

Noteworthy In Norwich

June 30th 2022

Community News, Commentary and Concerns

Volume 2 Issue 1

ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY

I can't believe it's been one year since our first issue was published. So much has happened since then, and yet some days, it feels like nothing has changed.

We have seen two by-elections, rallied as a community to watch our annual Santa Clause parade, and held a memorable Nostalgia Days. Our Fire Department hosted their pancake breakfast to raise funds for The Upper Deck and the Norwich Dollarstore finally opened!

Many of us watched with joy as the community flagpole was erected, and a sense of being seen as the Pride flag flew for a week without incident. It may not feel like a victory to some, but to

those in this town who have experienced rejection, discrimination and violence because of their gender,



sexuality or support of Pride, it means the world.

To feel safe in ones community, for everyone, should mean the world and each of us should strive to create that for our neighbours.

We have had our share of sorrow and loss, businesses closed, buildings lost to fire. Trees that have stood for decades by windstorm or mans hand.

It has been a year to remember. Every issue published has come with emails of support, appreciation, constructive criticism (to which I am grateful, improvement should never cease). Every issue has come with creative difficulties, lessons, and excitement and to that I owe endless gratitude.

Most of all, I know you will all agree, this newsletter would not be what it is without the contributions of Vic Whitcroft and E.A Wild. Here's to another year of writing!

JULY

Hot July brings cooling showers, Apricots and Gillyflowers.

-Sara Coleridge

July, named after the Roman Emperor Julius Caesar

Birthstone

Ruby - symbolizing passion, protection, love and commitment

Birthflower

Larkspur – symbolizing open heart, attachment and conveys feelings of lightness and levity

YOUR GARDEN IN JULY

E.A WILD

Lawn and plant growth slows down considerably in July, but there are still lots of jobs you can do to keep your garden looking good:

Cut back perennials after first flowering to encourage

more flowers, Dead-head annuals, Shorten stems of Fall flowering plants to keep them compact, Remove old flower clusters on lilacs. Keep adding a mixture of "green" and "brown" materials to compost bin, Keep birdbaths, clean and change water regularly

Stay on top of weeding and pests such as Japanese Beetle. Leave caterpillars – small birds such as chickadees need upwards of 5,000 to feed their young, and those that the birds don't get will become beautiful butterflies.

EDITORIAL

VIC WHITCROFT



The end of June sees an end to another pride month. It was reported that pride month was uneventful in Norwich, I beg to differ. The community flag pole as yet has only been used to proudly display the Pride Flag for the allotted 7 day period as set out in the policy covering the pole as written by township council.

The raising of the flag had a small gathering of

supporters on hand to witness what must be looked at as a step in the right direction. Once again Norwich United Church held the annual service recognizing LGBTQ people from the community and surrounding area ending with a short pride walk.

A couple of thefts of LGBTQ items were reported stolen from private property. These thefts were kept quiet as many people who lost flags, myself included, felt it

was futile to call the police.

On another positive note, Canadian Flags have been hung from downtown lamp posts marking recognition of Canada Day in July. Perhaps our next council will see changes to a more progressive, inclusive team that understands DEI. A council not afraid to stand up for what is just and inclusive. If so, maybe the lamp posts can once again hang pride banners for the month of June.

WELL, WHAT ABOUT US?

JENNIFER WILD

It's a familiar refrain come June as Pride comes out in force, and one I would like to take some time to acknowledge. June is more than just Pride month. It's also Men's Mental Health Awareness Month and Indigenous History Month. One cause does not take away the legitimacy of another. We had a flag-pole erected to celebrate individual groups in our community who wanted to be represented, seen and heard. Every individual in this community deserves to be seen, represented and heard. I am not a man, but I love the men in my life, so I speak for their sake. I am not Indigenous, and cannot claim to speak for them; I can however open this platform for their stories, to raise their voices.

