

NOTEWORTHY

IN NORWICH

A COMMUNITY NEWS PUBLICATION

Ward Four Candidate Details Her Ideas

Lacey Hird, a last minute entry as a candidate for ward 4, Oxford Centre, outlines her ideas, goals and what her being elected would mean to Ward Four.

Q Why have you decided to run and why did you wait so long to enter the race?

A “I decided to run, well, there was only one other person running in ward four.’ ‘I don’t think that makes for a good political campaign right.’ ‘That’s what politics is, that’s how you get a good council, that’s how you get good government, is by having people run against each other and the best person getting in”.

“Why I waited so long, I am very busy professionally, my youngest daughter plays very competitive sports, she has now decided she is now going to be done her competitive soccer, so that frees up a lot of time to be able to commit this time to doing this if she wasn’t going to be done, I don’t know that I would have been able to put in the time needed.’ So it was a last minute decision, but it has been something I’ve been thinking about.’ ‘Not just this term but previous terms so now is the time to just go for it”.

Q What is your background, schooling, career etc?

A Growing up in Norwich all my life, went to Norwich Public School, I did two years at Norwich High School, then did my grade 11 & 12 at

St Mary's High School in Woodstock.' 'From there I went to Westervelt College and took the Paralegal program, I have been working in the legal field for over twenty years now".

Q Do you feel your representation is more for your ward or the township as a whole?

A "I think you have to look at the township as a whole.' Obviously the people in my ward are going to be coming to me to bring their voice to council, however that doesn't mean that I'm not going to advocate for others in the township if they come to me and there is an issue, or if they'd like something brought up I think if the township as a whole, we're all taxpayers we're working for the entire township collectively".

Q Where do you stand on the LGBTQ situation?

A "It's been out there in the media lots, I am not against anything to do with the LGBTQ.' 'I would prefer if the flags got flown on residences privately as opposed to at the township building, or at the school, only because it's such a huge issue.' 'If the Canadian flag is flying, all of us are Canadian weather we're in that community or not, I think it represents all of us, having said that I think if people want to personally on their own property I have no opposition to that".

Q Are you in favour of the Oxford Safe & Well Plan, voted against by the present council?

A "To be 100% honest I have not went in and done a lot of research on that specific one that they have rejected, as of yet.' 'I need to do some more research on that so I can't really comment on, I would like to review it again myself before I can comment".

Q Would you be in favour of hiring more people to eliminate the township grass cutting contracts?

A “This is a bone of contention with me for many, many, many years.’ The way that administration is spending money on not just that but on taking care of ball diamonds and that kind of thing, definitely is something that needs to be looked into.’ ‘I think there is a much more efficient and cost effective way of dealing with it than what is happening currently”.

Q What are your thoughts on the present number of policing hours we pay for from the OPP?

A “It’s absurd!’ ‘I live in Oxford Centre, but I lived in Norwich all my life before that.’ ‘I’ve lived in Oxford Centre for three years now and you always knew that there was always one or two police for the entire day that’s going to be going through town.’ ‘And, people know that, they know they can get away with the speeding and the recklessness at night because they’re not there.’ ‘How can one or two officers take care of the whole township’? ‘Its crazy”!

Q What do you think is the number 1 traffic calming measure the township should implement to help slow down vehicles around the community?

A “Again, I thinks it’s going to come from the police presence being around, enforcement, and also I don’t know if more stop lights or stop signs, I’m not really sure, I’m going to have to look at the initiative and see where everything is lacking.’ Definitely I think it’s younger individuals know that they’re not going to get away with it, then I think its going to deter it.’ With our justice system there needs to be some stronger penalties for these kids or young adults or whatever in order to really deter others from doing it.’ ‘If they don’t have consequences, set some examples”.

Q You may be the only woman on council, do you have what it takes to push back on issues you feel strongly about?

A “I do!’ ‘I work in the legal field already, so I do have to advocate against the other gender all the time in my career.’ I don’t think it matter weather you’re a male or a female, I think you just have to have your voice out there and you need to stand up for, it not necessarily my, what I want it’s what the people of the township want. That’s who I’m working for”.

Q What should happen to an individual who pleads to council for a new building, promising to use it as he stated his case, then uses it for something different?

A “So I think first there needs to be obviously an investigation done by a by-law officer, of which I think we should have one full time working here in the Township of Norwich, not bringing in somebody from another, Sarnia or where ever they come from to deal with things here.’ ‘So yes I think they should do an investigation, they should get a verbal warning first, then you get a fine.’ ‘I think the fine should just increase monthly, whatever”. For the longer they don’t comply. “Eventually I think there is going to have to be something, were it may have to be torn down if they don’t want to comply.’ ‘I don’t know where to go after fines but, maybe it can be added to their property taxes, again the policing issue right”.

Q What is your number one goal you hope to initiate and or accomplish should you be elected?

