin Municipal council had signs up on Munroe Street in West Lorne making it official that commercial trucks are no longer allowed there. Aug 2



Port Glasgow: Past and Present

JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

(Left) - An image of 'Cnoc Nelliadh' (Nelly's Hill) in Port Glasgow from a postcard circa 1909. The postcard image was provided by Port Glasgow Yacht Club director Bob Carey. (Right) - The Port Glasgow harbour area as it appears today.

History of the Port Glasgow Yacht Club

The Port Glasgow Yacht Club has come a long way after 50 years in operation.

The club was founded in June 1958 and they set out to change the face of Port Glasgow. Port Glasgow had been a shipping port since 1818, but since then, erosion along the lakeshore had taken its toll and destroyed the original harbour. After the club's first meeting, they got to work installing docks in the twin lagoons leading into sixteen mile creek and building a breakwater using stones brought from Clearville.

Today, the marina includes 80 docks, and the property has been improved with washrooms and shower facilities, and a bridge over sixteen mile creek.

"At this point, we've got about a million dollars invested in the property down there," said Bob Miller, a member of the

Port Glasgow Yacht Club. He said that amount includes the purchase of the land, breakwaters, marina basin, docks, clubhouse, picnic shelter, and the new deck built there. "This was built for everyone to enjoy. It represents fifty years of volunteer hours at no cost to taxpayers."

The club started with 12 members, including Jim

Beattie who purchased the property from Gordon Havens.

"Jim Beattie developed the small marina there himself. He dug out a basin big enough for 12 boats. It was actually where the Yacht Club started," said Miller.

"You could do a story on Jim Beattie, period," added Audrey Miller, Bob's wife and Port Glasgow resident. "He was into oil in a big way, and he built Beattie Haven nursing home."

In November 1960, the Port Glasgow Yacht Club purchased the Port Glasgow Fishery for \$6,000.

A dragline was set up in 1960 to pull gravel from the lake and it was sold to the former Aldborough township. Many roads in the area use gravel pulled from the lake. Sale of the gravel made up a major source of income at approximately \$12,000 annually.

"Not only was it income for us but it kept the channel from filling in," said Bob Miller.

The official opening of the harbour took place in 1961 with a ribbon cutting ceremony presided over by the Yacht Club's President of the time, Allan Ross, and Aldborough Boys president C.E. Gladstone. In 1961, the Rodney Bowling Club house was moved to the lake, and it was renovated for a refreshment booth and gas pumps.

By the 1980's, a road of broken concrete was completed along the shoreline, spanning from Yacht Club to Memorial Park. The concrete road was built to stop erosion

along the shoreline, and it's likely that without it, several acres of Port Glasgow would have collapsed into the lake by the present day.

In the spring of 1990, a booth and double ramp was built, designed by W. Babin and built by Bruce Kelly and Rick Van Vugt. The total for the project was \$55,000.

The Ministry of Natural Resources directed the Port Glasgow Yacht Club to build a steel enclosure around the old break water, and that \$60,000 project was completed in 1992. In the same year, a new \$5,000 lighthouse was erected on the west pier. The light house was government funded; marking the first time the Port Glasgow Yacht Club had any outside funding.

The Yacht Club has since repaid the \$250,000, which was the entire amount of debenture, to complete the marina expansion.

Today, the Port Glasgow Yacht club has 14 members. Members devote many volunteer hours towards the marina, including dock repairs, maintenance of the picnic tables, and general clean-up.

"They come from all walks of life. One's a custodian, one's a nurse, Ford workers, farmers... anybody could become a member," said Audrey Miller.

Although it's called a Yacht Club, members don't have to own a boat; just have enthusiasm for helping the marina.

The Port Glasgow Yacht Club is non-profit, with all income going towards marina improvements.



Performing some skateboarding tricks at Miller Park

JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

Cole Kalica takes advantage of the mild weather on Jan 12 and gets in a little skateboarding with his friends at Miller Park. He may have to wait a while before going out again now that snow has fallen over the region again.

Municipalities get infrastructure money

Jesse Cnockaert
Staff

All municipalities in Elgin-Middlesex-London are receiving infrastructure funding through the Investing in Ontario Act, 2008.