I recently posted about Every Child Matters on my Facebook wall, to get a comment of disdain, disregard and criticism regarding the

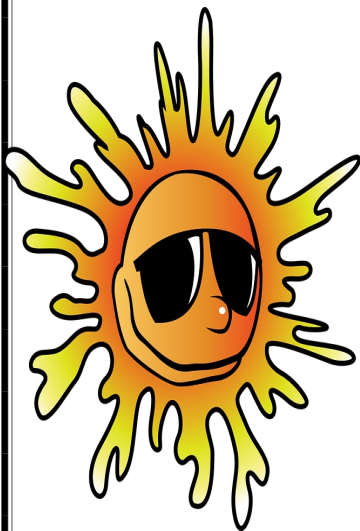
legitimacy of the cause. It broke my heart to think that this cause is not wholly supported or encouraged by my fellow Canadians. To hear men be told, toughen up, you're a man, real men don't *insert feeling/action here* does a disservice to the years of fighting done to bring equality of the sexes about.

Take a minute to read the statistics: Men commit suicide 3x more often than women, it is the second leading cause of death among those 15-34yrs of age. High income countries, such as Canada have the highest rates of suicide among men. Despite these stats, mental health professionals diagnose depression more often in women than in men. The rate of suicide among First Nation people is 24.3/100k, opposed to 8/100k for nonindigenous people. Why is this? Men have been taught to hide their true feelings, to

suppress anything other than a tough exterior, and our indigenous people have had their history, heritage and culture ignored, oppressed and white-washed.

The Indigenous people of Canada have a rich, vibrant history full of more heart soul and passion than any other history written on North American lands. 400 years vs thousands? We are but a blip on the calendar of North America! We should embrace every opportunity to learn about this land before we arrived, with all the passion we pour into discovering our ancestry upon landing on these shores.

This time next year, let June be a month full of celebration, remembrance and support for all residents! June is for Pride, for Indigenous History, for our Men! We have more weeks, and more flags to raise!



SUMMERTIME

VIC WHITCROFT

Now that the day-time temperatures are well into the 30c range, it's time to think about work safe, and play safe, when it comes to outdoor activities. Children at play, adults at work and pets can all be adversely affected by extreme heat and humidity that we experience in Southwestern Ontario during summer months.

For the people at play, common sense things

like staying well hydrated, limiting exposure to the heat and staying in shaded areas can help keep heat stresses to a minimum. If you work out of doors both the Occupational Health and Safety Association green book as well as the Canada Labour Code have rules employers must follow to keep workers safe under these conditions.

Tips for staying cool include, drinking wa-

ter throughout the day, eating popsicles and or icles, taking frequent short rest breaks, and proactively recognizing symptoms of heat related health issues.

The Infrastructure Health and Safety Association, (my former employer) has information pamphlets for workplaces to help identify heat stress, heat stroke, etc. I have posted one below this article.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN JULY:

E.A WILD



What's Happening in July:

- 1 – Canada Day
- 3 – International Plastic bag free Day
- 4 – Caesar Salad Day
- 5-6 – Nostalgia Days
- 7 – National Strawberry Sundae Day
- 15 – World Youth Skills Day
- 16 – National Cherry Day
- 20 – World Chess Day
- 21 – Full Moon – Buck Moon
- 28 – World Conservation Day

From July 3rd to August 11th the sun aligns with Sirius – the Dog Star, giving us the phrase Dog Days of Summer, when the heat and

humidity makes us lathargic we want to just laze around like dogs!

Many people acknowledge and participate in Plastic Free July. This non-profit, independent organization started in 2011 in Australia and now has a world-wide following. Their core belief is “Small changes add up to a big difference”. Their website - plasticfreejuly.org - is packed with information, hints, tips and challenges on how to make changes, which are not limited to just July but can be practiced throughout the year by individuals or organizations. One way we can all cut down on plastic is to take your own food and drinks containers on outings, re-usable bags for shopping, support local farm stands and farmers markets etc. opt for sustainable products and natural

fibres, try making your own toiletries and cleaning products, buy from bulk stores where you can use your own containers such as BulkBarn in Woodstock – you even get a discount if you take your own containers to shop on Sustainable Sundays.

For Tennis fans the third of the four Grand Slam Tournaments takes place between July 1st and 14th in the UK. Wimbledon is the oldest tennis championship in the world, it has been held since 1877. Tennis is thought to have originated during the 12th century in the cloisters of Monasteries of Northern France. It is the world's 3rd most popular sport, Soccer being first and Cricket in second. One of the highlights of “Wimbledon fortnight” are the traditional refreshments - Pimms and strawberries and cream!

