

OPAction Newsletter

September
2022



The **2022 Retiree Rally** proved to be another great success. The Norwich businesses once again responded to requests for door prizes., resulting in a prize for every attendee. Great entertainment, interesting tours, delicious food and fun activities ensured that all retirees went home with wonderful memories. This campout is an effective recruitment tool which was proven by the 3 new family memberships that resulted from their first-time attendance. See pages 2 to 12 to learn more.

Goodbye
Tension...
Hello
Pension!

Retired
Young at heart.
Slightly older
in other places.



Spooky Wooky Fall OPA in Tavistock was a hauntingly good time for all who attended. Thirty-two RVs plus some drive-in day visits boosted the attendance. A full agenda provided a variety of fun activities for all ages. For more information see pages 13 to 29.

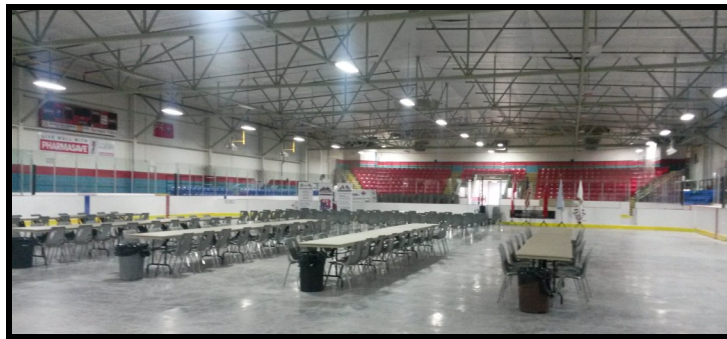
Highlights from the **OPA Voting Delegates' Meeting** are found on pages 23-25.



Retiree Rally 2022

This year's Rally was held on the ice pad of the Norwich Arena since the repairs to the Main Hall are still underway. Although echo-y, the space provided lots of room for meals and activities. It also offered a cool place to escape the heat wave outside as well as free wifi.

Opening Ceremonies were held on Monday evening. M.C. Lynn Acre welcomed 65 campers (35 RVs). Mayor Larry Martin and his wife Sharon brought greetings on behalf of the Township of Norwich. After the announcements, the Golden Wanderers hosted the evening's entertainment—Progressive Euchre. The Meandering Mohawks ended the evening with a “Hospitality” of cookies & coffee. While the campers were relaxing with their evening snack, M.C. Lynn Acre presented 9 door prizes, all of which were gift certificates from local Norwich merchants.



Cheerful smiles greeted campers as Retiree Rally Treasurer Jim & Lynn Sampson did double duty as Registration Chairman.



Carol Shelley of the Golden Wanderers, prepares the cards for the Progressive Euchre game Monday night.



Twenty four campers showed up to play Washer Toss on Tuesday morning. This popular event was hosted by Ruth and Michael Taziar.



Zenia & Don Morrier compete against each other at washer toss....a true test of their marital stability!



(Left) Jim Sampson tosses a washer while opponent Walter Meixner watches.

(Right) First-timer Adele Waite tried her hand at washer toss for the first time ever. Was it “Beginner’s Luck” or talent that earned her a second place prize along with partner Jim Sampson.?



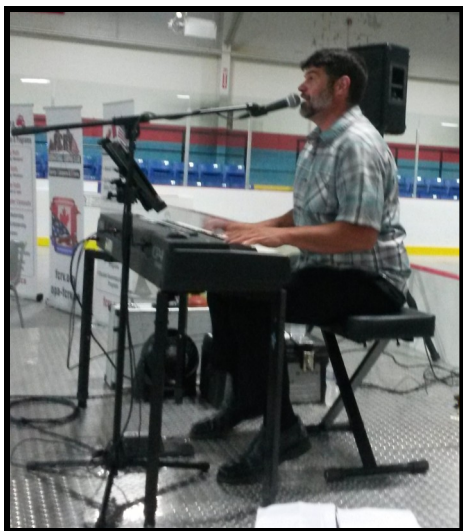
A delicious homemade soup lunch was prepared and served by Gerry Neutel and Connie Skillings of the Oxford Rovers. Fresh bread & butter and fruit cocktail completed the meal.

