

**Bringing new families to area**



**New West Elgin residents Henk and Ans Deiker and kids with Ed DeWild (centre) and retiring West Elgin farmers Lyle and Diane Trudell.**

Ed DeWild wants to keep bringing people to the four counties area. The Sales Representative for Remax Land Office Inc., says he really enjoys bringing Europeans to the area and recently helped Henk and Ans Deiker move to West Elgin.

In the following weeks they will be moving into the farm of Lyle and Diane Trudell, who are retiring from farming. They are moving to Dorchester.

Through dual agency which enables sales representatives like DeWild to work across borders, he can work with real estate agencies in Europe and bring clients to Canada. For DeWild, it is the four counties area. Normally DeWild works with local clients with houses and property, but occasionally

he is able to work with European clients who he says find the four counties area attractive because of the Canadian dollar and its strong agricultural potential.

The Deiker's have four boys - Maikel, Twan, Paul and Ard.

DeWild congratulates the municipality of West Elgin for its hard stance on nutrient management which will be followed by the new farm operations of the Deiker's. He pointed out not many municipalities have implemented such a hard stance that still works with farmers.

**'White elephant' is popular**

"It used to be the big white elephant, now everybody wants to use it," was the sentiment coming from West Elgin councillor Mike Mooser when finding out people have been lining up to use the board room of the West Lorne Complex.

This month, staff of the municipality have been instructed by council to look into costs of a possible program to beginning booking the board room and kitchen, at a cost.

Most recently service groups and individuals have been excluded from using the board room because they were not

on the list. Administrator Joanne Groch pointed out council at the last meeting that only a small group of clubs were ever supposed to use it, and they could use it free of charge. Somehow that list increased.

Due to the increased demand, council is now looking at the possibility of continuing the free list but also start booking the facility for meetings and gatherings on a rental capacity, for those willing to pay.

They are also looking at putting a lock on the kitchen to prevent abuse, which has been reported in the past.



**Recognized for volunteerism  
in West Elgin**

Rosalie Krebsz (at left) has been selected as West Elgin's Volunteer of the Year by the West Elgin Chamber of Commerce. She is presented with her recognition plaque by West Elgin councillor Trudy Balint. Last year Ray Jobson won the 1st Annual Volunteer of the Year Award. Right now Krebsz is a member of the Chamber of Commerce, the Beautification Committee, currently helping to raise funds for her Church to build a new wheelchair ramp, a member of the WESS 50th Reunion, and is an advocate for cancer awareness. Krebsz also won the Women of Distinction Award for Elgin two years ago. Krebsz said she was shocked and humbled by being selected for the volunteer award. She felt overwhelmed because "there are so many great people who try to do so many great things." Dutton/Dunwich will also be presenting their Volunteer of the Year Award in the very near future.

**Million dollar rains come**

One of these days, it was bound to rain, but would it be too late for area farmers?

Local crop growers were quick to notice deteriorating crops last week as the first signs of drought began to show in fields of corn and soybeans.

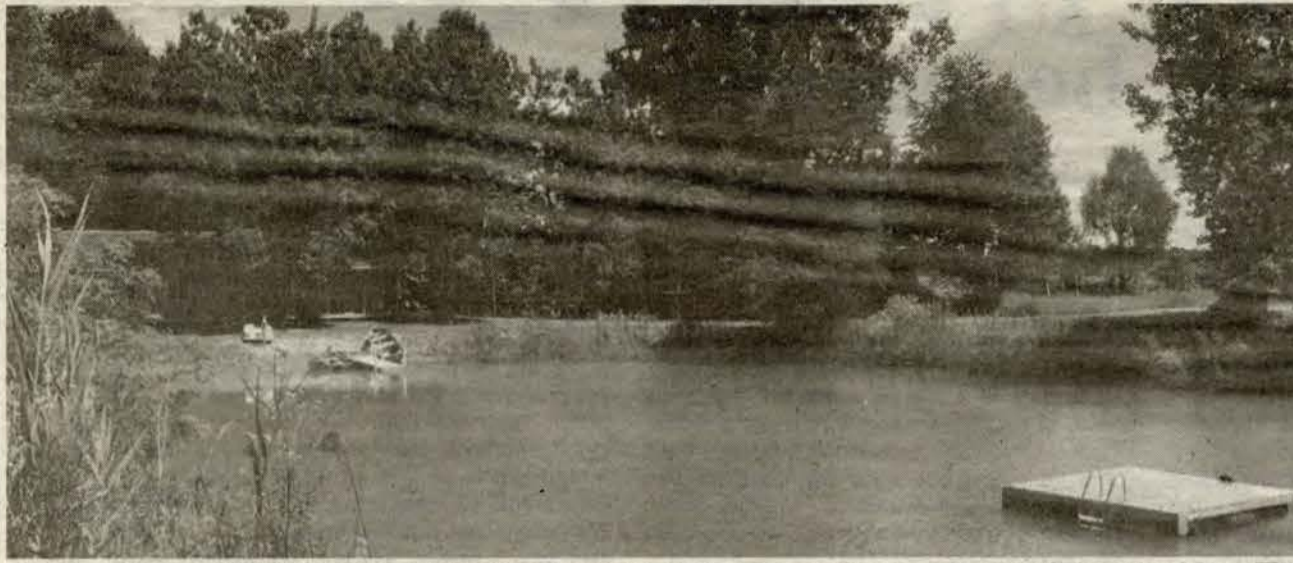
Those feelings evaporated last Friday morning as the much needed rain finally arrived.