The municipality of West Elgin will receive \$334,656 and the municipality of Dutton-Dunwich will get \$239,058. The Investing in Ontario Act means that a portion of the provincial surplus at the end of a fiscal year is directed to municipalities for infrastructure needs, such as improving roads and bridges, expanding transit and upgrading social housing.

Deputy Mayor of West Elgin, Bernie Wiehle, said much of the infrastructure money will be put towards improvements on Carrol Line and its bridge. Wiehle said that Carrol Line doesn't get much traffic, so it hasn't been a high priority in the past.

"It's always been hard to justify putting money into [Carrol Line]. Now we've got a bunch of money that basically doesn't cost us anything. We can put money on that road and do it right. There are a few other smaller projects, but that's the big project. It's one of those roads that needs to be done and we probably couldn't have put it off much longer," he said. "Our guys are doing the road work all by themselves, for the most part. Then the bridge construction will take place next spring, we'll have a contractor come in and rebuild that bridge."

Ken Loveland, Administrator/Treasurer for the municipality of Dutton-Dunwich, said that their infrastructure money will be put in reserve and put into next year's municipal budget.

"We haven't planned anything to spend it on. We're not sure what

we can spend it on," said Loveland. "It came part-way through the year and we weren't sure where we're going. It'll probably be part of next year's budget."

According to a press release issued by the Office of MPP Steve Peters, the surplus for 2007-08 was enough to enable a payment under the Investing in Ontario Act of \$1.1 billion in additional funding to municipalities to support infrastructure investments while also reducing the province's accumulated deficit by \$600 million.

Through regulation, the government designated municipalities as the eligible recipients of payments for 2007-08. Future eligible recipients will be identified based on provincial priorities.



Honoured for lifesaving actions in fire.

SUBMITTED

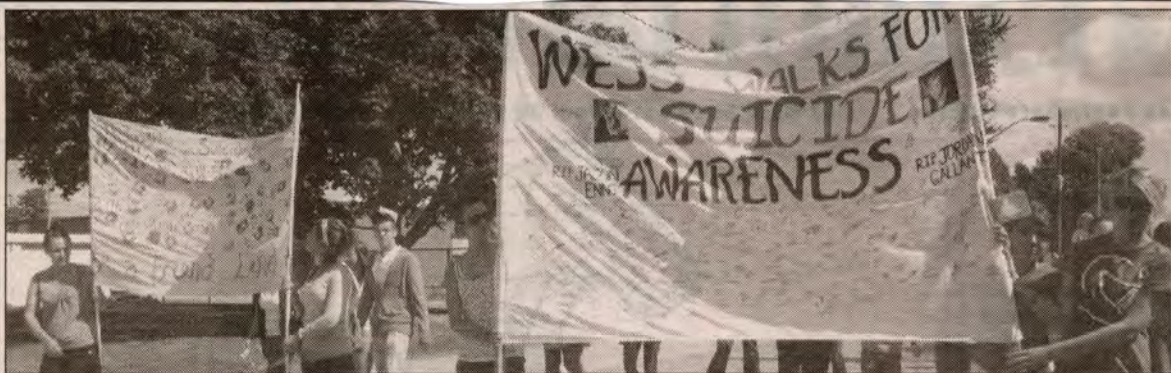
On Oct. 27 Walter Mooser (L) received a Commissioner's Citation for Lifesaving for his actions in helping to extinguish a fire in a West Lorne Apartment building in March this year. Mooser and fellow tenant Donald Deleary helped put out a fire in the laundry room using pots of water, and also helped evacuate the building.



JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

Heritage House gets new TV

Residents of the West Lorne Heritage House can enjoy a 32" Sony Flat screen TV which was donated Nov. 25 by Alex Perovich and AP Electronics. From L - Doug Staddon, Heritage House Chairperson, Alex Perovich, Robert White, Heritage House Vice Chair, Ray Jobson, Heritage House Executive, and Stephen Huver, Heritage House Secretary.



Suicide Awareness walk in West Lorne

JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

Banner holders Lauren Vergeer, Gale McFadden, Katy Miller, Mikayla Myers and Amanda Ackersley took the lead in the Suicide Awareness walk Sept. 7. After, suicide survivors spoke to the crowd about their experiences.

Walk for suicide awareness week

Suicide Awareness Week started in West Lorne Sept. 7 to remind grieving family and friends of suicide victims they are not alone.