Heat stress

Explain dangers

When your body loses too much sweat through heavy labour or working under hot, humid conditions, you can become dehydrated. If your body doesn't have enough water to cool itself down, your temperature can rise above 38°C. That's when you can get a heat-related illness such as:

- Heat rash (plugged sweat glands)
- Heat cramps (salt loss from sweating)
- Heat exhaustion
- Heat stroke.

HEAT EXHAUSTION is when your body cannot keep blood flowing both to vital organs and to the skin for cooling.

Symptoms

- Weakness, feeling faint
- Headache
- Breathlessness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Difficulty continuing work.

Treatment

Get medical aid and cool down (move to a shaded area, loosen clothing, and drink cool water). It takes 30 minutes at least to cool the body down from heat exhaustion. If it's not treated quickly, it can lead to heat stroke.

HEAT STROKE is a serious medical emergency. You can die from it. Your body has used up all its water and salt and cannot cool itself. Your temperature rises to dangerous levels.

Symptoms

- Confusion and irrational behaviour
- Convulsions or loss of consciousness
- Lack of sweating—hot, dry skin
- High body temperature—40°C or more.

Treatment

If a co-worker shows symptoms of heat stroke, you should act fast.

- Call the local emergency number or get the worker to a hospital.

- Take steps to cool the worker down (e.g., put them in a tub of cool water or give them a cool shower, spray them with a hose, or wrap them in a cool, wet sheet and fan rapidly).
- If the worker is unconscious, don't give them anything to drink.

Identify controls

- When temperatures start to increase in the spring, your body needs to become used to working in the heat. Don't overdo it. Your body will gradually adjust to working in the heat over time.
- Wear light, loose clothing. Light-coloured garments absorb less heat from the sun.
- Use PPE that allows sweat to evaporate. Consider cooling vests and reflective clothing. If wearing a hardhat, wear a hardhat tail to protect the neck from direct sunlight.
- Drink at least 1 cup (250 ml) of water every half hour. Don't wait until you feel thirsty or until your regular break.
- Avoid coffee, tea, beer, or carbonated soft drinks that can make you go to the bathroom.
- Avoid eating hot, heavy meals that can increase your body temperature.
- Try to do any heavy, physical work earlier in the day, before it gets too hot. Seek shade and reduce time in the sun during peak temperatures.
- Be alert to any symptoms of heat stress in yourself and your co-workers.
- Remember that your physical condition can affect your ability to deal with the heat. Age, weight, fitness level, health conditions (e.g., heart disease or high blood pressure), recent illness, or medications can all affect your ability to withstand high temperatures.

Demonstrate

Show your crew the location of any cooling stations, water fountains, or shaded break areas on the site.

If your company has a heat stress policy, review it with them.

ROAD SAFETY

Ontario's roads are among the safest in North America. For 24 years in a row, Ontario has ranked among the top five jurisdictions for road safety. In 2020, Ontario ranked number one in road safety with the lowest fatality rate in North America while also achieving overall reductions in fatalities and serious injuries, despite annual increases in the number of licensed drivers. Source, (Ontario Annual Road Safety Report).

The volume of traffic on Ontario roads has never been as high as it is today. You can certainly count on it becoming more congested as the years pass. The future of safety on Ontario roads is solely up to road users like you and me.

Today in Ontario there are about 10,706,382 licensed drivers, out of an estimated population (2020) 14,721,852 people. The year 2020 saw 530 people fatally injured in this province. This number is down from an all time high of 1959 souls dead in 1973 from automobile collisions. 530 fatalities is far too many, but why the drop? Car manufacturers have made strides in improving the safety features built into modern cars. Today cars have crumple zones, air bags, brake assist, ABS brakes and many more. There are also features that warn of traffic in blind spots and in conflicting areas around your car.

Despite the drop in deaths and the rise in registered vehicles on our roads, it is not uncommon to see drivers and passengers not wearing seat belts. On a daily basis vehicles of all descriptions speed up and down

VIC WHITCROFT

roads including residential streets to freeways and all other types or roads. Distracted driving continues to be a threat, road users, eating, drinking and texting are a few examples of distracted driving. Needless to say impairment from drugs and alcohol remains problematic.