Local Environment Canada statistician Keith Kelly who has his station outside Rodney,

said it was a bleak month up to that point. He reports that as of Thursday afternoon, July 18 there was only 1 millimetre of rain for the first 18 days of July. That sprinkle came July 8.

Last week early signs of drought were appearing across Southwestern Ontario in fields of corn and soybeans and among many vegetable fields. It is hoped last week rains were "million dollar rains" and saved the crops.

# Attention grows on Eagle wetlands



This is not your traditional appearance for a wetland pond, according to conservation authorities. The floating dock and boats exhibit human activity which would be a disturbance, and may be a health concern according to the Elgin-St. Thomas Health Unit. This wetland, located in Eagle has been in the news lately since an application has been made to build a church on the property.

by Keith Peever  
The Chronicle

They have good intentions but have picked a bad location. That is the sentiment coming from neighbours of a property owned by Rick and Brenda Gordon who own part of the Eagle wetlands.

For the past three months, complaints have been coming to the Municipality of West Elgin over what residents feel is mistreatment of the Eagle wetlands by members of the Melody Fellowship Word of Faith Church property located at 10128 Graham Road in Eagle.

Those complaints led to a public information meeting on May 23 which aired concerns and heard the plans for a new church on the property by the owners.

This month, the Municipality and the Lower Thames Conservation Authority have confirmed the property is classified as a wetland.

Neighbours came out to the May meeting and voiced their complaints about such an institution coming in for fear of disruption of the wetlands and how it would also affect the neighbouring agricultural lands.

Back in May, many of

the neighbours proved they were not in favour of the church in the wetlands and voiced their concerns to West Elgin council.

Neighbours Marlene and Ron Payne said they feel they have been pegged as the main instigators of the revolt, which they said is not true. Marlene said they and many other neighbours just want the laws to be abided to and if the land is still designated as wetlands, then they should be adhered to.

Valerie Towsley, Resource Technician with the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, said the church parishioners should be concerned about the quality of the water in the pond for swimming or baptising, which some neighbours have already reported has happened.

Towsley said the pond has been used by ducks and other waterfowl and could have high levels of e-coli and she adds there are recent concerns for humans around wet areas with the latest threat of mosquitoes carrying the West Nile Virus.

When contacted, George Dawson Manager of Health Protections Program with the Elgin-St. Thomas Unit said he was very concerned about the issue.

"We do not recognize this as a bathing area. We consider it an irrigation pond," said Dawson on Thursday.

Dawson said the Health Unit will be acting as an adviser and will be contacting the Gordons stating the dangers of swimming or being in the pond.

Dawson said they have real concerns over levels of e-coli that may be in the pond.

"That pond is very deep and is open to wildlife," said Dawson.

According to Dawson this wildlife, like humans, carry e-coli and there have been no tests done to see if 015H7 e-coli, which was the fatal form of e-coli in Walkerton, is present in the pond and surroundings. Because it is private property there has been no testing by the Health Unit and it has never been designated as a swimming area.

The bacteria can also cause eye, throat and ingestion infections which Dawson said can be very dangerous.

"It makes people very sick," said Dawson.

Controversy still continues over the large storage shed that was built on the property. Neighbours have been questioning

whether there have been church meetings in that building. The Pastors Rick and Brenda Gordon have stated publicly they have not.

West Elgin's Building inspector Lorne McLeod said the applicant was approved for a storage building and although there are extra additions, including drywall and a porch area, the permit is still valid.