Almost 100 people gathered at West Elgin Secondary School (WESS) in West Lorne and had a walk which ended on Chestnut Street behind the Scout Hall. Candles were lit that symbolized the life of the people who have died by suicide and the survivors who must carry on without them. At the end of the walk, West Elgin Mayor Graham Warwick spoke to the crowd, a memorial tree was planted and suicide survivors shared their experience.

"We want and we need suicide to be treated with the same weight and public funding as other deadly health risks. From developing preventative strategies to funding public service announcements, any effort that puts suicide at the forefront could save lives. We believe Canada should recognize Suicide Awareness and Prevention Week," said organizer Penny Knapp.

Knapp's 20-year-old son Nicholas took his own life last year. Since then, Knapp helped form a group to spread awareness about suicide. Knapp said that statistics show about 4,000 Canadians die each year by suicide.

"Knowing that we are not alone as a survivor of suicide, we believe that together we can help in healing our wounded hearts and rebuilding our lives," she said.

Knapp also helped organize the annual Nicholas Knapp Memorial Golf Tournament with proceeds benefiting the Nick Knapp Kindness Fund and Kids Help Phone. This year's tournament will be held Oct. 4 at the Wardsville Golf Club. The registration deadline is Sept. 26. Phone 519-762-2898 or e-mail myersgang@sympatico.ca.

Paul Gallant is a former WESS instructor and spoke Sept. 7 about his own experience as a suicide survivor. His 18-year-old son Jordan died May 14, 2008.

"The name of this walk is Suicide Awareness, not Suicide Prevention. If you can prevent suicide, you have a lot more power than I do," said Gallant.

Gallant compared the challenges of life to a poker game; we lose

our chips when things don't go our way, but our family and friends can help us get back in the game.

"As time goes on, you lose more and more of your poker chips, more and more of the things that mean something to you in your life," he said. "Tell your friends how much they mean to you, and hopefully, you'll open up conversations that alert you to the possibility of this happening."

A barbeque was held behind the Scout Hall with proceeds going toward the Youth Centre.

"We live in a stressful world and we live in a world of challenges. Most of us get through it because most of us, by the grace of God, find a way to balance our way through it," said West Elgin Mayor Graham Warwick at the ceremony. "As a community, I thank you so much for raising this. Let's keep talking and we can get through this."



First time in the snow

JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

Christina Vanraes and her son, 10-month old Aiden Vanraes, take a walk on Elm St. Jan 3. This was Aiden's first time out in the snow.

WALKER

Robert George (Bob), 74 years old, of West Lorne, died unexpectedly on November 30th, 2008. Beloved husband of Shirley (McWilliams) for 46 years. Dear father of Cindy and her husband Ron Aldred. Loved by his two grandchildren Saffron and Andrew Aldred. Bob is survived by his brothers Ronald, Bill (Earla), sister Gloria Johnston, sisters-in-law Dorothy Walker, Barbara Walker, Roseanne Walker and Caren Emery; Helen McWilliams, Joan (Richard) Veenstra and Jacqueline Leitch. He is also survived by several nieces, nephews and their families. Predeceased by brothers Ted, Harley, Gerald, Beverly, Jack, Dennis, Gary, sister-in-law Marie Walker and brothers-in-law Bob Johnston, Cameron McWilliams, Cameron Leitch and Murray Keys. Bob retired from Erie Flooring Wood Products after over 40 years of service. He was one of the original owners of Lakewood Trailer Estates and Leisure Heights Trailer Park. In retirement, Bob has been a member of the West Lorne Kiwanis Club and has been a driver for the Cancer Society. Friends called at the West Lorne Chapel, 202 Main Street on Tuesday from 2-4 and 7-9 pm., where funeral service was held on Wednesday at 1:30 pm. Rev Jim White officiating. Interment Evergreen Cemetery. Contributions to the Daffodil Auxiliary would be appreciated as your expression of sympathy. Arrangements entrusted to Padfield Funeral Homes (519 785-0810). Online condolences may be made at www.padfieldfuneral-home.com

West Lorne Heritage House to be enclosed by end of January

The West Lorne Heritage House is expected to be enclosed by the end of January, and depending on weather, ready for residents by the end of June.

