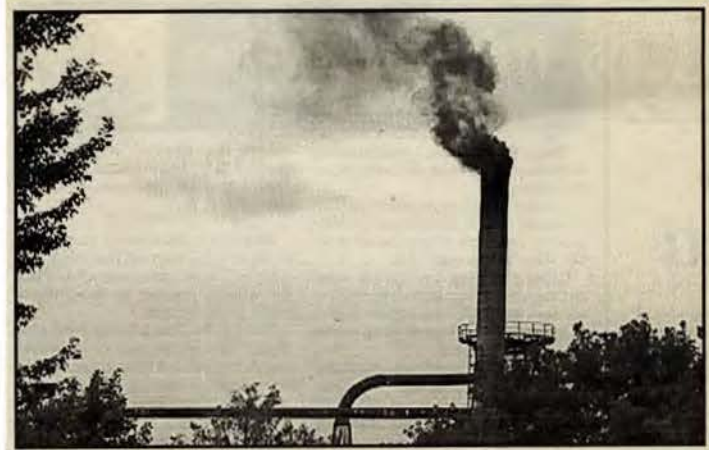




Branching Out

Hundreds of dried flowers and craft lovers converged on Mezenberg's Perennials & Dried Flowers recently for the West Lorne business' annual two-day festival. Here, Darryl and Barb Handford of London work diligently on a willow chair during a twig furniture workshop.



Concerns were raised at West Elgin Council last week about the ongoing concerns with pollution from the stacks at Erie Flooring. Council looks to meet with company officials in regards to these concerns.

Concerns raised over Erie Flooring stacks

West Elgin Council hopes to set up a meeting with Erie Flooring officials after concerns were raised at last week's council meeting over the ongoing pollution problems caused by the local wood products plant.

Councillor Mike Mooser brought the concern to council's attention saying he, along with many other residents, are tired of cleaning off their outdoor furniture that gets covered in black soot.

"I can't remember the last time we hung clothes on our clothes line," says Mooser. "It's a concern to us and other residents. There will be a cost factor to this but we need to have something done."

The Ministry of the Environment (MOE) has been notified in the past over such problems but have not acted on

anything. "I really think we should talk to them [Erie Flooring] first out of courtesy to see if there are ways to work things out," says Councillor Paul Gangle. "They should be given that courtesy

before we go hog wild and contact the MOE."

"We'll set up a meeting with Erie Flooring and see if we can come to a compromise that satisfies everyone," says West Elgin Mayor Duncan McPhail.

Walkerton thanks Elgin for help

Despite the continuing water crisis in Walkerton, the small community passed on their thanks to Elgin County Council for their \$5,000 contribution to the Brockton Response Centre Fund.

"Your generous donation will help the residents and businesses of Walkerton to rebuild their lives in the wake of our E-coli water outbreak," Walkerton Mayor Dave Thompson said in a letter to council.

"The response to the Walkerton fund-raising initiative has been very encouraging and the success we have experienced to date is owed to the generosity and compassion of communities like yours."

All money raised through the fund goes directly to the residents and businesses. All administrative costs are being paid for by federal, provincial and municipal funds.

"Your gift is helping to make a tremendous difference in a time of need," says Brockton Response Centre manager Barb Fisher. "On behalf of a grateful community, thank you."



Freggie Time!

Freggie's in town! He's Ontario's Vegetable and Fruit Mascot and wants to talk to kids and their parents about eating more fruits and vegetables. Freggie will be hanging out at the Rodney-Aldbrough Fair this Friday (6 to 9 p.m.) and Saturday (noon to 4 p.m.) if you want to check 'em out. Here, Freggie talks with two-year-old Fraser Morton and his dad Chris when he paid a visit to the West Lorne IGA last week.

SEPT. 11, 2000



Sign of the Times!

Driving eastbound on Highway #3 you'll know just when you're entering Elgin County, thanks to a newly erected sign by the Elgin-St. Thomas Tourist Association (ETA). The sign is the first of many that are planned for various entry points into Elgin County. Here, West Elgin Mayor Duncan McPhail, left, ETA board member Irene Puddester and ETA executive vice-president Ed Lewinsky show off the new sign.

OPP to increase their visibility and presence in the community

By Paul Mayne
The Chronicle

The Elgin County OPP have launched its first-ever 'Business Plan' with the objectives of getting tougher on crime, in particular break and enters, and increasing their visibility throughout the county.

Elgin OPP Detachment Commander Staff Sergeant John Stephens and Community Services Officer Constable Dennis Harwood spoke to West Elgin Council last week to explain how they plan to implement their business plan.

"This is the first kick of the can with a business plan," says Stephens. "We're going to have some successes and some failures. The expectations from me are high because the communities expectations on me are higher, and I like that."

Along with objectives for the entire county, including reducing break and enters by five per cent, police have also set priorities for each individual municipality.

In West Elgin the two objectives include increased visibility and the reduction of youth criminal activity. In order to address the need for increased visibility, initiatives include:

- Foot patrols, especially in Rodney and West Lorne;

JUNE 28/99
See 'Police' Page 2

New book shares story of living life to the fullest

Paul Mayne
The Chronicle

It's been a year-and-a-half since Dutton resident Forrest McFeat died after his battle with an accelerated case of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS or Lou Gehrig's Disease).