A “First Timers” Meet & Greet was held after lunch. Provincial Directors Lynn & Lew Acre welcomed John & Adele Waite, Glenn & Norene Burlington, Duane & Charlene Jenner and MJ Ryan. Brochures & flyers were distributed, questions were answered and an overview of FCRV was given.





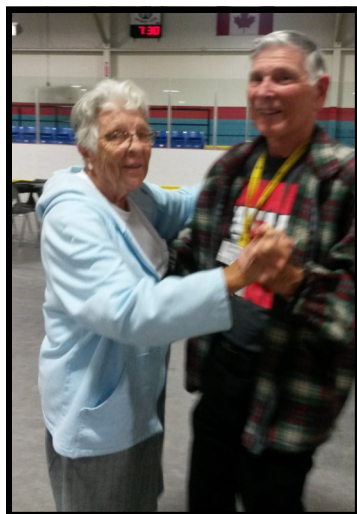
Norwich Volunteer Firefighters once again provided their usual fare of bbq'd hamburgers and sausages on Tuesday evening despite the fact that they were called out for an incident just prior to the supper hour. This ambitious group of guys and gals rallied to the challenge and showed up with smiles and delicious food.



The extremely talented Kiley Joe Masson, of Ingersoll, energized the campers with his enthusiastic performance. He played and sang songs from the 50's and 60's as well as some New Orleans style tunes. Thanks to Pat Richardson for arranging the entertainment.



Campers were introduced to Grayson Masson, Kiley Joe's 10-year old son, who joined his Dad for a few songs, playing his trombone.

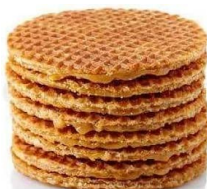


Don & Maureen Blenkinsop took to the floor for some slow dancing. The cement floor prevented this swinging couple from doing their usual jitter bug moves.



Michael & Ruth Taziar wore their "dancing shoes" and enjoyed a slow dance.

The evening ended with a Hospitality of Dutch cookies served by Gerta & Walter Meixner and Gerry Neutel. Twelve more door prizes were given out.





was the topic of the Rally's Devotional Service led by Lynn Acre. Don Lumley and his trusty guitar kicked off the service with Amazing Grace & Kumbiyah. Lynn used various sized batteries in an object lesson on how to recharge our spiritual batteries. A collection of non-perishable food items and cash was received for the Norwich Food Bank. The cash totaled \$150.25.

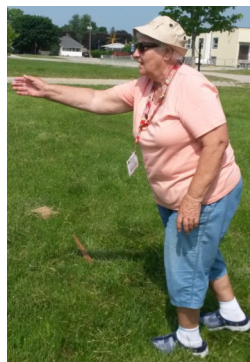


Retiree Olympics , hosted by the Meandering Mohawks followed the Devotional Service.



Above— Barb Cronmiller tosses a ring; Robert Chamberlain putts for a “hole in one”, and Dale Cull aims a baseball towards a bucket.

Below: Angela Cull smacks an “air golf ball”, Gerta Meixner tries for points in Ladder Golf and both John Waite and Lew Acre throw bean bags in the Bean Bag Baseball event.



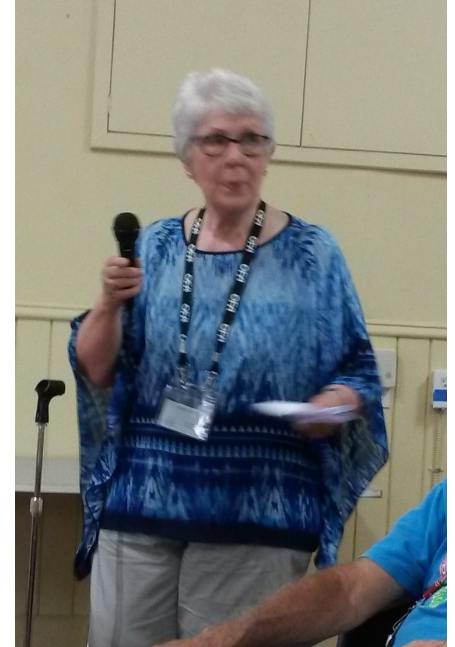
Left: Don Blenkinsop kicks his shoe in the “Shoe Kick” event.