The home will be located on former railway land next to the West Elgin Community Health Centre.

The Heritage House application committee is currently reviewing a list of about 30 qualified applicants from about 60 people who have applied to live there. The committee will start sending out invitations at the end of January and beginning of February inviting people who they've chosen

to move in. Applicants are selected based on income and their physical condition.

"I think it's important so that seniors can stay in their community when they retire for the type of life they've been used to. There's no reason why when somebody decides to retire, and if they're still healthy enough to stay in their community, that they can't," said Harry Mezenberg Project Chair.

The last fundraising event for the Heritage House was a draw held on Labour Day. Money has been raised above \$96,000, pulling well ahead of the target \$70,000.



JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

West Lorne Heritage House to be completed by mid-summer

The Heritage House will be a 16-unit housing apartment for seniors, located next to the West Elgin Community Health Centre.

Mezenberg says as long as unexpected weather doesn't delay construction, the Heritage House will be finished on time.

"The only set back we've had so far is we started behind

schedule. That's because of bureaucratic issues," said Mezenberg. "Our local council has been very supportive of the project and has done everything possible to speed it up."

When it's completed, the Heritage House will be a 16-unit housing apartment for seniors. Twelve single rooms and four double rooms mean about 20 to 30 people could move in.

The \$2.2 million project is being sponsored by the West Lorne Heritage Homes Not For Profit Corporations, made up of local service clubs.



SUBMITTED

Spring has Sprung

The Treble Makers Women's Choir performed at the Spring has Sprung concert May 31 in Rodney. Back Row: L-R Karen Kendrick-Diamond, Tanya Van Raes, Idith Fleuren, Jill Soos, Amy Kozma Front Row: L-R Anne Nogradi, Jane Anton, Lynn Sculland, Normande Jacques-Morencie, Joanne Brady, Lori Milos-Ivanski

West Elgin Community Band Spring Concert

West Lorne- Former WESS music teachers, Spiro Grima, Mark Enns, Dave Cunningham, and Janis Wallace, WESES Secretary, Chris Moore, and local performer, Kate Emerson, all have at least one thing in common. They graduated from the Faculty of Music at the University of Western Ontario. And, having graduated from UWO Music, they all had at least one teacher in common- Prof. Emeritus Don McKellar.

Professor McKellar will be a guest conductor at this Friday's West Elgin Community Band concert, Classics and Beyond. Unbeknownst to him, several of his former students will also be in attendance, both as audience members and as part of an expanded WECB. Chris Moore is one of them and she has been practising with the Band for the past few weeks. One former student who will be playing is retired music teacher, Gary McCumber. He is currently Director of the UWO Symphonic Band and was in one of the first Music Education classes.

Sharon Little, Director of the WECB, although not a UWO Music grad, has known Don for much of her own career. "He was on faculty at the National Music Camp of Canada during the first few years that I worked there. A few years ago, we were two of the adjudicators at the first Port Stanley Idol Contest. He's been a formidable force in music education. You can't go anywhere without running into some connection to Don."

Over the course of McKellar's career, he has held numerous leadership positions, both in Canada and internationally, and has received several awards, including the highest honour of the Canadian Music Educators' Association, the "Jubilee Award of Merit" in "recognition of significant contribution to music education in Canada."

Prof. McKellar continues to adjudicate festivals across the country and, most recently, in

Hong Kong. "He does everything- from piano to school music classes, from bands, jazz bands and orchestras, to woodwind, brass, string and percussion ensembles. It's astonishing. He's positive and supportive of everyone's interest in making music. He's been thrilled to work the the West Elgin Community Band because he believes that this is what music making is all about.

When Prof. McKellar retired, Canadian composer, Don Coakley, wrote a piece for concert band, Distant Voice, for him. It was finding this piece of music that inspired Little to put this concert together. They will be playing the piece, with McKellar conducting.

Don is living history. It's not often that we can talk to 'the guy who started it all.' Don is one of those guys. The Music programs in western Elgin are so important to the community. I wanted the community to have a sense of why the programs have been so good- they don't just happen. We can't take them for granted. It takes a strong vision and extraordinary commitment to a high ideal to accomplish what Don has. Our music programs are connected in a very real way to what Don started in the 60's. This concert is a small way to say 'thank you' and pay tribute to a man who has made it possible for so many of us to do what we love. Don is truly a classic... and way beyond.