People behind the wheel play a huge role in collision free driving. The psychology of driving is complex. Driver conditions like a distracted driver, an angry driver, one who is fatigued or perhaps in a hurry, have to realise they are at risk of a collision. Then we have new drivers or a driver who is operating a car new to him or her. Orienting oneself to the location of vehicle controls while stationary is less risky, thereby less stressful than trying to find these features while driving. Now combine all of these driver traits, add a good amount of entitlement and the recipe is complete, you have a down home recipe for disaster!

A driver who has very fast reflexes will take 3/4 to perceive a driving hazard, an additional 3/4 to react to that hazard, if travelling 60 miles per hour, 88 feet per second, this means you travel 132 feet before your brakes take hold. In metric it goes like this 75 metres before braking takes hold. As drivers age and reflexes diminish these distances become longer, the same applies when a driver is impaired, tired and not paying full attention to the task of driving.

Attitude is critical when driving. If you drive with a bad attitude or think the rules don't apply to

you, you are a collision looking for a place to happen.

Looking at this from a different perspective, road crashes account for many more deaths than air crashes. With this in mind, think about boarding an airliner being operated by a pilot who thinks the rules apply to everyone but him or her. The pilot knows the aircraft is less than airworthy, but ignores all the problems with the aeroplane. The pilot, having had a couple of beers, thinks, "Well I've only had a couple, I should be okay to fly." Would you fly with this pilot?

Knowing driving is statistically more dangerous, driver's attitudes continue to allow them to drive in vehicles that will not pass roadworthiness standards.

Statistics show if you are driving on a Friday in August you have a greater chance of being involved in a fatal collision than at any other time. Don't let your guard down however, stats from other days and months show too many fatal and injury producing collisions can happen at any time in the blink of an eye. Long weekends always require extra caution as this time can be a deadly time to drive.



PROPOSED BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS

VIC WHITCROFT

In the afternoon of June 27, 2024, council members and municipal staff from Norwich Township, City of Woodstock and Oxford County held an information session at the Oxford Centre Hall to explain the proposed boundary adjustments that will impact Ward 4 in our township.

Before the meeting got underway, a scan of the room, slowly filling to near capacity showed laptops, and bureaucrats, combined with cacophonous, deafening chatter.

With this said the speakers were well prepared, putting their best foot forward stating the facts, using carefully chosen words like proposed, if approved, consultation with input from the public, no land use changes and other words that were meant to reassure the crowd that nothing is as yet carved in stone. What they meant was, no land use changes at this time and before any changes take place all the required steps would have to be met. Environmental studies and so on would be done before any changes take place for land use. So eventually the proposed 974.01 acres being sought after by the City of Woodstock will become industrial land, if the city can meet all required approvals. Note some wetlands will not be developed.

If approved, Township of Norwich zoning by-laws will remain in force, Woodstock City by-laws will apply to property standards, waste, discharge of firearms, tree protection and animals. Street names and addresses will not

change, and no speed limits are due to change.

According to the slides presented, this is not an expropriation and land owners can choose to sell or not. Land owners, under this proposal, if it gets the go ahead have no choice to join the municipality of Woodstock or remain part of Norwich Township, their properties will be inside the boundaries of Woodstock. At some point there is a possibility of a serene farm property, may abut an industrial site, again approvals would have to be sought before this could happen.

If the attraction of prime land near the 401/403 corridor is not to make it industrial, why would Woodstock want it? I asked how this will impact the wards within our township, due to losing a rather large parcel of land in ward 4, will other wards have to be realigned or do we adjust the size of council or perhaps remain as we are.

At the end of the presentation the floor was opened to questions and comments. Many passionate citizens from throughout the township took to the podium with many good questions. Audience input ranged from what, if any, does the Provincial Government have to do with this, to suggestions that the City of Woodstock is

bullying Norwich to hand over a big chunk of ward 4. Because this is an important issue further resident input remains open until August 2, 2024. Copies of the citizen input sheets are available at the township offices.

I did an impromptu exit poll as the approximately 250 people in attendance filed out of the hall. My non-scientific poll simply asked “Are you in favour of the proposal”? 25 people or about ten percent answered the question, everyone answered no, some said hell no, others I won’t repeat. Not a single yes was heard.

When we elect municipal councillors, no matter if they preside over a city such as Woodstock or a smaller community like the Township of Norwich, they run with good intentions, moving into the job do their best. Certainly this means looking out for their constituents best interests.




PUZZLE PAGE

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SPELLING BEE