Top Right: Dave Warrington and Judy Richardson of Meandering Mohawks keep track of points earned.

Bottom Right: Spectators gathered under portable shades to beat the heat.



Norwich Museum Tour: Twenty-seven campers gathered in the old Quaker Meeting House where Marie Avie gave an informative talk on the history of early Quakers in the Norwich area.



Marie Avie spoke of the “peculiar people” known as Quakers, who wore “peculiar” clothing, and were pacifists who wouldn’t even spank their naughty children. They were anti-slavery and were involved in the “underground railroad” system of helping escaping slaves from the United States get settled in Ontario. As a religion, none of their clergy were trained nor ordained and women were considered equal in church leadership. Marie Avie’s 3 X great grandmother was Esther Millard, a Quaker evangelist. This meeting house was built after a split happened with the original congregation. The split occurred when they disagreed about including music in their worship services. Emilie Stoe, the first female doctor, was a Quaker. She was raised to believe that she could achieve whatever she set her heart after. Quaker children were encouraged to cultivate their natural talents for the betterment of the community.



Above: A collection of photos showing some of the displays within the Norwich Meeting House itself.

Below: the original home of Peter Lossing, the founder of the Norwich-based Quaker settlement. Inside the building a ladder offers access to the loft above, where extra sleeping quarters were located.

Peter Lossing came from New York State. He bought 50,000 acres of land at 50 cents/acre and then persuaded 50 families to come and settle the land. The very first year in Ontario, this industrious group of settlers cleared land and built a road all the way from Norwich to Burford and Brantford. This road was called “Quaker Road”. Some of the original settler families are still living in the area today.

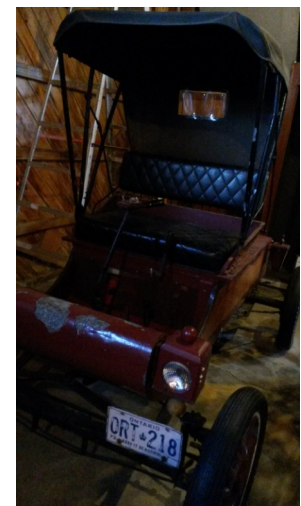




Two barns located behind the Museum were filled with more historical artifacts. Many were associated with Dairy Farming. Left is a “cheese press” and Right is a collection of dairy-related items.



Volunteer Deb stands beside a makeshift jail that was constructed to hold a murder suspect who had been scamming British citizens by selling them non-existent tracks of land. The crook turned to murder in order to cover up his scamming scheme but was caught and tried for murder. Below is a collection of agricultural artifacts, early gas station garage artifacts and a “horseless carriage”





Crissy's Catering of Tillsonburg delivered another delicious meal of roast beef and chicken, mashed potatoes & gravy, mixed vegetables, salad and a variety of pies. Thanks to Lew Acre for organizing the supper.

Dinner
IS BETTER
WHEN WE EAT
Together



The Pleasant Ridge Band brought guitars, ukuleles and voices to entertain the campers on Wednesday night. Many sang along to the familiar tunes. Thanks to Pat Richardson for arranging the entertainment. Later, the Meandering Mohawks served a variety of fruit breads for Hospitality followed by more door prizes.



Thursday's Breakfast was prepared and served by members of the Tri-County Travellers, with some help from some friends. Scrambled eggs, sausages, home-fries, toast & jam, & juice were consumed by the hungry campers.



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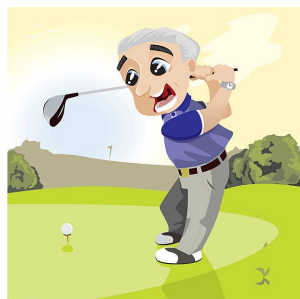


Only 6 campers braved the sweltering heat on Thursday morning to play Bocce Ball, which was hosted by Wayne & Marilyn Rosenberger. Two teams of 3 people each competed for the championship.

Below: Walter Meixner, MJ Ryan and Dave Lawrence take turns throwing a bocce ball.