The Band is also playing a number of other pieces, including the Golden Hits of Elvis Presley and a collection of Glenn Miller tunes. Also featured are two band members. Christine Van't Voort will be playing two movements from a Mozart Horn Concerto. Brent Sterner, from London, will be playing a solos with the band, in a piece written by London composer, Jeff Christmas.

Tickets are available from band members and at the door on June 6 at St. Mary's Parish Hall. The doors open at 7:15 p.m



SUBMITTED

Volunteer of the Year award

Norma Schnekenburger received the Volunteer of the Year Award July 1 from last year's winner Mary Bodnar. The award is presented by the West Elgin Chamber of Commerce.

Volunteer of the year

This year's winner of the Rosalie Krebs Memorial Volunteer of the Year Award is Norma Shnekenburger.

Shnekenburger was given the award July 1 by last year's winner Mary Bodnar. The award of the West Elgin Chamber of Commerce is given to community members that demonstrate outstanding community involvement.

Shnekenburger was born in Aldborough Township and retired in 1994 after 35 years as a teacher. In 1980, Schnekenburger helped found the West Elgin Genealogical and Historical Society. She was also one of the founding members of the Southwest Aldborough Neighbourhood Watch.

In 2002, Schnekenburger helped organize the Citizen's Group for Rural Education and was also one of the members behind the creation of the Coalition of Small Schools. In 2004, she helped deliver over \$337,000 to the students of Thames Valley School District including WESS and Glencoe District High School.

Schnekenburger currently serves as a volunteer driver for the West Elgin Community Health Centre's meals-on-wheels program and she also works towards the preservation of the historical St. Henry's Church along with her husband. *July 17/08*



SUBMITTED

W.E Community Band readies for concert

On Nov. 17, the West Elgin Community Band prepared for the Wonderful Time of the Year Concert, which will be Dec. 8 at 7:30 p.m. in the WESES Auditorium. In front: Anne Nogradi, and Christine van't Voort. In back: Stephen Self, Marlene Needham, and Daniel van't Voort. *NOV 27/08*



JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

Ribbon cut at grand opening of Heritage House

West Lorne's new seniors housing complex, the Heritage House officially opened Aug. 27. The ribbon was cut by Heritage House Board member Robert White, West Elgin Mayor Graham Warwick, Heritage House Board secretary Kate Melito, Doug Staddon, Project Chair Harry Mezenberg, MPP Steve Peters, Judith Binder of the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and Board treasurer Ray Jobson.

Heritage House opens

Jesse Cnockaert
Staff

The West Lorne Heritage House is finally complete, realizing a dream of many people to have a housing facility that will let seniors stay within their home community.

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held Aug. 27 at the Heritage House building on 154 Munro Street in West Lorne. The facility is a 16-unit building for seniors and individuals with special needs. Ground breaking began in August 2007, and now construction is complete.

"It has been a dream that has been going on a couple of years; to be able to keep our seniors in West Lorne, and we've finally accomplished that," said Harry Mezenberg, Heritage House Project Chair.

Mezenberg spoke at the ribbon cutting ceremony and wanted to thank the municipal, provincial and federal levels of government for their contribution to the Heritage House. The \$2.5 million project, sponsored by the West Lorne Heritage Homes Not For Profit Corporation received over \$1 million from the Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Program. Federal and provincial funding is complemented by more than \$1 million in municipal financial incentives from the municipality of West Elgin. The Heritage House fundraising committee had set a goal of \$100,000 for the project. Ultimately, they raised \$114,486.

"I think the biggest thank-you has to go to the community, because the community supported us all the way," said Mezenberg.

MP Joe Preston couldn't make the ribbon cutting

ceremony, so Judith Binder of the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation spoke on his behalf. MPP Steve Peters also attended.

"The province invested over \$1 million in this project and I think it's serving as an investment in the future. I think it's important to invest in our rural communities and make sure that people who have lived their lives in a smaller community can continue to do so," said Peters.

West Elgin Mayor Graham Warwick said the Heritage House will provide affordable housing for seniors, and its location puts it within walking distance of village amenities.

"I think this is a wonderful example of where we can get when we work together, and not just the people of the community, but the governments as well," he said.