Last week, his wife Ruth released her first book entitled "Making Sense Out of the Senseless." The 90-page book, dedicated to her husband, details her family's experience with Forrest's ALS and how, along with her two children (Stuart and Brenda), they were able to care for him at home, ensuring his life was happy and dignified.

The book launching was held at the John P. Roberts Research Institute in London, one of the country's foremost centres on ALS research.

"This is overwhelmingly wonderful," McFeat told a room of friends, family and medical professionals. "This book is a fulfilment of Forrest's dream, which then became our dream."

ALS is not a rare disease, it is a rapidly progressive, fatal neuromuscular disease which attacks the motor neurons responsible for transmitting electrical impulses to the brain to the voluntary muscles throughout the body.

"When the muscles do not receive these messages, they quickly become weak from lack of use, wither and die, eventually causing death or total paralysis," says Dr. Michael Strong, ALS researcher at Roberts.

The disease, however, does not affect the senses or the mind. Most people who get ALS are over the age of 50 though there are cases of teenagers with the



"Making Sense Out of the Senseless" author Ruth McFeat

disease. In 90 per cent of ALS cases, it strikes people with no family history of the disease.

In the case of Forrest, he was diagnosed with ALS in February of 1996. Prior to this, Forrest had worked as a credit manager for several companies. But his passion was as a volunteer firefighter with the Dutton-Dunwich Fire Department, where he was named fire chief.

Ruth says it was her husband's love for life that kept her and the kids strong throughout the whole ordeal.

"He decided he was going to have fun and nothing was about

to stop him," remembers Ruth, when Forrest was first diagnosed. "If he had been negative about everything, it would have made it much more difficult for us."

Written over a 12-month period, the book chronicles the variety of emotions, bad sad and joyful, that Ruth and her children experienced.

"The book idea started one day towards the end of Forrest's life," says Ruth. "I said we should write a book detailing some of the great ideas we and the nurses came up with -- to help other families who are nursing a paralysed

relative at home, as well as providing information for medical professionals. Forrest smiled and blinked agreement with his eyes."

Ruth's daughter, Brenda, says the family was always close, but the process of writing the book brought them even closer and gave way to a lot of emotions, which in turn made the grieving process a bit easier.

"It's a way for us to tell others of our feelings and what we were going through at the time," she says. "Everyone will have different experiences, but this may help others deal with a family member or friend who has ALS."

Brenda adds her father was an strong man, even late in life, and that helped her in dealing with his death. And it is that same strength she now sees even more so in her mother.

"She's truly the strongest person I know," says Brenda.

Money raised from "Making Sense Out of the Senseless" will go directly to Roberts for research. And with 2,000 copies in print, a possible \$14,000 could be raised.

To kick-off the new book, the London ALS Chapter purchased the first 100 copies, which they will distribute to families or ALS patients. The Royal Bank of Canada also made a cash donation. Ruth works at the Royal Bank in Aylmer.

And to show their commitment to ALS Research at Roberts, the McFeat family, and extended family, presented Roberts with a donation of \$1,100.

"It is a wonderful initiative," says Dr. Mark Poznansky, President and Scientific Director at the Roberts. "We are so pleased Ruth and her family have decided to support ALS research at Roberts. Her book is a vital addition to the field of Lou Gehrig's Disease, and will help numerous caregivers and families better deal with this disease."

To purchase a copy of "Making Sense Out of the Senseless," you can call McFeat at 762-3516 or send \$10, plus \$5 for shipping and handling, to McFeat family Group Inc., c/o Ruth McFeat, Box 124, Dutton, ON, N0L 1J0.

Ocolisan children keep on winning

Winning has become common place for the Ocolisan family and their latest performance is proof that they're not slowing down any.

The Ocolisan children (Paula, Dennis, Kanda and Wyatt) attended Beef-A-Rama, a show open to Junior Hereford Association members under the age of 21, in Hillsdale, Ontario, and returned home with their fair share of honours.

Approximately 45 juniors from across the province competed in various categories such as art, photography, literature, speeches, confirmation and showmanship with their animals.

In all, the Ocolisan children brought home eight banners, two plaques and a trophy.

Junior members were responsible for feeding, watering, washing, drying and grooming their own animals - with parents only watching.

Here is a list of what the Ocolisan children won:

- Wyatt, 9**
 - ✓ Champion Pee Wee Public Speaking
 - ✓ Champion Pee Wee Showmanship
 - Kanda, 10**
 - ✓ Champion Junior Photography Competition
 - ✓ Grand Champion Junior Yearling Heifer
 - Dennis, 16**
 - ✓ Grand Champion Bull
 - ✓ Senior Champion Yearling Heifer
 - ✓ Reserve Grand Champion Female
 - Paula, 18**
 - ✓ Reserve Grand Champion Bull
 - ✓ Grand Champion Bred and Owned Bull
 - ✓ Reserve Grand Champion Showmanship
 - ✓ Reserve Senior Champion Showmanship
- A group of three animals from

one family was also entered in the show, which won the Ocolisans' a trophy.