On Thursday afternoon, eight campers drove to the Mt.Elgin golf course for 9 holes of golf. Meanwhile others gathered in the cool arena for a lesson from Gerry Neutel on making greeting cards. Still others visited local merchants for some shopping.



At 3:00 pm the Retiree Rally's Annual General Meeting was held. Treasurer Jim Sampson predicted a small loss for this year's Rally. Appreciation was extended to Entertainment chair Pat Richardson for quickly responding to the cancellation of our Elvis Impersonator and replacing him with Kiley Joe Masson. Appreciation also went to Gerry Neutel who stepped in to replace Secretary Karen Chatfield. Lynn Acre was instructed to investigate if the neighbouring Legion might offer a "fish & chip" meal for us next year. Next year's Rally will be held during the second week of June and by then, it's expected that the main Hall will be fully repaired. By the end of the meeting, nearly all of the 2023 positions had been filled by volunteers however the following still remain vacant; Daily Coffee, Monday Hospitality, & Thursday Breakfast. Contact Chairman Paul McQuiggan to volunteer jp_mcquiggan@hotmail.com



After the AGM an impromptu performance by Don Lumley and "first timer" John Waite, entertained with a variety of country & western and other popular tunes.

Spooky Wooky

FALL OPA



On Thursday Sept. 1, 2022 , 10 units arrived for the **Early Bird** day. They spent their time setting up, visiting, & relaxing.



Connie Skillings jumped right into character of the Spooky Wooky theme by donning bright blue hair and a cap. Shown left are **Registration** co-chairs Brian & Karen Chatfield and Connie Skillings.

At 7:00 pm campers carried their lawn chairs to the picnic pavilion for **Opening Ceremonies**. After the singing of O Canada and the introduction of the attending dignitaries , popcorn and drinks were distributed. A time for visiting was enjoyed while we waited for it to get dark enough for the movie. A huge white tarp was mounted to the screen wall of the pavilion which ensured that everyone had a good view of the animated movie “The Adams Family”.

Right: “Cowabunga!” M.C. Dale Cull dressed the part, making introductions and announcements before the movie. Do you know why cows wear bells? Because their horns don’t work! Many more “udderly” ridiculous jokes followed as Dale “milked” the crowd for more laughs.



Saturday Sept. 3, 2022



Ben Vandevyvere led a small but mighty group of 2 on a vigorous morning walk.

Pancake & Sausage Breakfast



Above: Ron Brown & Lew Acre cook sausages for the pancake breakfast. Dave Skillings transports the cooked pancakes & sausages inside for serving .



Many hands make light work!
Left: Connie Skillings keeps freshly cooked sausages warm inside a crockpot. Right: Youth helpers Grace Cammaert and Brooke Mather stand by to help serve the food.



Hungry campers lined up with their plates which were soon filled with golden brown pancakes and sizzling sausages. Butter and syrup were also provided along with coffee, tea and orange juice.



Youth Craft



For those who were able to find a pumpkin in September, a pumpkin carving activity took place after breakfast on Saturday. Left: The Blenkinsop girls pose with their creation a vomiting pumpkin. Above: Ben Vandevyvere helps his grandson Kalid while brother Malik works on his own. Below are the finished creations.



For those who were not able to find a pumpkin, some improvised and brought along watermelons to carve instead. Left: Brothers Caleb, Liam & Cameron Scott are busy scooping, drawing and carving their unique creations.

There was even a potato person!
Below are some of the finished creations.



Youth Activities Continued Rock Painting



For those who were unable to find a pumpkin, an alternative activity of rock painting was organized by Dale & Angela Cull, shown above with their two grandsons Everick and Eddie. Some of their creations are shown below.

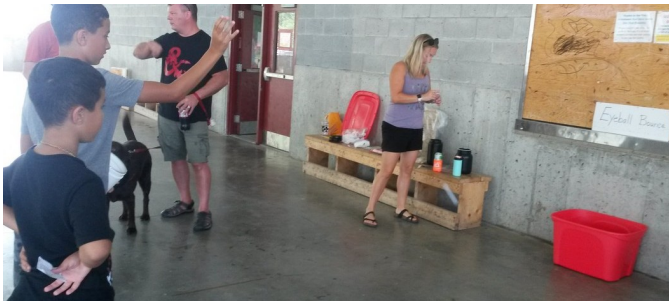


Young artists At Work: The rock painting activity proved to be very popular with the teens. Below Brooke Mather and Grace Cammaert meticulously create impressive artwork.