A “I want something for ward 4, so, as you know Oxford Centre has been taken out by a tornado previously, and our township building community hall is one of the only ones in the Township of Norwich where you would go if there was a natural disaster, It does not have a

Generac System.’ (Back up emergency generator) ‘We found this out on Canada Day we were there, I was on the Canada Day Committee, we thought there was a tornado coming through so everybody gathered in the building, little did we know it’s on septic and not sewers and on wells therefore nobody could use the facilities while we were hunkered down in this building.’ ‘So that is one of the things I am going to advocate for.’ The township has one over here, Otterville has a place at the fire hall, they have a Generac, Burgessville also has one, Oxford Centre does not”.

Q The township has many illegal vehicles on the roads. The HTA allows for individual townships to enact by-laws allowing these vehicles to be operated legally. E-Scooters, quads, dirt bikes come to mind. Would vote in favour or against such a by-law for these units to be operated legally in the community?

A “On the road I do not think the E-bike, the four wheelers and those kind of, you know.’ ‘They are not intended to be a mode of transportation on the road, they are intended for trails and some of these little scooters, they go ridiculously fast, like the ones that the kids have now.’ ‘I just find that it’s so dangerous”.

Q I’ve heard it said the township should yield to the county, meaning moving to a one tier government, yay or nay and why?

A “Nay, I think the county, you can’t rope that Township of Norwich into one big government with the county.’ They are dealing with municipalities such as Woodstock which is huge, Tillsonburg, Ingersoll, those need their own, I think everybody needs to have their own government, I think it’s way too much for the county to try to police everybody.’ I don’t think we can be treated the same as Woodstock or Tillsonburg or Ingersoll”.

Q How would you vote should an individual approach council to pave a labyrinth in one of our parks? Perhaps the green space at the east end of Brock Street between Lossing Dr and Polden Dr?

A “I would be all for that.’ ‘I think there should be more of that, there should be more space for people to get out and do that kind of thing.’ ‘Ya I would absolutely be in favour of that.

This interview can also be viewed on Byler’s Banter on U Tube in September. The date is yet to be finalized.

Temporary closure of Oxford Road 19 bridge in Otterville

Please note, the one-day closure originally scheduled for September 1 has changed to **Wednesday, September 2, 2026**. Construction schedules are weather dependent and subject to change based on site conditions, contractor availability and other factors.

The next full-day bridge closure is expected to take place on **September 2**.

South Norwich Historical Society Meeting

Tuesday 9th September 6:30 pm

Otterville Station and Woodlawn Place

Join SNHS at our Blacksmith shop (behind the Station) for a Forge Sausage BBQ at 6:30pm. Sausage on a bun, garnishes, and refreshments provided. Bring a salad or dessert for the Pot Luck part. Then stay for Matthew Lloyd's talk on the North Norwich Pioneer Cemetery. Also get caught up on what's happening with our Historical Society, and plans for the Re-enactment at Woodlawn. Everyone is welcome to join in on the fun!

H.Z. Grade 6



I'm excited for the first day of school as I look forward to putting out my nice outfit the night before school, packing all my binders, pencil cases, and books in my backpack. I'm excited to go the first day and see who is in my class and organize my desk. I'm also excited to start a new fresh year with a goal to exceed my marks from last year. I want to do just a little better every year. She also said however, she is not looking forward to walking to school in the winter and indoor recess due to rain. All in all I am excited to go back to school.



Premier Ford Spends Money in the USA

Premier Doug Ford recently rolled out a seven hundred and fifty dollar classroom supplies fund for eligible elementary teachers in Ontario. Some have reported it's a Staples gift card. It's not simply a Staples gift card, it's an ordering system using a single vendor that's been said to be Staple.

The question now becomes, if Doug Ford stands up for Ontario against Donald Trump, as he claims, why is he making this \$750.00 purchase exclusive to Staple? Remember, Staples is a 100% American owned big box office supply store.

That means teachers receiving the new \$750 classroom supply

card have to spend that money through one U.S.owned chain.

In the middle of a trade war, why are Ontario public dollars being directed to an American owned company?

Ford led the way in removing American alcohol from LBCO shelves, why the turn around on school supplies?

Ontario has no shortage of Canadian retailers and local suppliers that can stock our classrooms and support Canadian jobs at the same time.

If you're looking for Canadian-owned office supply alternatives, some options include Grand and Toy, Dollarama for basics, Canadian Tire, and Scholar's Choice in Ontario.

At the Museum Guest article by Matthew Lloyd

Norwich & District Historical Society's Heritage Dinner is back for 2026!

If you've never been to a Heritage Dinner, it is the biggest fundraiser of the year for the Norwich Museum and Archives. On Saturday 24th October, from 5pm to 9pm at Oxford Centre Hall, attendees will enjoy a three-course roast beef dinner catered by Jordan's Divine Dish with beef donated by NorPac. Each year, we welcome a speaker for an after dinner talk on a variety of subjects – this year's speaker is photographer Mark Zelinski.