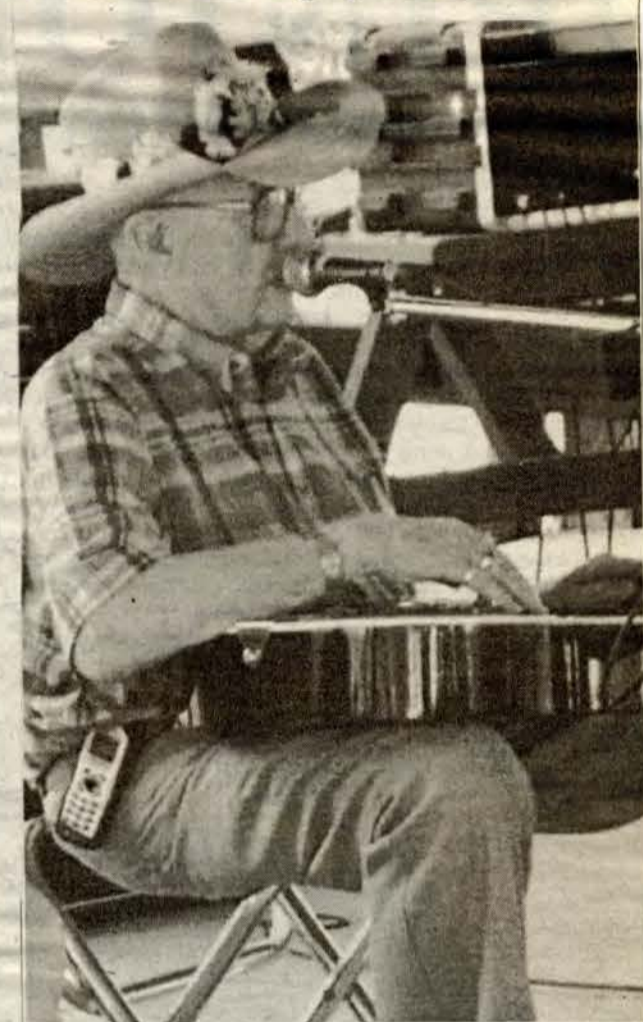
Three weeks ago the Municipality of West Elgin reviewed the latest complaints from Eagle residents and wrote a letter to the Gordons stating that church services are not to be held on the property or at their home.

The Gordons have an application to build a church on the property.

They declined to comment last week.

JUNE 2002

## Local voices at popular Jamboree



Earl Bobier of Dutton was one of the local entertainers who performed at the 1st Annual Dutton/Dunwich Jamboree held June 1. Bobier is a member of the band - Lake Erie Wood Choppers.

The Chronicle

JULY 2002

## Relay for Life raises \$100,000



This is the 6 am victory picture of West Elgin participants of the second annual Relay for Life held June 13 at St. Joseph's high school track in St. Thomas. Shown in front are, team Captain Darleen Ford and Jim Ford. Back row l-r are Bonnie Vowel, Nan Wardle, Rosemary Leith, Rosalie Krebsz and Helen Kovacs. Several friends showed support by joining them by walking through the night. The 45 teams involved raised \$100,000 for the Canadian Cancer Society. Several friends joined the relayers throughout the night on the track giving them moral support.



Some Yes We Can! participants from WESS., left to right, teacher Jamie "Mohawk" Fraser, Morgan McWilliam, Berta Prelaz, Beth McMurchy, and John Peternel. Fraser bet the students they could not raise 3,000 cans within a school campaign and agreed to have his head shaved if they did. The students raised 3,080 and Fraser will have a "mohawk" hairstyle on Monday December 16. Interesting enough, if the students had raised 920 more cans, The Chronicle editor Keith Peever would have lost his beard.

DEC. 2, 2002



### Festival time in West Lorne!

2002

It was festival time from May 16 to May 19 in West Lorne as the Portuguese community held three days of events during the Holy Spirit and Lady of Fatima Religious/Cultural Event. Hundreds of people took part in the four day events. On Sunday, the procession was held with accompaniment by the West Elgin Secondary School Band and the West Elgin Legion Colour Guard. It was then followed by the well known feast held at the West Elgin Arena.

Monday June 10, 2002

## Caravan of Caring made local communities proud



The first ever Caravan of Caring was been called an incredible success. Seen here are Rodney firefighters holding up the huge \$3,728 cheque to Childrens Hospital of Western Ontario, while Michelle Slater, chief organizer looks on. At the right hand corner of the cheque is Rodney firefighter Travis Murray, along with Sparky the fire dog. The caravan travelled through Rodney, West Lorne, Dutton, Wallacetown, Shedden, Iona, Talbotville, St. Thomas, Lambeth on June 1 and ended in London to at the Children's Miracle Network. Volunteer firefighters and caravan volunteers collected money from people in each municipality. Sirens blew alongside the happy faces of caravan volunteers and firefighters. Slater said the wonderful support has resulted in plans for another Caravan of Caring for 2003. 25 (photo by Mona Blain)

The first ever Caravan of Caring on Saturday June 1 brought many tears of joy and positive emotions and guarantees a second endeavour in 2003.

Michelle Slater chief organizer of the event said everyone involved had a great time and they were very thankful for the community spirit of giving. The first ever Caravan of Caring raised \$3,728 for the Children's Hospital of Western Ontario.

Travelling from Rodney to West Lorne through Dutton, through Wallacetown, through Shedden, Iona, Talbotville, St. Thomas, Lambeth and onto London to arrive at the Children's Miracle Network, the volunteer firefighters and volunteers collected money from people in each municipality.

The Caravan was met at each municipality with a host firetruck that led the caravan through the town, villages and cities. One firetruck - the 1941 pumper from Rodney made the trip from start to finish.