And there's no rest for the weary as the Ocolisans head to East Lansing, Michigan this week to compete in a National Hereford show. This show is open to all participants across the

United States with a large group of Juniors expected to represent Ontario.

On the solo front, Paula is expected to participate in the Bonanza '99, which is the Canadian National Junior Hereford Show held in Verdon, Manitoba at the end of this month.



The Ocolisan family has once again stocked their trophy case with their latest victories at the Beef-A-Rama in Hillsdale. Children Dennis, 16 (back row left), Paula, 18, Wyatt, 9 (front row left) and Kanda, 10, brought home eight banners, two plaques and a trophy from the All Ontario Junior Hereford Event.

1999

District 10 horticultural meeting

Whether you wanted to know how to make a Christmas urn to set outside your front door or how to write minutes on a computer, the workshop of the Ontario Horticultural Association District 10 Thames Valley held in Dorchester Nov. 6 was the place to be.

Nina Havens and Florence Kelly represented the Rodney and District Society, Leola Lawrence and Mary Lippold went from the West Lorne Horticultural Society, Shirley Vojin and Clair Champ attended from the Dutton-Dunwich Society.

It was a pleasant way to keep local societies up to date about provincial and district changes and knowledgeable about new trends such as broom corn wreaths.

New book chronicles history of post offices in West Elgin

It had been sitting on a shelf for 18 years collecting dust. But now, the history of post offices in West Elgin has found its way into book form.

West Elgin residents Keith Kelly and the late Irving Thomas took it upon themselves to research and chronicle the long history of post offices in the West Elgin and surrounding areas.

"We started that project 18 years ago and it's been on my shelf ever since" smiles Kelly, who began the project as a member of the West Elgin Historical and Genealogical Society. "At a recent meeting we decided to finish it up. It's a chance to keep our history preserved and in front of us"

Kelly, along with fellow historian Don Carroll, finished the rest of the book by adding Southwold Township to the book which already covers Aldborough and Dunwich Townships.

Kelly learned a lot of interesting facts and met a number of interesting people while researching the book. He attained a number of rare photos and artifacts which add to the book's appeal.

The book features a history of locations and postmasters throughout the county. It even recalls the rarely remembered Taylor Station and West Magdala.

"I learned a lot of interesting things along the way. Some stories I don't think I can repeat," laughs Kelly.

Kelly will be on hand at the Dutton Library this Thursday (July 29) to talk about and sell copies of the book from 2 until 4 p.m. Books are \$15 each.

If you can't make it to Dutton, and would like to purchase a copy of the book, you can call Kelly at 785-0247 or Carroll at 762-2176.



West Elgin resident Keith Kelly shows off his book "A Post Office History of West Elgin" which he and the late Irving Thomas worked on. He's also holding one of the last cancellation hammers (1908) from the Kintyre Post Office, which he found while putting together the book.

Our boys are missing

CURRENT
EVENTS
1999

Family, friends and the entire West Elgin community still await news on the fate of five local boaters who have been missing now for a week. AUG 23, 99



Andy Vankoeverden, 47



Charles Dodge, 36



Dennis Dodge, 15



Steven Vaterlaus, 26



Jamie Schnekenburger, 21

By Kathy Hollingsworth
and Paul Mayne
The Chronicle

"Love hopes."

Those are the words of West Elgin Living Water Pentecostal Church member Margie Mezenberg talking about a prayer chain that is linking the people of the community in this time of hope.

The hope is for positive news on five missing West Lorne residents who have been missing now over a week on Lake Erie.

It was Saturday, Aug. 14 when Andy Vankoeverden, 47, Steven Vaterlaus, 26, Jamie Schnekenburger, 21, Charles Dodge, 36, and his nephew Dennis

Dodge, 15, left the shores of Port Glasgow in a 14 foot fibreglass boat. They haven't been seen since.

The five were reported missing on Aug. 16 when they hadn't showed up for work. An immediate search began with OPP boats, Canadian and American coast guard boats, a Hercules rescue plane and Labrador helicopter from Rescue Coordination Centre Trenton, the London Naval Reserve Unit, and a handful of local boaters who wanted to help out.

Family and friends held daily vigils at the Port Glasgow

Marina, many spending the entire week in campers provided by local residents.

As the hours of waiting stretched into days, family kept each other going with hugs and stories of those lost on Lake Erie. But the most difficult part was the lack of any news. Police did find a handful of items on their search (such as a gas tank, pail and gloves) but said they were not from the missing boat.

However, it did give the searchers an area to concentrate on. The Sprayer, a coast guard ship with sonar capability, searched the area but turned up nothing. It has since stopped searching.

Prior to that, searchers had to cover an area that stretched from Rondeau to Long Point (80 miles) and from the Canadian

border to the U. S. border (25 miles).