Ghoulish Games

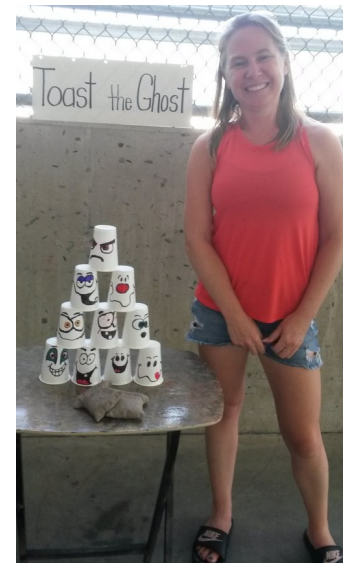
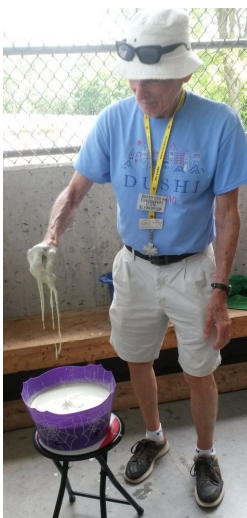
At 1 pm 44 players and 13 helpers gathered in the pavilion to participate in 9 spooky activities. From top left clockwise: Cameron Scott tries “Pin the Grin on the Jack-o'-lantern”. Larry Parks attempts to get a ringer on “Witch Pitch”. Kalid racks up the points with “Eyeball Bounce”. “Mummy Cat Mini Putt” and “Monster Mash Bowling” were two other events.



Below Left: Don Blenkinsop reaches into the “Slime Pit” to seek out a hidden ghost for points.

Below Centre: Ryan McQuiggan shows Malik how to toss the “Flying Saucer” onto the landing pad.

Below Right: Ellen supervises the “Toast The Ghost” activity. Not shown is the “Kamakazi Flying Bat” activity.



Door Prizes



Joan & Don Adamson were on duty from 2-4 pm handing out door prizes to the many lucky winners.

HOBBITSTEE WILDLIFE REFUGE PRESENTATION



At 3:30 pm, 29 people (and a dog) gathered in the Memorial Hall to listen to Chantal Theijn talk about the wild animal refuge that she has grown over the years. Her talk was accompanied by a powerpoint presentation showing the facility and some of the animals they've rehabilitated. Above Faye Swanburg presents a cheque in the amount of \$1,000 (U.S. funds) on behalf of the International FCRV Wildlife Fund.

Trick or Treat



Between 5:30 and 6:30 pm the Tavistock Fairgrounds were haunted by cute witches, walking hamburgers, super heroes, video game characters, princesses, fairies, gypsies, 1920's flappers & gangsters, medieval knaves and a skinny red balloon man. As they traveled from RV to RV collecting yummy treats, they had to venture through some very spooky woooky campsites.



Above: The Mather family decorated their site with a witch and black cat.

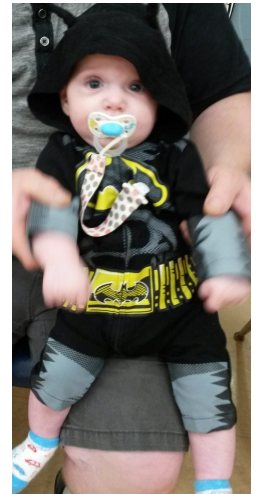
Left: Darlene & Steve Gunning pose with their site's ghostly display.

Right: "Boney" Simpson waits for the "Trick or Treaters" to come by.



Costume Judging

At 6:30 pm the costumed campers gathered at the Memorial Hall for costume judging and prizes. Young and old alike got into the spooky woooky spirit.