Slater said they were busy accepting the donations throughout the 8 hour trip. At one point she said she called ahead to CHWO to announce a large cheque was coming. She said herself and CHWO members were expecting approximately \$1,500 to \$2500 at that point. When the final tally came up at \$3728,

everyone was ecstatic whether they were Caravan volunteers or CHWO workers.

Slater said they are thankful for the West Elgin donations on a very busy day and weekend. Two car shows, a jamboree, safety day camp, rounded out other activities and events for that day. The strong support has guaranteed there will be another Caravan of Caring for CHWO in 2003. It will be held the same weekend - as part of the Children's Network Telethon.

#### Must be thanked

Michelle wanted to thank the following for their tireless efforts:

Rodney Fire Department, West Lorne Fire Department, Dutton/Dunwich Fire Department, Southwold Department, St. Thomas Fire Department, London Fire Department and also the following individuals - Rick McFadden, Dennis Lee, Custer and Austin Carver, Les and Paxton Knott, Randy and David McDonald, Kevin Schleichauf, Travis Murray, Tim and Mona Blain and kids (Amanda, Taylor, Julia, Nat and Kelsey), Karry Howard, Ed Doherty, Katie, Kyle and Kelsey Slater, Mike Gardiner, Elgin Bus Services, Kellogg's and Coca-Cola.

Pre-event donations came from Knights of Columbus, St. Mary's Ladies, West Lorne Kiwanis and Rodney Lions.



Special to The Free Press

**DEDICATED:** Bob Padfield put "his whole heart and soul" into caring for his community.

## County mourns 'Rodney Bob'

Bob Padfield's kind heart and hard work made him a legend.

SARAH YOUNG  
Special to The Free Press

Elgin County lost one of its most dedicated — and possibly largest — ambulance operators when Bob Padfield died Nov 17.

He was 54.

At six-foot-six, Padfield was known in Rodney, a community of about 5,000, as a big, gentle bear.

He played football for the University of Waterloo, was drafted by the Ottawa Rough Riders then traded to the Saskatchewan Roughriders, but never played in the Canadian Football League.

Instead, he returned to Rodney to work for his father's ambulance service where he'd helped out since he was 14. He took over the Rodney Ambulance Service, which covers the west end of Elgin County, about 20 years ago.

Padfield was at the station every day, whether he was working or not.

"There wasn't anything Bob wouldn't do for the community," said Kevin Langlois, a part-time paramedic who knew Padfield for nearly 20 years.

Padfield was a generous man, Langlois said. He repaired and offered wheelchairs and crutches free of charge to residents who couldn't afford them.

"He loved his job. He put his whole heart and soul in it," Langlois said.

"When a call came in the middle of the night, Bob would jump on his bike and come flying down West Alley. Even though we were sleeping there, he'd actually beat us to the ambulance."

Part-time paramedic Kevin Langlois

Padfield's death was "a great loss to Rodney and a great loss to the EMS community," Langlois said.

"Bob was very professional. He had the same level of concern whether it was three in the morning or one in the afternoon."

Paramedics work a 12-hour shift, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., with a crew on standby through the night.

The Chronicle

SEPT 2002

## Gospel concert held September 22

### SONGS AND PRAISE AT WEST LORNE BAPTIST CHURCH

"With a Voice of Singing," Marilyn

Zivkovic of West Lorne and the Jazz Trio of Wayne Carroll, his nephew Patrick Carroll and Kevin Usher will sing and play "Praise Songs" in a Gospel Concert at the West Lorne Baptist Church on September 22 at 3 pm.

This benefit for the

Baptist Church will also feature the release of Marilyn's new Gospel CD featuring traditional to modern music. Look for *The Holy City, The Lord's Prayer, He Touched Me, Wade in the Water* and many more.

The Jazz Trio will entertain with such

instrumental favourites as *Old-Tyme Religion* and *Just a Closer Walk with Thee*.

This concert is sure to be an afternoon of superb Christian Music and we invite you to come and enjoy. Tickets are \$10 and are available from West Lorne Baptist Church. Call 768-1023 or 768-0152.



West Lorne singer Marilyn Zivkovic will be performing with others at West Lorne Baptist Church

## DeBoer convicted of counselling to commit murder DEC. 9 2002

by Times Journal Staff

Cheryl Diane DeBoer of West was willing to pay \$10,000 to have her husband killed, and was handed a 15-month conditional sentence Thursday after being convicted of counselling to commit murder. DeBoer was sentenced in Superior Court in St. Thomas by Justice John McGarry of London.

She was described as the long-suffering victim of years of spousal abuse by her husband, Reginald, against whom she directed her unsuccessful plot.

Her husband was incarcerated following convictions for assault against her in October, 2000. Later that

month, DeBoer travelled to Drumbo, Ont., to visit a relative where she offered a distant relative, John McLean, \$10,000 to kill her husband.

At one point DeBoer met with an OPP undercover officer who taped their conversations. Later, she met with the same person, and provided a picture of her husband and a cheque for \$10,000.