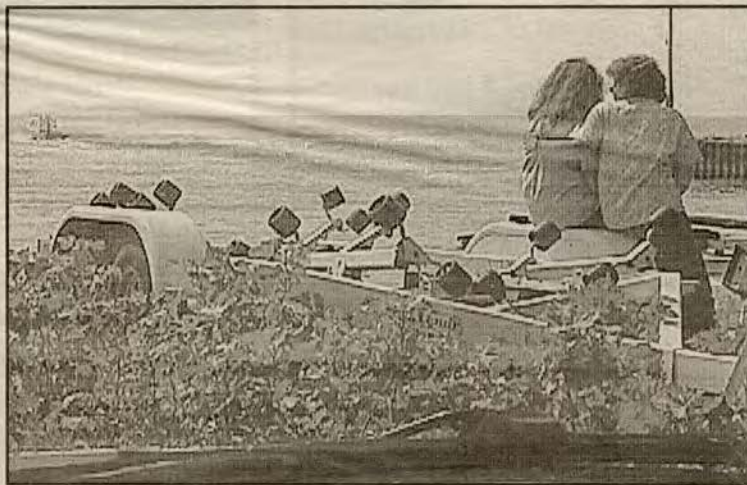
"I don't know what to think," says Heidi Vaterlaus of her brother's disappearance. "I'm not believing anything until someone says it's definite. I just wish they would find something so we could have some answers."

Vaterlaus is confident her brother "is coming back" as she continues to hold onto his favourite Toronto Maple Leafs hockey sweatshirt.

"He loved fishing. That's all he ever did," she says. "I just keep thinking he's out there somewhere. I have to think that. I just want him to come home - all of them."

Sandy Cowan, girlfriend of Jamie Schnekenburger, keeps the faith that she'll

See 'Search' Page 3



Friends of one of the missing boaters console each other as one of the OPP boats heads out onto Lake Erie in an attempt to find the five boaters who went missing off Port Glasgow after they left for a fishing trip Aug. 14.

Missing boater found

The body of missing West Lorne resident Jamie Schnekenburger, 21, was located in Lake Erie (just east of Palmyra) 19 days after he and four others went missing. The search continues in an attempt to locate the other boaters.

Paul Mayne
The Chronicle

Nineteen days after five West Lorne residents went missing on Lake Erie, the body of Jamie Schnekenburger, 21, was found Sept. 1 approximately 13 kilometres west of Port Glasgow.

The body, found about 90 metres off shore by a recreation boater from Erieau, was taken to a Windsor hospital for identification and an autopsy. Results from the autopsy indicated that death is consistent with drowning, says Elgin OPP Constable



Jamie Schnekenburger

SEPT. 6 / 99 See 'Search' Page 2

Last boater found outside Buffalo

A week after Kim and Pete Dodge pleaded for the public's assistance in locating their missing son Dennis, the 15 year-old has been located washed ashore on a beach outside of Buffalo, N.Y.

The body was discovered Nov. 15 by a female who was out for a walk along the Lake Erie Shoreline, in the Town of Hamburg, N.Y. (just outside Buffalo - across from Fort Erie, ON).

Elgin County OPP worked with the Hamburg Police to make a positive identification of Dodge using dental records. The U. S.



Dennis Dodge

authorities conducted a post mortem which concluded the death was consistent with drowning.

Dodge was the last of the five boaters to be found. The five were last seen Aug. 14 when they left the Port Glasgow Marina in a small fibreglass boat. The disappearance sparked a massive search of the water of Lake Erie.

Found earlier were Jamie Schnekenburger (Sept. 1), Charles Dodge (Sept. 26), Steven Vaterlaus (Oct. 19)

and Andy van Koeverden (Oct. 24).

Third body recovered

Elgin County OPP have identified the human remains that washed ashore Oct. 19 on a small Lake Erie beach in Bayham to be that of missing West Lorne boater Steven Vaterlaus.

The body was located by a property owner at approximately 11 a.m. as he was checking his shoreline 1½ kilometres east of Port Burwell (south of Aylmer), about 60 kilometres east of Port Glasgow where the boaters were last seen.

Dental records were used to positively identify the body. A post mortem conducted in Toronto indicated that death was consistent with drowning.

Volunteer firefighters from the Bayham Fire Department had to climb down the cliff face to retrieve the body.

The 26 year-old Vaterlaus was one

of five boaters that went missing on Lake Erie Aug. 14 in a 14 foot red and white fibreglass boat.

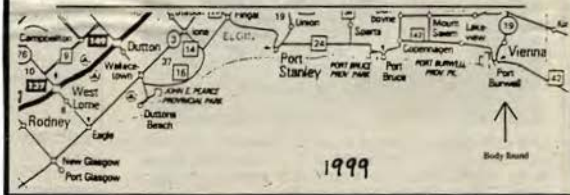
The initial disappearance of the five boaters sparked a massive search of the area by OPP, coast guard, naval reserve, family, friends and numerous volunteers.

The bodies of Jamie Schnekenburger and Charles Dodge were found Sept. 1 and 26, respectively.