Above: Herb Lochbihler, dressed in traditional German attire, dons his hat to the judges.
Middle Left: Janet & David Mather strut their stuff all the way from the roaring twenties.
Middle Right: Steve & Darlene Gunning were cooking up some mischief.
Far Right: Leslie (Bond) was “clowning it up”.



The Blenkinsop Gang was out in full force with their team costume which depicted a “Pac Man” game.



The evening concluded with several games of “Graveyard Card Bingo” followed by hospitality of cookies and watermelon.

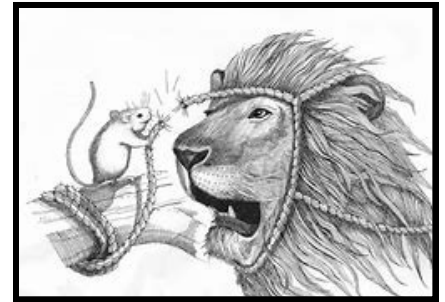


Above: Tri-County Travellers Helen Kowal, Joan Adamson, Linda Vandevyvere & Don Adamson await the hungry campers.



Campers Own Church Service

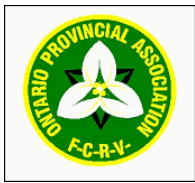
At 11 am on Sunday morning, Lynn Acre led a service which included 3 hymns and a devotional entitled ***“Small But Mighty”***. Campers learned about the grasshopper mouse, which has the nickname “Werewolf mouse” and how God has given it adaptations that allow it to survive in its harsh environment. They were reminded that God has also given each of us unique gifts and talents that we can use to bring Him honour and glory. A collection of \$241.85 was received for the Tavistock Assistance Program (T.A.P.) which is a local volunteer organization providing food, clothing and financial aid to families in need in the Tavistock area.



Poor Person Lunch

At noon Dave Skillings was back on the grill, flipping hamburgers and hotdogs which were soon gobbled up. Proceeds from the lunch were allocated for the Ontario FCRV Scholarship Program and raised \$114.00





HIGHLIGHTS FROM OPA Voting Delegates' Meeting September 4, 2022

Membership Report

OPA.....89

Ontario.....127

International.....2,027

There are 9 chapters in OPA and 7 independent members.

Decals

A new round decal has been designed by the FCRV Trustees. Every member will receive a free decal. Terry and Faye Swanburg brought some back from Campvention and have been distributing them. Upon renewal of membership, another decal will be given. Life members will also receive a free decal annually. At

Campvention 2023, anyone arriving with a new decal displayed on their unit, will be eligible for a prize.

Copies of the former, rectangular logos are still available for purchase from the Swanburgs.



Scholarship Report

Donations: Jean Bedford reported;
Spring OPA 2022 activities raised \$274,
Memorial Donations raised \$175.
OPA annual donation raised \$100.
All of these raised **a total of \$549.**

Award: One scholarship was awarded this year to Natalie Rosenberger in the amount of \$2,000.



Campout Co-coordinator's Report

Shelley & John Scott were pleased to announce that an approved bid has been received from the Meandering Mohawks to host the Spring OPA 2023, which will be held in Harriston, Ont from May 19-22, 2023. The theme is "Memories & Making Them". Everyone is encouraged to bring along old photos & memorabilia for a display. They are hoping to have activities within the community like the Retiree Rally does. If it can be arranged, an optional church supper will be part of the agenda.



Pull Tab Report

Even though Wayne Rosenberger has only collected \$251 worth of tabs and cans from chapter in the past 11 months, it was decided to continue with this project for another 3 years.

The top 3 chapters during the past year are
Brantford Sun Downers
Kingston Roadrunners
Tri-County Travellers

Tabs and crushed cans will be collected at Spring & Fall Campouts until 2024. At that time a cheque for the total value will be sent to Ronald McDonald House.



Pull for the
House.



Regional Director's Report

Camy Hicks announced that she will be resigning from the position of Regional Director at some point this year. She was pleased to add that Terry & Faye Swanburg have agreed to step into this position. The Swanburgs are currently “in training” and the official transition will be made later this year.