Terms of her conditional sentence are that she remain in her home, leaving only to go to work, attend church, for medical appointments and weekly shopping trips. She must also perform 100 hours of community service. DeBoer was also fined \$300 for possession of marijuana.

Padfield would go home for the night, but the other medics often slept at the station.

"He always amazed me," said Langlois. "When a call came in the middle of the night, Bob would jump on his bike and come flying down West Alley."

"Even though we were sleeping there, he'd actually beat us to the ambulance."

"It turned into a race, with us always trying to beat Bob," he added.

Padfield was so well known in the community he often got emergency calls at home.

"If an elderly person fell and couldn't get up, people just said, 'Call Rodney Bob,' and he would go help them," said Jim Price, Padfield's brother-in-law and vice-chairperson of Health Trust, an emergency medical service provider to Simcoe County. Price is temporarily managing the Rodney Ambulance Service.

"His life was one that was truly dedicated to ambulance service, and that's what made him so unique," Price said.

"We will continue the service of providing emergency medical coverage to residents, with the kind of patient care that Mr. Padfield's high-ethics and standards would be proud of," said Elgin County Warden John Wilson.

Nov 11, 2002

## Chamber steps up

### LOOKS TOWARDS CHANGES

The West Elgin Chamber of Commerce is ready to make big steps in social development and also build up the local commercial sector.

The most recent step came last week when the Chamber approved its own bylaws. This brings the West Elgin Chamber of Commerce under the umbrella of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce.

The community does not have to look any further than the agenda and minutes of the meeting last week to tell the Chamber is ready to roll up their sleeves and get on with business.

West Lorne cross walks. The Chamber will be writing a letter to the municipality in favour of the latest quest to see safety at the West Lorne intersection at Graham and Main Street. Currently West Lorne resident Suzanne Kirschner has a petition asking that there be cross walks at the intersection.

The Chamber has shown favour in seeing "no-parking" signage and markings where vehicles are not to park. The Chamber is also showing its favour in asking that there be serious enforcement of the current no parking bylaws.

The Chamber is trying to find common-ground on the issue without hurting downtown parking.

If a complete crosswalk is set up along Graham and Main Street, there can be no parking for 30 metres on either side of the lights. Chamber members are afraid that this would be very detrimental to downtown parking and eliminate too much parking space.

Supporting the

The Chamber has decided to offer a trophy this year to the best business float that participates in both the West Lorne and Rodney Parades. The Chamber is hoping to see increased participation in both parades. Late last year the Rodney Parade committee resigned after many years of service. Rather than letting the parade die, both the Chamber and Municipality of West Elgin have been working to make the parade viable. A decision was made to have the parades one day after the other. This November 29 the West Lorne Parade will be held at 7 pm. On Saturday November 30 the Rodney Parade will be held at 1 pm.

Members of the Chamber were also pleased to hear the "Welcoming Packages" have become a great success. Many different businesses have taken part in the welcoming package that includes unique deals for new residents and businesses in West Elgin. The bag that is used and given to each new individual has the picture of Nellie's Hill at Port Glasgow.

Chamber President Tom Jones said last week things were definitely coming together for the organization. "Every aspect of the diversified committees are meeting their objectives. We are actually ahead of previous goals," he admitted.

"Due to this, the future looks promising. The next thing to do is continue to build on our strong community ties and improve the quality of life in West Elgin."

NOV. 9, 2002 The Chronicle

## Drunk driver gets four years

Eric St. Onge has received a four year penitentiary sentence after being convicted of impaired driving causing death. He received the sentence last Wednesday in St. Thomas court.

On March 23, 2001 the car driven by St. Onge ran a stop sign and t-boned a

van driven by Tressa Gray with her daughter Jeffrica as passenger. Both died from the accident.

Last January St. Onge pleaded guilty to two counts of impaired driving causing death.

St. Onge has also received a 10-year driving prohibition.

St. Onge had a previous assault conviction from a bar fight in Rodney.

Tressa and Jeffrica are survived by their husband/father, Robin, and 13 year old son. Robin now lives in Brockville with their son, Cory.

-- with files from the London Free Press.

AUGUST 14, 2003



Susanne Wilkins of Town and Country Landscaping, has purchased the octagonal barn from Bianca Savik, in hopes of restoring the historical landmark and architectural rarity. She is currently dismantling the barn and will be moving it to Muirkirk.

*Chronicle photo*

## Octagonal barn is on the move

By Scott Hilgendorff  
*The Chronicle*

An architectural rarity is being dismantled near West Lorne this month in hopes to preserve it later.

The octagonal barn owned by Bianca Savik, is one of only a handful left in Ontario and has stood on the Queen's Line property since late 1880s. It's now being taken apart to relocate it to Muirkirk, where its new owner, Susanne Wilkins, operates a landscaping business.

"This came as a surprise. This wasn't what I was going to be doing this summer," said Wilkins.