Still missing are Andy Vankeoverden, 47, and Dennis Dodge, 15. Elgin OPP are requesting that property owners continue to check their Lake Erie shorelines for any further signs of these people. If you have any information you are asked to call 631-2920.



Steven Vaterlaus



van Koeverden found

Just five days after a third missing boater was located, the human remains found washed ashore on the American side of Lake Erie on Oct. 23 have been positively identified as fellow boater Andy van Koeverden.

Elgin OPP say the 47 year-old West Lorne man, who was found on a beach just west of Erie, Pennsylvania, was identified using dental records. The post mortem, conducted by the Erie County Coroner's office indicated that the death was consistent with drowning.

Four of the five boaters, who went

missing Aug. 14 from the Port Glasgow Marina, have now been located. Jamie Schnekenburger was found Sept. 1, Charles Dodge was found Sept. 26 and Steven Vaterlaus was found Oct. 19. Still missing is 15 year-old Dennis Dodge.

The police and all families involved are continuing their requests that property owners continue to check their Lake Erie shorelines for any signs of the last missing boater. If you have any information, you are asked to call 631-2920.



Andy van Koeverden

NOV. 1, 1999



Looking Back

It was a step back in time for some local residents recently as the Eagle Community Centre held a social featuring photos and other items that told the history of Eagle. Above, Mary Payne, seated at left, John Conway and Carl Staddon helped organize the social. At left, Herman and Ruby Forschner enjoyed their time at the community centre reliving a number of memories of the area.



The West Elgin Chronicle

MAY 24, 1999



Picture Perfect

Local children with artistic flare found the perfect place to express their talents at the West Elgin Summer Art Camp held at the West Lorne Complex. The two week-long camps were so successful that a third camp is planned for the last week of August. Eleven-year-old Ilias Giannon can vouch for the fun the camps offers. If your child would be interested in attending the art camp, call Karrie at 768-1880.

JULY 1999



Home Show Success

There was definitely something for everyone at the recent West Elgin Home, Garden and Recreation Showcase held at the West Elgin Arena. Residents were able to get a handle on projects and find information on a number of products offered by local businesses. In top photo, Gary Long of Redeye, left, got the feel of a riding lawnmower when he stopped by to visit Dan Maslik at Gode's Small Engines booth. At left, West Lorne's Britany Smith gives a hug to her dog Suzie who was entered in the dog show.



Memorial Tree

Members of the West Lorne and Community Horticultural Society were busy sprucing up West Lorne by planting a number of trees. Once such tree, a Silver Fir, was planted in front of the West Lorne Complex in the memory of horticultural society members who recently died. The horticultural society also planted 30 Sugar Maple trees along the field between Monroe Street and the railroad tracks.

1999

The West Egin Chronicle AUGUST 3/99



Flower Frenzy

It's been a relatively dry summer, so what better backdrop for a dried flower festival. The annual event, held at Meyersburg's Perennial and Dried Flowers, had every colour of the rainbow available, plus a number of unique crafts from local artists. Above, Debbie Giles of Lambeth, seems to be running out of room with her haul of dried flowers. At right, Beverly Small of Iona spots just one of the many locally made crafts that caught her eyes.



SEPT. 1999 The West Egin Chronicle



Fifty Reasons to Smile

Sisters Chelsea and Cassandra Van Breda are all smiles as they show off the \$50 top prize they won in the Downhill Derby contest sponsored by Ric Whyte. The pair, who will split the money, simply collected the letters to spell 'Downhill Derby'. Talk about easy money!



Kickin' Temperatures

When the temperature begins flirting close to 20°C (70°F) you just can help but head outdoors and enjoy a few rays of sunshine. That's just what eight-year-old Wyatt Occleston decided to do as he grabbed his soccer ball and worked on a few moves.

LONDON FREE PRESS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1999



MIKE HENSEN/The London Free Press

Former CFPL-TV news anchor Al McGregor has found there is life after being fired when the London station changed ownership and philosophical direction.

Former news anchor has new business

By James Reaney
Free Press Arts
& Entertainment Reporter

Al McGregor is finding there is life after the New FL.

McGregor, fired by CFPL-TV more than nine months ago, was back behind a newscast anchor desk for three days last week. He was filling in at CBC Windsor, where he also has done some reporting.

"They've been very, very kind," McGregor says of the CBC operation. The Windsor station's signal is beamed through Essex and into the Sarnia-Lambton region — areas where he became a familiar presence with CFPL.

"My face is recognized to a certain extent down in Windsor, not as much as in London, of course."

Last week was the second time McGregor had travelled from his West Lorne-area home to anchor the CBC station's newscast. He also filled in as an anchor in October.

Police officer hit on 401

A simple traffic stop for an Elgin County OPP officer turned into a brush with death May 10 after another vehicle struck him as he was talking with another motorist.

Constable Jason Gibson, 32, was hit by car on Highway 401 near Rodney as he was standing on the gravel shoulder taking to a motorist he had stopped for a traffic violation. The westbound vehicle stopped after striking the officer.

Gibson, who works out of the Dutton detachment of the OPP, was taken to London Health Sciences Centre's Victoria campus with two broken legs, injuries to a knee cap and wrist, and number of scrapes, bumps and bruises.

