



# OPAction Newsletter

September  
2023



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**Retiree Rally  
June 12–16, 2023**

Thirty-three units were onsite for the 47th Ontario Retiree Rally in Norwich, Ontario. This attendance included 5 “first time” couples from the Explorer Club. See page 2 for more details & photos.

**“River Time Fun”  
Blue Water Mixer  
September 22–24, 2023**

Ten Ontario families attended the Blue Water Mixer in Imlay City, Michigan. See pg. 23 for more details.



**Watermelon Fest**  
FCRV Promotion/Recruitment efforts were undertaken by the Tri-County Travellers . See details on page 13.



**Fall OPA Campout  
September 1-4, 2023**

Twenty-five units were on site for Corny Country Camping Fall OPA in Brigden, Ontario. Corny Card Bingo, Washer Toss, Penny Sale, Ice Cream Social, Door Prizes, a Barbershop Quartet, a Scarecrow Devotional Service, Poor Person Lunch, Corn Hole Contest, Corn on the Cob hospitality & Campfire & Sing-along filled the weekend. See page 13 for more details & photos.



**Spooky Wooky  
Halloween Campout  
September 29-October 1**

Thirteen RVs and 2 families with day passes attended the numerous activities offered by the Tri-County Travellers. See details on pages 24 to 26.





# 47th Annual Retiree Rally

Monday June 12— Friday June 16, 2023  
at the Norwich Community Centre

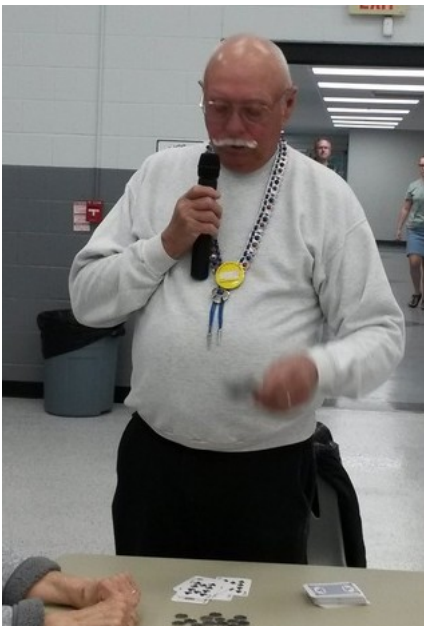


Thirty-three units arrived at the Norwich Community Centre on Monday June 12, 2023 for the 47th annual Ontario Retiree Rally. There was no “early bird” day this year. The Rally officially opened on Monday evening, in the newly renovated Hall in the Community Centre. The Brantford Sundowners & Golden Wanderers hosted the evening’s entertainment of Nickel Card Bingo.

Pictured below, Ted Shelley of the Brantford Sundowners, calls the cards while tables filled with campers enjoy the friendly competition.



# Bingo Night



# Washer Toss Tournament



Ruth & Michael Tazair organized the Washer Toss Tournament on Tuesday morning. Seven games were played simultaneously which shortened the tournament to about 90 minutes.



Above: Michael & Ruth Tazair present First Prize to Adele Waite and Jim Sampson.

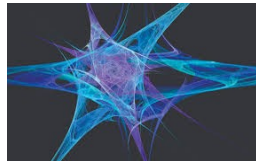
Below: Second prize was won by Barb Cronmiller and Gord Smith.



# Tuesday's Schedule



Members of the Meandering Mohawks lined up in the kitchen to serve a lunch of fresh submarine sandwiches & cookies.



**Guest Speaker, Jenn Hewson,** owner of “Take Back Your Health” gave a talk after lunch on Bioresonance which is holistic medicine based on Quantum Energy. To learn more go to her website [www.takebackyourhealth.ca](http://www.takebackyourhealth.ca) or phone her at 519-280-0592



Tuesday evening, the Norwich Volunteer Firefighters set up in the parking lot and sold BBQ'd hamburgers and sausage-on-a-bun along with soft drinks.

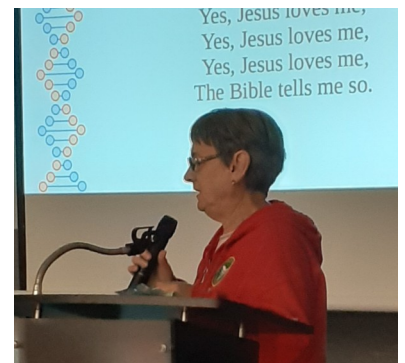
Above: Firefighter Liam Wall welcomes the campers.

Right: Paul Pereira from Hitch & Go RV Sales in Delhi gave tours through two travel trailers and later answered questions regarding RV related topics.



## “Two Guys with Guitars” Tuesday’s Live Entertainment

On Tuesday evening, two talented guys with 5 guitars and 1 mandolin entertained the enthusiastic crowd with a variety of classic rock & country songs.



## Wednesday Morning Devotional Service

At 9:00 am Don Lumley (Bullwinkle) played his guitar for the singing of two songs before Lynn Acre gave a powerpoint presentation called “Lessons from the Three Little Pigs”. Attendees were reminded that only a firm foundation in Christ can withstand all the Huffing & Puffing of life’s trials. A collection was taken for the Norwich Food Bank which raised \$160.00 in cash as well as two big bags of non-perishable food items.