Alongside the dinner we run our Silent Auction – your best opportunity to support the Historical Society and get something from a local business in return. This year, we're bringing part of the auction online so that if you can't make the dinner, you still have the opportunity to support the Historical Society as we preserve the history and culture of Norwich Township. Look out for the online auction's launch on September 16th! (<https://www.32auctions.com/NDHShheritagedinner2026>)

Tickets for the dinner are \$50.00 and include the first drink (alcoholic and non-alcoholic). They are available at the museum, from Norwich & District Historical Society board members, or online (link: <https://www.universe.com/events/heritage-dinner-silent-auction-2026-tickets-JZ7Y34>)

We look forward to seeing you there!

Mark Zelinski: "Niagara Escarpment: Land Between Waters"

Zelinski's presentation of "Niagara Escarpment: Land Between Waters" brings exquisite focus to the environmental treasures of the

Niagara Escarpment UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve, and to the diverse Indigenous and settler communities that thrive along its rugged, curving path. The show includes photos and stories from his global travels, and also features Mark Zelinski's stunning photography of Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG), considered the plant and wildlife biodiversity hotspot of Canada.

Mark Zelinski trained as an artist and a designer, and graduated as the top student of OCAD in 1979. His diverse career as a professional photographer has taken him across 80 countries, with clients ranging from The National Film Board of Canada to Panasonic. He is also a publisher, writer, painter, filmmaker, Fellow of Royal Canadian Geographic Society, member of The Explorer's Club, Board Member of UNESCO Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Network and winner of the Canadian Governor General's Medal. Zelinski is best known for his "Books That Heal" initiative - donating 8,000 copies of his photography books to 100 worldwide charities. His internationally acclaimed photography books include forewords by HRH Prince Philip, The Honourable Lincoln Alexander, and The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau. www.MarkZelinski.com



Heritage Dinner Speaker Mark Zelinski



The Winner Is

Scott Batram from Norwich Printworks! Scott found what I thought would be a very difficult & challenging logo discovery hidden in the image of Then and Now. If the truth be known Jennifer, Scotts wife found it however, Scott was the first to report it.

Council Controversy

Editorial by Vic Whitcroft

When an elected representative votes on a motion before council, what is their thought process? Are they voting their likes and dislikes, or perhaps they are doing what they feel is best for the township. There is also the possibility the vote they cast is strictly what they feel is best for their ward.

The danger comes when an alliance is formed and council votes to run the town as they see fit. No checks and balances, no regard for township resident's wishes, no consideration for marginalized groups.

I have noticed, as I attend council meetings either in person or via the video broadcast, some councillors have sidebar conversations. These little side chats could be interpreted as one councillor advising another how to vote on a motion, or it could be the weaker councillor asking what to do.

Weaker councillor? Yes, weaker councillor! Some people are meant to lead, while others are natural followers. We see this in

life, at work, in sports, or on council.

My hope for the newly formed council will be made up of independent thinkers, able to make their own decisions, based on what is good for the township.

Several years ago in London, council was taken to task because they had met unofficially at a restaurant and talked shop during their meal. I would hope there is none of this type of politics happening after the November 17, 2026 swearing in.

I fear potential councillors, while still candidates have had strategy sessions about what they see as a perfect municipal political body. If so & so gets elected, along with this one, that one and the other guy, what's his name will automatically follow suit.

There will come a day when a subject of a controversial nature rears up, at that point we will see the true colours of the council

elected to represent the township.

The present council, in the very early days, dealt with the issue of Pride Flags hanging on downtown streetlight poles. Issues like this one are apt to create controversy again. Another day, another topic, this is when true colours show through. Safe and well Oxford could end up being one of the issue the new council will be faced with. Councillor Toews, a lawyer, took exception to the

wording and led two other councillors to vote nay.

Toews' case was a good one, wording is important however, in the end what will the cost be. Every other municipality in the county voted to accept the plan as written.

Why must Norwich Township go it alone with the potential of hiring a consulting firm to come up with a costly home grown plan?

Back to School

School children return to their classrooms September 8, 2026. It is a sure bet not all students will be delighted by the thought of spending long days in class, as their teacher looks over their shoulders.

With the distraction of chatting with friends, thinking of in class time and the potential for homework, these kids will not be paying full attention to traffic as they walk to and from school.

Please drivers, watch out for kids across the township, along Pitcher Street in Norwich and as they enter and exit school buses. It is everyone's responsibility to look out for each other. More so the car operator is most responsible.

Stop for school buses when the lights are flashing and the stop arm is out.

Open Doors Coffee Club

Tuesday Mornings

9:30- 11:30

Norwich Museum

Note we're still at the museum!

Join us for coffee, cookies and conversation!

**At Norwich District Historical Society
Likely until October 1st**

Everyone Welcome!