He was later transferred to University Hospital where he underwent minor surgery.

OPP Community Services Constable Dennis Harwood says Gibson's "spirits are up there" and that the 11-year veteran is an officer who "will do well dealing with a situation like this." It is unsure how long Gibson will be off work. **MAY**

Charges are pending on the driver of the vehicle who struck Gibson. **49**



Treasure Hunt Bible Adventure

Local children spent last week hunting - for Jesus, that is. The West Lorne United and Presbyterian Churches held their annual Community Vacation Bible Schools and took the children on an adventure to find Jesus. Some of the children who took part on the week long camp include (top photo) Nicole Vergeer, front left, Kylie Beer and Kate Welch. In back are Shayla Sample, left, and Sarah Cramp. In bottom photo, taking a break from camp, are Bethany Morden, front left, Erin Budgell and David Given. Back row is David Vergeer, Lauren Johnston and Joseph Guitart. **AUG 1999**



A Real Blast!

Things were literally booming at Miller Park last Thursday night as residents celebrated Canada Day with a fireworks display. Here, pyrotechnics technician Ken Long loads up one of the shells in preparation for show. See more Canada Day activities on Page 3. **1999**

Baptist churches welcome Rev. Kaups

DEC. 1999

The West Lorne and Rodney Baptist Churches will be officially welcoming their new pastor, Rev. Andres Kaups, with an induction service this Sunday (Dec. 12) at the Rodney church beginning at 3 p.m.

Kaups, who came to West Elgin from London, began his ministry at the churches Nov. 1 and his wife Evi moved into the parsonage on Graham St. this past weekend.

Rev. Kaups and his wife are native Estonians whose families left their homeland for Sweden in 1944 to escape the incoming Soviet regime.

They subsequently immigrated to New York City and Toronto respectively, where they met at the Estonian Baptist Church and were married in 1966. They have four grown children and two grandchildren.

Rev. Kaups went to school in New York and in 1969 earned his bachelors degree in business from Pace University in New York.

He pursued a career in financial management first on Wall Street and let with Christian colleges and seminaries in Columbia, South Carolina, Penn-



Rev. Andres Kaups

sylvania and Toronto. In 1988 he responded to God's

call to the pastoral ministry and has served Glen Cairn Baptist Church in Toronto, Ferndale Baptist Church in Scarborough and, most recently, Sunrise Baptist Church in London.

In November '91, Rev. Kaups was ordained into the Gospel Ministry by Ferndale Baptist Church in the Toronto Association of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec. He received his Master of Divinity degree from McMaster Divinity College in '97.

If you wish to meet Rev. Kaups, you are welcome to attend his induction. A time of fellowship, greetings and refreshments will follow the service.



Optimist Goodies

The Optimist Club of West Lorne brought out the Christmas goodies recently for a bake sale at the IOOF Hall in West Lorne. Here, Olive Chambers shows off some of the delicious treats she picked up. Money raised will go towards youth programs in the community.

DEC. 6, 1999

CURRENT EVENTS

1999

The West Elgin Chronicle

NOV. 1999



Christmas Boutique

A Christmas boutique featuring the arts and crafts of some local artists will be on display at Marie Spence's Studio near Muirkirk this weekend (Nov. 13 and 14). The boutique, open from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. each day, features Christmas decorations, special gift ideas and loads of stocking stuffer, such as the ceramic work of RR#3 Rodney resident Elaine Conway. The studio is located at 15487 Spence Line, just off the Duart Road, eight kilometres northeast of Highgate. Call 678-3326 for more information.

DEC. 20 1999

The West Elgin Chronicle

Ceremony remembers loved ones

Remembering loved ones during the holiday season was the idea behind the 5th Annual Angel Tree Ceremony at the West Lorne Complex Dec. 10.

More than 30 local residents came out on a chilly Friday night

for prayers, songs and comforting words. Pastor Eric Betsch led many of the dedications, along with prayers from Doug Cavener, Marianne Merks, Margaret Murray and Duncan McPhail.

Music was provided by the United Church Choir and a closing hymn by Ann Prudhomme. A special thanks also goes to Donut Delite, Tim Horton's and IGA (West Lorne) for their donations of snacks and refreshments.

This year's free will donation went to the Caring Cupboard in Dutton.

Those remembered at this year's Angel Tree Ceremony included Sid and Josie Authier, Katherine Lynn Alderton, Abigail Kate Bandeen, Matthew Earl Bandeen, Christopher Beer, Joey Beer, Michelle Beer, Christopher Cowan, Pam Cowan, Shane Cowan, Timothy Cowan and Daniel Cowan.

Andy Dewulf, Lloyd Cecil Doan, Michael Doan, Marnie Fleming, Michael Gammon, Jason Kayelites, Ashley Ann Murray, Margaret McColl, Jeremy Robinet, Willy A.R. Merks, Sonia Oliveira, Alusha Marie Tomczyk, Elaine Watterworth, Patty Winter and Janet Oakley.