# Retiree Olympics



Above: Judy and Pat Richardson hand out score cards for Retiree Olympics, while Robert Chamberlain kicks his shoe and Duane Jenner tries his hand at putting golf balls into a goal.



More fun at Retiree Olympics. Above, Brian Chatfield tosses a ring onto a spike., Dave Lawrence tosses a washer into a wooden box, Isabelle West winds up to throw ladder-golf balls towards the ladder, Dave West prepares to drive a golf ball and Karen Chatfield tosses a ball into a bucket.

Below: Spectators enjoy the drama as the Olympics progress.



## Retiree Olympic Champions

Below: Jim Sampson presents cash prizes to Shirley Lawrence ( 1st Prize) and Heather Rennalls (2nd Prize) and also to John Waite (1st prize ) and Lew Acre (2nd prize).



## Tour of the Delhi Tobacco Museum & Heritage Centre Wednesday Afternoon



Thirty-seven campers attended the tour of the Delhi Tobacco Museum & Heritage Centre. Angela and Andrew, shown left, introduced the Museum's collection and answered questions during the self-guided tour. The original crop in the area was timber, especially white pine but once it was depleted the only crop that thrived in the sandy soil was tobacco. More recently ginseng has been introduced—see photo—below. The upper floor of the museum was dedicated to the various groups of immigrants who settled in the area.



## Museum Tour continued

A portion of a stick kiln was accessible for visitors to enter. The aroma of tobacco still lingered in the air. Hanging above, a sample of dried tobacco leaves tied to sticks could be seen. Each stick would have been set into place by a “kiln hanger”. This type of kiln was heated with wood. The furnace door was visible from the outside of the kiln.

A “cure man” was given the responsibility of keeping the furnace burning at the correct temperature.



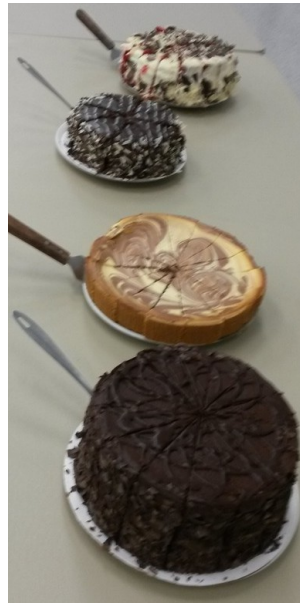
**Quance Planing Mill:** Robert Quance Sr. & his brother Peter bought the existing sawmill and flour mill in 1974. The sawmill included the planing mill which later was known as “The Sash & Door Factory”. It was here that rough lumber was planed for the construction of barrel staves, fascia boards, fancy moulding, flooring, furniture, houses, barns, shingles, soffits & stair rails. This factory was in operation up until 1970. Pictured above: the outside and the inside of the planing mill.



**Quance Dam:** Frank Quance built the original dam to provide power for his flour mill. It was later purchased by the Big Creek Conservation Authority which has since become the Long Point Region Conservation Authority. The Quance Park is a beautiful area surrounding the dam.



**Catered Supper:** Chrissy's Catering of Tillsonburg provided another bountiful, delicious meal of roast beef, roasted chicken, mashed potatoes & gravy, mixed vegetables, lettuce salad and a selection of delectable cakes. Shown below, Shelley & John Scott enjoy their meal.



### Special Raffles

Two special raffles were held this year. Gord Smith—shown left—was happy to win a bar frig which was donated by Nortech RV Parts & Service.

Below: Charlene Jenner poses with a Camper's Quilt that she made and donated to the Rally. It's raffle raised \$137.



### Doppelganger

Wednesday night the dynamic duo of Ken Waltham and Jim Lambert captivated the audience with their flawless vocals and expert mastery of guitar, mandolin and mouth organ. You can contact them at 289-880-2878 or email at [kwaltham@xplornet.ca](mailto:kwaltham@xplornet.ca)



**Starting the Day with a Hearty Breakfast on Thursday morning.**

*A special "Thank You" to Paul McQuiggan for financing this breakfast out of his own pocket.*



Above: Kristen Emmerson, Paul McQuiggan & Ellen prepare the scrambled eggs and toast in the kitchen while Robert Chamberlain and Dave Skillings grill the sausages and fried potatoes outdoors.

Left: Paul McQuiggan serves scrambled eggs.

Below: Hungry campers line up to be served their hot breakfast. Dave Lawrence thoroughly enjoys his meal.



## Bocce Ball Tournament



Marilyn & Wayne Rosenberger, shown above, organized the Bocce Ball Tournament on Thursday morning. Three courts were bustling with active games until the final two teams were left to battle it out.

In the end, Walter Meixer & Adele Waite (below left) took first prize while Brian Chatfield and Lynn Acre (below right) came in a close second place.



**Greeting Card Craft:** Gerry Neutel assists Donna Franklin in the making of a homemade Greeting Card on Thursday afternoon. About a dozen ladies attended the optional activity.