Please see Senior's, page 2

The West Lorne Heritage House is on schedule for completion despite acts of vandalism resulting in thousands of dollars of damages.

Vandals have been breaking into the unfinished Heritage House on Main Street in West Lorne for the past several weeks. The Superintendent with the construction crew, Paul Thuss, said every few days when the crew leaves for the night, they return the next morning to find sheets of dry wall torn down, broken doors and windows. Thuss estimates the damages to be upwards of \$2,500. The construction team then spends hours restoring the building to how they left it.

"They kicked down some dry wall off the ceiling. That probably took the longest to fix," said Thuss. "We lost a day because the dry wall-ers couldn't get in here because we had to straighten everything up. But it hasn't really delayed us any. It's just more mess we have to clean up. It's no fun walking in every morning to see they were in here."

Every entrance to the Heritage House is barricaded by a two-by-four piece of wood and held in place by 3 and 1/4 inch screws. Even still, vandals have kicked-in those barricades to gain access to the building.

"They find pretty creative ways of getting in. They were climbing in through the eaves when they were open. Wherever they could squeeze through, that's where they were getting in," said Thuss.

Vandalism is not only a hindrance to the construction crew, but is potentially very dangerous.

Please see Vandalism, page 2



SUBMITTED

Goods collected for charity

For two weeks, Gina Ackermann of West Lorne offered her services as a personal trainer for free if her clients would donate to the Caring Cupboard and Daffodil Society.

Donations to charity in exchange for service

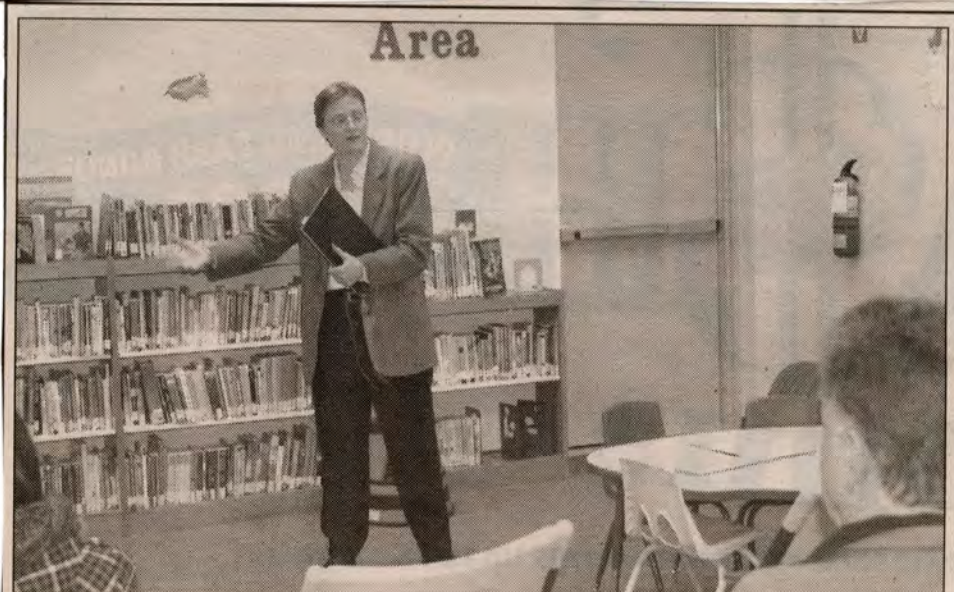
The Christmas Spirit is alive and well in the hearts of many people in West Lorne. Gina Ackermann, certified personal trainer, was overwhelmed during the past couple of weeks when she offered her clients no charge for her services in exchange for donations for the needy.

As a result, boxes of food, toys and clothing have been given to the Caring Cupboard and the Daffodil Society for distribution to local families.

Gina wrapped up her Christmas project on Friday and reports she was really happy. Her clients went way beyond her expectations in bringing donations to her.

This was the first year she made the offer to her clients and based on the resounding response she plans to do it again next year.

With the economy hurting, she notes, many more people are in need of help this Christmas season.



JESSE CNOCKAERT/THE CHRONICLE

Author speaks at library.

V.C. King, an author from the West Lorne area, appeared at the West Lorne Library Nov. 27 to answer questions about her new book entitled Titanic: Relative Fate.

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