Constitutional Review Report

Due to dwindling membership, we have been unable to follow our existing constitution. At Spring OPA, a team met to suggest some possible changes to reflect our current situation. The Executive have discussed them and agree that some changes are wise. In the near future, chapters will receive copies of these suggested changes for their review & discussion. While there is no rush, it is hoped that the changes can be approved in November 2022.

Treasurer's Report

Dave Skillings reported;

August 31, 2022 Bank Balance.....\$17,066.66

Minus Fall OPA registrations in trust.....- \$ 2,295.00

Actual bank balance\$14,771.66

Other Assets:

2 G.I.C's with TD Bank.....\$ 15, 734.98

Total OPA Assets.....\$30, 506.64

This report does not include any profit/losses from either Spring or Fall OPA campouts yet.



TREASURER

Campvention 2022 Report

Jack Smye and Terry & Faye Swanburg attended this year's Campvention in Colorado. Here are some highlights from the Trustees.

- Every chapter must have a gmail account in order to receive mass email communications.
- Focus will move away from Teen Royalty Pageants and develop a vibrant Teen Program based on the needs & wishes of the teen membership.
- Focus will return to origins of Conservation & Wildlife
- Wearing of name tags will be stressed and may be playfully enforced.
- The new V.P. of Marketing & Development, Amy DeCamp, has brought with her an increase in FCRV membership of approximately 80 when “Friends & Family Campers” merged with FCRV.
- 2023 Campvention will be held in Richmond, Indiana July 9-14, 2023. The theme is “A Rose by any other name is FCRV”. (Richmond is known for their rose production.) Richmond is a day's drive away for us.
- 2024 Campvention will be somewhere in New York State—possibly Syracuse or Hamburg.



2023 DRAFT BUDGET

Dave Skillings submitted the following draft budget for 2023

Income

Membership dues—95@ \$20 (plus 2 life members).....	\$1,900.00
Website sponsorship.....	\$ 250.00
Interest from investments.....	\$ 195.29
Total Income:	\$2,345.29

Expenses

Website management.....	\$ 235.04
ZOOM renewal.....	\$ 226.00
Scholarship Donation.....	\$ 100.00
Office Supplies (photocopying/postage etc.).....	\$ 150.00
Promotions(brochures, RV show, engraving etc.).....	\$ 200.00
Campvention (hospitality, float, royalty expense).....	\$ 200.00
Contingency/Membership Recruitment.....	<u>\$2,000.00*</u>

- *Allocation for use by President or Executive with focus on chapter membership recruitment.*

Total Expenses.....\$ 3,111.04

Net Income/Loss.....(\$765.75)

Even though a loss is projected, it is unlikely to happen unless the full \$2,000 from the Contingency Fund is spent in 2023. This year only \$553.28 has been spent from the possible \$2,000.00. However it should be noted that there is enough money in the TD bank to cover any future losses. Chapters are encouraged to discuss this proposed budget and be prepared to vote in November. Please contact Dave Skillings if you have any questions. dcskillings@outlook.com



Installation of

2023-2024 OPA Executive Officers

The following slate of officers was appointed by acclamation since there was only one name standing for each position.

President—Jack Smye

Vice President- Michael & Ruth Taziar

Corresponding Secretary– Darlene Wiltsie

Treasurer– Dave Skillings

Voting Delegates Rep– Dave Webster

Recording Secretary– VACANT

Provincial Director Lynn Acre duly installed the above officers into their respective positions according to the Constitution.

Membership Development Team Report

An attempt to attract new members in the Tavistock area was held August 30. An ad was placed in the Gazette, flyers were posted around town and a room in the main street library was rented. Unfortunately no one from Tavistock attended. The Membership Team remains committed to their recruitment efforts and refuses to become discouraged.

Next Voting Delegates Meeting

Sunday November 6, 2022

1 pm

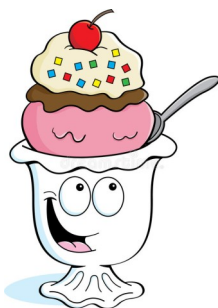
Via ZOOM

Voting Delegates will receive an invitation by email. Contact lewacre@gmail.com if you are not a voting delegate but wish to attend. All are welcomed.