Donna Smiljanick, Munroe McMillian, Grace Haven, Gordon Haven, Ken Okolisasn, Jim Shostak, Bill Griffin, Lorne McGill, John Hulaj, Yancy Begin, Justin Ray Bell, Roy Dos Santos, Jose Dos Santos, Chris Ayling, Chris Kauzen, Ron Jones and Murray Keys.



West Lorne resident Myrtle Joyce and her granddaughter Amanda Bobier were just some of the many local residents who showed up for the 5th Annual Angel Tree to remember those who have died and will be missed this holiday season. Joyce lost her brothers Charles and Pete Dodge, and nephew Dennis this past year.

Charles Begin, Fred and Frany Redinger, Paul Babin, Edna Ray, Jean Wyatt, Joe Simpson, Ralph Simpson, Jamie Schnekenburger, Steven Vaterlaus, Andy van Koeverden, Dennis Dodge, Wilson Pete Dodge, Charles Dodge, Marie Sadecky and Ivan Buck Edwards.

Joanne Bell, Winnis Van Lierop, Nickie Lipan, Sophie Lipan, Sam Lipan, Constantine Lipan, Mary Lipan, Wilfred Doan, Doris Doan, Jason Szabo, David Newman, Amilcar Madeira, Armino Coello, Frank Hay, Rosiana Hay and Tony Krebs.

Chronicle Year in Review

Con't from Page 2

death of three residents. No such problem occurred in Elgin.

RODNEY REC CENTRE TRASHED

Often the victim of mindless vandals, the Rodney Recreation Centre received its worst hit yet when vandals caused substantial damage to the interior of the building, along with stealing a number of items.

Several of the interior doors were damaged, vents were kicked out, the storage cupboards were broken into, fire extinguishers were discharged in the building, the recreation storage area was trashed and the office areas were broken into, including the Fair Board storage area.

MISTELE WINS PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

Rodney area farmer Paul Mistele was honoured with the 1998 Pork Producer of the Year award from the Elgin County Pork Producers Association.

As part of a rally at Queen's Park in Dec. '98 to protest low hog prices, Mistele initiated the "Donate-A-Hog" program which brought 58,000 pounds of pork to Toronto's food banks.

After receiving the award at a February banquet, Mistele was named President of the Elgin County Pork Producers Association.

KALITA ENTERS HALL OF FAME

Years of hard work and quality farming saw West Lorne farmer Ed Kalita named to the Elgin Federation of Agriculture Hall of Fame.

Kalita came to Elgin County in 1962 as a tobacco farmer, which he maintained until 1983. He continues to grow corn and soybeans.

RODNEY LIBRARY EXPANDING

The Rodney Library went from talks of possible closure a couple years back to announcing they are looking at almost doubling its current size. It will be the first expansion the library has seen since first being built in 1951.

Estimated cost of the shelving, furniture and fixtures, phone and computer cabling is approximately \$300,000.

STADDON GARNERS GOVERNOR AWARD.

West Lorne Optimist Club member Dorothy Staddon was recognized for her dedication to the high level of success as lieutenant-governor for Optimist Clubs in the zone she was responsible for.

Staddon received the Distinguished and Outstanding Lieutenant Governor Award at the Southwestern Ontario District of Optimist International banquet held in Wallaceburg.

HEART DISEASE HIGH IN ELGIN

A study released by the Institute for Clinical Evaluative

Sciences and the Heart and Stroke Foundation confirms that Elgin County has one of the highest rates of death from coronary heart disease in the province.

The age/sex mortality rate in Elgin from coronary heart disease is 29 per cent higher than the provincial average. Residents are found to be extremely susceptible to heart attacks.

FIVE BOATERS GO MISSING ON LAKE ERIE

The warm and sunny month of August will forever have a black cloud hanging over it as five local boaters left the shores of Port Glasgow in a 14 foot fibreglass boat, never to return.

Andy van Koevorden, Steven Vaterlaus, Charles Dodge, Dennis Dodge and Jamie Schneckeburger were last seen Aug. 14 when they went out on to waters of Lake Erie. After being reported missing two days later, a massive search was undertaken.

OPP boats, Canadian and American coast guards, a Hercules rescue plane and Labrador helicopter from Rescue Coordination Centre in Trenton, the London Naval Reserve Unit and a number of local boaters who wanted to help in any way they could.

Family and friends held a daily vigil at the waters edge for a number of weeks. After police officially ended their search after a week, family and countless volunteers continued to search the vast and unpredictable waters of Lake Erie.

As family prayed for any sign of their loved ones, their worst fears were met when the body of Jamie Schneckeburger was found Sept. 1. Over the next two-and-a-half months the bodies of the remaining boaters were located, bring closure to family members who endured indescribable pain and suffering for so long.

Tragically, Wilson Pete Dodge, the brother of Charles and father of Dennis, died just days before he was to bury his son.

PETERS NEW MPP

In one of the closest races across the province, Liberal candidate and St. Thomas Mayor Steve Peters ousted Conservative candidate Bruce Smith to take the newly formed riding of Elgin-Middlesex-London.