The barn can be seen from Highway 401 where hundreds of cars pass every day and Wilkins said, "I don't think I've ever driven by and not looked for the octagon barn."

Savik has been at the farm since the 1950s and used to use the barn for sheep, cattle and pigs and stored hay in the mow.

No longer in use that way, Savik said there simply wasn't any more need to keep the barn anymore and she was concerned about having to maintain it.

At the same time, knowing it was rare, she didn't want to tear it down.

"I grew up with that farm. It's always been a part of life. I'd like to see it somewhere else rather than knock it down after it's got rotten," she said.

The barn was beginning to deteriorate and Savik has spent the past several months looking for someone interested in restoring its historical significance.

"We thought if we could find someone who would want it and would restore it, they could just come and get it," said Savik.

Wilkins heard about it back in May, had

her father, Bob Spence, come back and look at it for a second opinion on whether or not she could effectively take it down and set it back up again.

She made herself wait a week to be sure she was making the right decision to take on the project and decided, "It's too important just to let go."

Savik said she was glad Wilkins was interested in the barn because Wilkin's artist mother, Marie Spence, had been commissioned several years ago, to paint a picture of the barn.

It was part of a municipal project to have paintings done of several of the area's landmarks.

"It's kind of nice that Marie's daughter is taking the barn," said Savik.

Wilkins is thinking about whether to try to put the barn in a place where the public has access to it because of its age and rarity but at the same time, it's still a functioning barn she is considering using.

Regardless, she still has to figure out how to get it back up again after they've finished taking it down and moving it.

She's had architectural drawings done and is numbering all the pieces to the drawing to help make it easier to put it back together.

The exterior came off easily for Wilkins but the roof and supports of the structure posed a harder challenge.

Working with her children and staff from the landscaping business, she's had some help with the project, but none have had experience with a project like this before.

"Ignorance is bliss. You can only deal with the next crisis as it comes," she said.

Wilkins expects it might be two years before it is restored at its new home.



PICTURES DONATED BY  
HELEN VAN BRENK  
WALLACETOWN W. I.



# Crop circle the real deal, says researcher of event

By Scott Hilgendorff  
The Chronicle

There are crop circles that are hoaxes and legitimate crop circles that defy explanation and remain a mystery as to their formations.

The formation appearing in Lawrence Holland's wheat field last week is the real thing, said a specialist who came to the field Aug. 13 to investigate.

The wheat was bent over, bearing ring-shaped marking suggesting a heat source, a common attribute of legitimate crop circles, said Joanna Emry of the Canadian Crop Circle Research Network.

The organization she works for investigates and documents crop circles, determining which are hoaxes, deliberately made by someone, who which are real and remain unexplained as to their formation.

While the source of crop circles remains a mystery and little scientific research is done, thousands of the formations have appeared around the world.

In the past month, there have been circles appearing in the Hensall and Brussels area in Huron County and now one in Holland's field at Erin Line and Willey Road.

Holland has farmed there for 55 years and has never seen anything like it.

It was discovered last Tuesday while the wheat was being harvested and Holland left the area



Lawrence Holland stands at the edge of the largest of two crop circles that appeared in his Wallacetown wheat field last week while, below, a steady flow of spectators came to check out the formations.

around the circles untouched to give investigators and spectators a chance to check it out.

One circle in the field is 21 metres around, connected by a narrow, 18-metre path that leads into a second, smaller circle that measured 13 metres.

Some theories say crop circles are formed by UFOs but Holland doesn't believe that.

He said it's difficult to break wheat stalks with anything but machinery but can't explain how they could have been laid down

and matted in perfect circles.

"Whatever laid the wheat down did a beautiful job. It's just like a mat, a perfect mat," he said.

He speculates a whirlwind, a naturally occurring wind pattern farmers are familiar with, could cause such a phenomenon.

"It's not the case of spirits or kids," said Holland.

The circles attracted a steady flow of spectators last week, wearing a path into the field to be able to stand in the circles and check them out.

Chronicle photo

Calls also came to the Holland household, including one from a man in eastern Elgin County who attested to seeing UFOs in Elgin County and was certain their formation was caused by one.

Most calls were from media or family and friends.

People visiting had different theories but also leaned toward not really understanding what could cause the formation.

Whatever causes them, Emry said the Wallacetown circles were not a hoax.

CURRENT  
EVENTS  
2003

# Black out causes no serious problems

By Scott Hilgendorff  
The Chronicle

Western Elgin County survived last week's blackout with no major incidents reported.

"We got through without any problem. It wasn't a real hardship for everyone," said Dutton-Dunwich Administrator Ken Loveland.

He and West Elgin Administrator Joanne Groch said there was no need to enact any measures from the emergency plan, although firefighters changed their methods of communication and patrolled the neighbourhoods in Dutton and Rodney in case there was need.

Loveland said they could have implemented the emergency plan at any time but there was no need on Thursday or Friday.