ICE "SCREAM" SUNDAES

At 3 pm Don & Joan Adamson were once again called into action collecting \$2.50 each for delicious ice cream sundaes. The proceeds from this fundraiser were allocated to the Ontario Scholarship Fund and raised \$108.50

Below: Dave & Connie Skillings supervise the enthusiastic youth volunteers as they add toppings of cherry pie filling, chocolate & caramel syrup, whipped cream, chopped peanuts & sprinkles.



At 4 pm , 24 players joined in the fun of **"WICKED WASHER TOSS"**. Despite the overcast skies and threat of rain, laughter and good-natured shouts could be heard within the baseball field as the tournament progressed. Thanks to Lew Acre for running the event.



Presentation of Prizes

Washer Toss Winners: Below Left: Father and son duo, Don & Keith Blenkinsop won first place in Washer Toss. Second place went to Ryan McQuiggan and Julie Bond.

Site Decorations Winners: Below Right: The Mather Family won second prize and Kathy & Larry Park took first prize.



Bring A First Timer Guest Winner: Kathy & Larry Parks won the draw for inviting Bob & Joyce Stewart to the campout.



Scholarship Donation Presentation

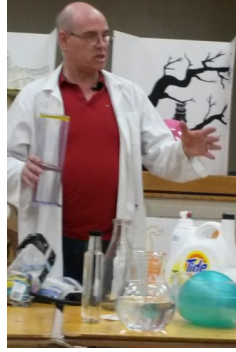


Dave & Connie Skillings,
who organize
the Poor Person Lunch
and the
Ice Cream Sundae
Fundraisers
Presented Jean Bedford
With a cheque
in the amount of \$ 222.50



Craig the Malicious Science Guy

Craig Johnson, of Aylmer, Ontario kept both young and old alike entertained and educated on Sunday night. His presentation, based on homemade science, was definitely “audience-participation”.

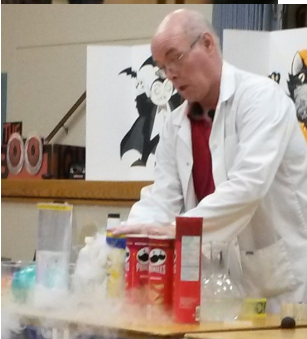


Experiment #1

Can a balloon placed on a bed of sharp nails survive when you stand on the balloon? Third from the left above: Ellie watches the purple balloon go onto the nails. She then stood on the balloon and it did not pop because her weight was spread across nails, which reduced the pressure. Craig also showed how to force a water-filled balloon to squeeze through a narrow-necked container by reducing the air pressure inside the container.



Left: He also showed how flammable non-dairy coffee powder was. Right: Using a leaf blower, Craig impressed all with his ability to trap a beach ball in the air current and to control it's movements across the room and through a hulla hoop.



Fun with Dry Ice: It was very spooky wooky when clouds of dry ice vapour poured across the table and onto the floor. Craig showed how to pop the plastic lids off of a “Pringles” tube using dry ice. By adding some dish detergent to the vapour, fun foam was created, which “magically” disappeared into smoky vapour. Below: Some lucky campers got free foam hand washes or shampoos.



Lesson: How to Shrink-Wrap Your Kids

Craig the Science Guy had some valuable lessons for all the parents and grandparents in the audience. For the child that just won't sit still, place them snugly into a hefty bag. Next place the hose of a shop vac inside the hefty bag with the child and turn on the vacuum. The result is a child who is so tightly wrapped that they are unable to move. Left: Craig tucks Brooke into the bag. Right: Brooke now has a snug second skin. Below: Ellie McQuiggan undergoes the same treatment and is so tightly wrapped that Craig is able to pick her up like a "Costco steak".



Using dry ice in a plastic bottle and attaching small hose to the opening, Craig showed how to make a vapour blaster. Those folks in the front row enjoyed a quick "dry-cleaning" as an added bonus to the weekend. Craig can be reached at craigthescienceguy@hotmail.com



Up-Coming Events

Blue Water Mixer, Imlay City, Michigan.....Sept. 23-25
ZOOM OPA Voting Delegates Meeting.....November 6, 2022
Spring OPA, Harriston, Ontario.....May 19-22, 2023



LETS
GO **CAMPING**