Steve Peters

Although Mike Harris and his Conservatives hold on to the province, when the votes were counted in Elgin it came up red as Peters grabbed 46 per cent of the vote, compared to 43 per cent from Smith.

RABIES CLINIC ENDS

It was a service local residents counted on for the past 20 years, but it is now a thing of the past.

The East London Animal Clinic told West Elgin Council that due to downsizing the won't be offering the service to West Elgin residents. Approximately 200 pets were vaccinated in 1998.

Some council members, along with many local residents, felt it was a "money thing" on behalf of the veterinarians - a way to get pet owners into their office.

But veterinarians say just a rabies shot it not enough and, in fact, a rabies shot alone may do more harm than good with pet owners assuming it is the only shot their animals need.

MAN KILLED IN SNOWMOBILE WRECK

West Lorne's Tony Krebs was killed March 6 after he was thrown from his machine and struck by a second snowmobile. The accident occurred along the west ditch of Highway #76 (near



Friends of one of the missing boaters consoled each other as police and coast guard searched Lake Erie signs of the five West Lorne residents.

Queens Line).

JUNIOR GIRLS WOSAA CHAMPS

The WESS Wildcats Junior Girls Volleyball team marched their way through the Elgin County championships, eased their way past the Elgin-Oxford title, and took care of Dorchester in two straight games to bring the WOSAA title back to West Elgin.

FCHS RECRUITS QUEBEC DOCTORS

With an evergrowing concern over the lack of family physicians in rural Elgin County, Dr. Stephen Jones attended a job fair in Montreal where he talked to a number of physicians interested in practising outside Quebec, including four interested in Elgin.

To date, no physicians from Quebec have agreed to come to Elgin County.

THE CHRONICLE LAUNCHES WEBSITE

The West Elgin Chronicle joined the World Wide Web this past April with the launching of its own website. By going to www.execulink.com/~chronicl, you can now keep in touch with local news and events by simply logging on. Keep in touch with West Elgin, no matter where you are.

DR. ESHAGHIAN ARRIVES AT FCHS

With only four full-time doctors with active privileges at Four Counties Health Services, hospital officials were ecstatic with the arrival of Dr. Farhang Eshaghian.

Coming from Manitoba, Dr. Eshaghian eases the burden a bit for the hospital which is still vastly underserved. Later in the year, Dr. Eshaghian opened up a two-day a week family practise at the Newbury Clinic.

POLICE OFFICER HIT ON HWY. 401

A simple traffic stop for Elgin County OPP Constable Jaison Gibson turned into a brush with death May 10 after another vehicle struck him as his was talking to another motorist on the shoulder of the highway near Rodney.

The 32 year-old Gibson received two broken legs, injuries to a knee cap and wrist and a number scrapes, bumps and bruises. He was taken to University Hospital in London where he underwent surgery. Gibson is expected to make a full recovery.

HOUSE FIRE DEEMED DOUBLE HOMICIDE

A fatal house fire in Southwold Township Feb. 2 that claimed the lives of two adults was soon treated as a double homicide by Elgin OPP. Roger Lee Smith, 40, and his common law wife Wendy Jean Haveron, 45, were found by Southwold Volunteer Firefighters in the early morning blaze. Police soon determined the fire was set in an attempt to cover up the murder.

BOATING MISHAP KILLS MAN

A June 6 boating mishap took

the life of Southwold Township resident Harold Mark Burton. His body was recovered two days later approximately 300 metres from where he was last seen.

Burton and his common law wife had gone boating, deciding to anchor the boat and wade ashore to a small beach. The anchor slipped and the boat started to drift. Burton went after it and got into difficulties and went under.

A TAPESTRY OF TIMELESS TALES

The students at WESES, along with a group of West Elgin seniors, but in a lot of hard work and dedication to produce a book of stories told to the students by the seniors.

As part of a project to celebrate the Year of the Older Person, a book release was held at WESES. The stories were written in hopes to offer the younger generation a better understanding of our local past.

SMITH CROWNED

WESS student Lisa Smith was crowned Fair Ambassador at the 145th Annual Rodney-Aldborough Fair.



HOG WILD

The building of a intensive hog barn operation on Marsh Line this past summer raised concerns from residents over its proximity to other households. Its location in regards to the Village of West Lorne was also brought up as a potential smelly concern.

Another hog barn stirred up the same emotions later on the same year, this time the concern being the barn being built extremely close to the waterfront. Its potential problem with affecting the water intake for the community was the major problem many residents brought up.

In both cases, the company building the barns have met all necessary requirements.

BIKER GANG SHOOTING IN IONA

The Western Region OPP arrested a total of eight individuals thought to be involved in the Oct. 22 shooting incident along Iona Road near Hwy. 401. Police determined the occupants of one car were shot at by the occupants of a second car. More than 75 charges were laid against RR#4 Iona Station residents Wayne Earl Kellestine and Tina Fitzgerald. The case is still before the courts.

MCPHAIL NAMED ELGIN WARDEN

West Elgin Mayor Duncan McPhail was elected Elgin County Warden for the year 2000, defeating Aylmer Mayor Bob Habkirk.