While the power outage was widespread, affecting more than 50 million people across

Ontario and into Michigan, Ohio and New York State, it didn't cause a huge impact on the rural communities of western Elgin County.

"We've had power out longer in the winter during a storm," said Loveland.

Power had been out for about six hours in Dutton-Dunwich.

In West Elgin, the largest impact was seeing the pool in Rodney closed Friday because the equipment to keep the water clean was not running.

Backup generators kept the West Elgin municipal office running and, more importantly, the water system, ensuring the safety of drinking water was never compromised during the outage, said Groch.

Elgin County OPP didn't report any major incidents as a result of the blackout but had extra patrols on duty including officers checking for stranded motorists on Highway 401.

Municipal offices opened Monday but were keeping power usage to a minimum, not using air conditioning or any unnecessary equipment.

Some businesses in the area were shut down Friday as roaming blackouts continued to affect the area while work was done to restore the power grid.

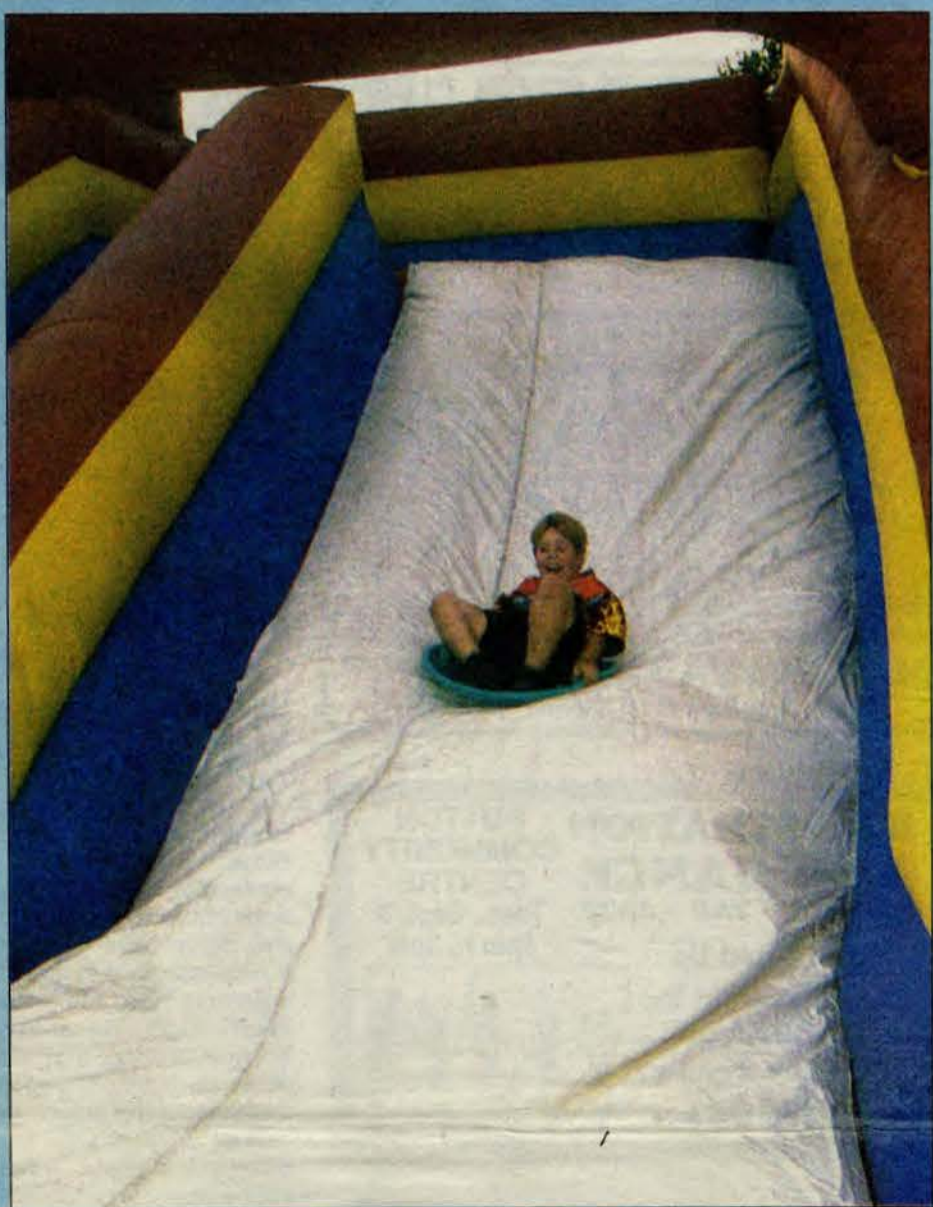
Monday, some area businesses continued to conserve energy but otherwise, there was no further significant impact from the power crisis.

However, concerns about further outages saw long lineups at area gas stations when unreliable power was restored across the area on Friday.

The potential remains, particularly the rest of this week, for further blackouts and brownouts.

Government officials are urging people to continue to conserve energy, especially by avoiding the use of air conditioners, as hot temperatures are expected to return through the remainder of the week.

AUG 21/03

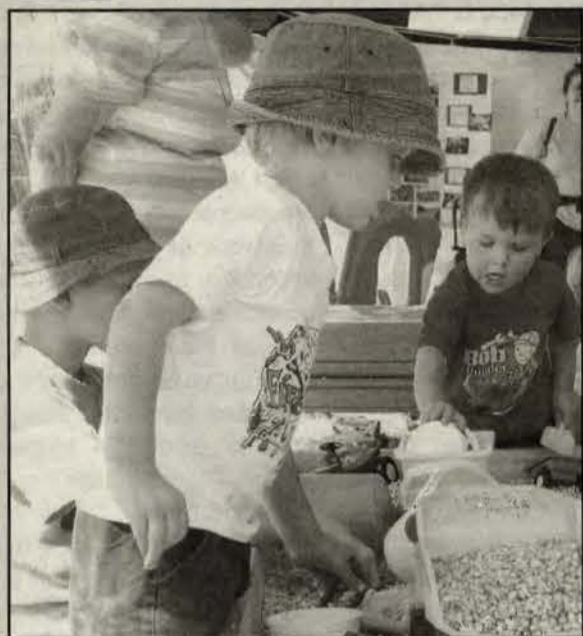


## FAMILY FUN

The West Lorne Downhill Derby Committee hosted a family fun night Friday on Main Street. Joshua Baddams of Rodney enjoyed one of the inflatable slides brought in for the event that also featured a cruise night for classic cars.

SEPT 4/03

Chronicle photo



Liam Brayton enjoyed playing in the crushed corn with friends in the children's tent on the fair grounds.  
*Chronicle photo*



Fair ambassador Melanie Knapp holds up one of the pies auctioned off at the fair.  
*Chronicle photo*



Trish Pearson holds the microphone for Jody Aldred who winds up for a "mom" calling as other contestants look on.  
*Chronicle photo*



The MJM trio, Mike Bennet on the saxophone, Mark Godrey on guitar and Jen Pinder on drums, take part in the Battle of the Bands  
*Chronicle photo*

Fair Prince Cody Vandergulik and fair Princess Brianna Downie with Madelaine Cirka and her guinea pig Beatrice. Cody and Brianna helped judge the pet show. Madelaine and Beatrice won a prize for best dressed.  
*Chronicle photo*



Abigail Smith of Iona gives her partner a warning to settle down in the 4-H Showmanship class.  
*Chronicle photo*



## A message from the president

We live in an ever changing society, but the one thing the community of West Elgin does together, and has for the last 149 years, is celebrate the Rodney Aldborough Agricultural Fair. This year I invite you on behalf of the Board of Directors to "WHERE TOWN & COUNTRY MEET", September 12, 13 & 14.

Each year, countless hours are spent planning and organizing. The fair could not be possible without the support of many people including our loyal exhibitors, corporate sponsors, church and service clubs, municipal council and our dedicated volunteers. The hard work and enthusiasm put forth by these individuals make the fair a success year after year.

The Directors and Associate Directors cannot

unmentioned. Their hardwork, dedication and commitment are invaluable to the community. They make sure the community tradition happens.

So I invite you to be a part of the community tradition. Not by just attending the fair, but being involved. Enter a craft, bake good, or vegetable. Watch the cattle or sheep show for the first time or lead a goat through an obstacle course. By doing so, you will keep our tradition alive.

I look forward to seeing you there!

**A Country Fair  
"Where  
Town and  
Country  
Meet!"**

Jane McGregor

2003

## Grandstand declared safe, fair is ready to go



Recreation supervisor Jeff Slater, Spriet Associates Engineer Kevin McIlmurray and fair board member Devon Pearson discuss the grandstand's inspection last Tuesday.  
*Chronicle photo*

By Rachal Fleury  
For The Chronicle

Engineers have officially declared the grandstand structurally sound and the Aldborough Rodney Agricultural Fair is ready to go Sept. 12-14.

"It's great what teamwork can do," said Devon Pearson, the fair's publicist this year.

While there wasn't any doubt in Pearson's mind once work began to upgrade the grandstand last month, fair board members feared the worst earlier this summer when they learned the grandstand was about to

undergo an engineering inspection.

The inspection came about following a municipal safety audit of all public buildings. Staff determined the aging grandstand should be inspected by an engineer to ensure it was safe to hold the crowds that use it each year to watch some of the fair's special events.

The land in front of the grandstand in the agricultural park becomes centre stage to a variety of events each day and night of the fair.

An engineering report found the grandstand

unfit to hold large enough crowds unless some steel reinforcements were made beneath the building. The need for proper railings along the front of the grandstand was also identified.

Fair board members took their concerns to West Elgin Council in July, worried that with the fair less than two months away, the work would not be completed on time.

Council agreed to make the grandstand a priority with as close to a promise as it could offer that the building would be in use for the fair.

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