## Retiree General Meeting

**Attendance:** There are 33 units in attendance this week. We need 40 paying units to break even.

**Treasurer's Report:** We projected a loss of \$741.78 but thanks to raffle revenues & a donation of \$330 from Paul McQuiggan, this loss is reduced to \$336.08. The bank balance is approximately \$5,100.00

**Entertainment:** The entertainment budget was increased to \$1,500 to allow Pat Richardson more options when scheduling next year's entertainment. Next year, the Wednesday night musicians will be invited to eat with us.

**Door Prizes:** The local merchants, while still generous with door prizes, appear to be experiencing "donation fatigue". Therefore next year, no solicitations for door prizes will be done. Instead we will aim for one valuable door prize per night, to be provided by the participating chapters/individuals.



**Golf Tournament Results:** Eight golfers entered the tournament on Thursday afternoon at the Delhi Golf Club. Shown above Lew Acre presents Robert Chamberlain with the "Best Score" prize . Jim Sampson won "Closest to the Pin" and Wayne Rosenberger won "Most Honest Golfer".

### Guest Speaker

John Eacott, author, historian and former teacher/principal from Tillsonburg spoke to the assembled campers about the history of Norwich. Following a map, John explained how the road systems developed, where the Attawandaron Peoples lived and how they became extinct. He pointed out the location of Gunn's Hill, the highest point in the area.



### The fun continues.....



Following the guest speaker, John Waite played and sang during the Ice Cream social. Once the bowls had been licked clean, Rocky & Don Lumley led a sing-along of silly songs and golden oldies.



**A donut & a coffee for the road....** Nobody left Norwich hungry because complimentary donuts and coffee were available Friday morning, giving campers another chance to gather in friendship. Thanks to Marilyn & Wayne Rosenberger for making the coffee.

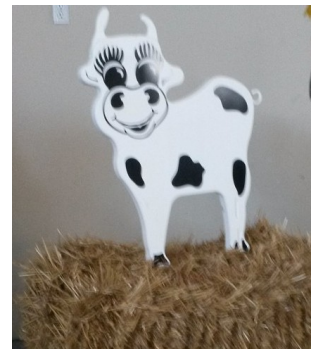
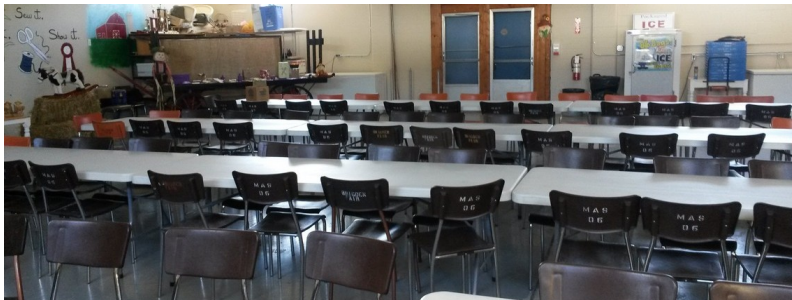
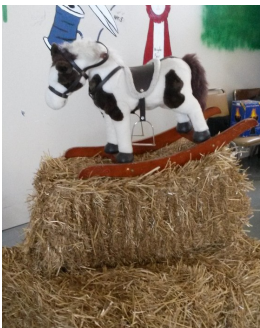
**Recruitment Efforts at Watermelon Fest** in Straffordville, Ontario. On Saturday August 26, 2023 three couples from the Tri-County Travellers attended a local festival to promote FCRV. Shown right; John Scott & Lew Acre chat with an interested grandfather while his granddaughter enjoys the free candy.



## **Corny Country Campout FALL OPA September 1-4 , 2023**



The Sarnia 4T's & the Tri-County Travellers partnered up to host Fall OPA 2023 at the Brigden Fairgrounds. Early Bird day was Thursday August 31 and more than half of the attendees rolled in early. A total of 25 units were onsite .



The Ploughman's Diner provided ample room for all of the activities for the weekend campout



# Opening Ceremonies

The evening began with the singing of both National Anthems and the presentation of the flags. Then the dignitaries were introduced.

The Emcee for the weekend was Dale the Scarecrow.



Seated Above: Jack Smye—OPA President, MC Dale Cull, Campout Chairman—Rudy Sandau & Sharon Sandau, Provincial Directors Lew Acre & Lynn Acre, Regional Directors Faye Swanburg & Terry Swanburg.

Shown above: Scarecrow Dale Cull tells lots of “corny” jokes.

## Friday’s Entertainment: Corny Card Bingo.



The Plowman’s Diner was packed for Friday’s entertainment of Corny Card Bingo. Left: Ben Vandevyvere calls the cards. Bottom Left: Gift-wrapped prizes covered the surface of the prize wagon. Below: Angela Cull, Betty Anne Clift and Marion Warrington show off their corny prizes.



## Saturday's Activities

### WASHER TOSS



Approximately twenty people participated in the Washer Toss Tournament on Saturday morning. Shown top & bottom: Teams of 2 battle it out to the finals. Right: Sharon Sandau keeps score. Left: Don Blenkinsop competes against Brian Chatfield.

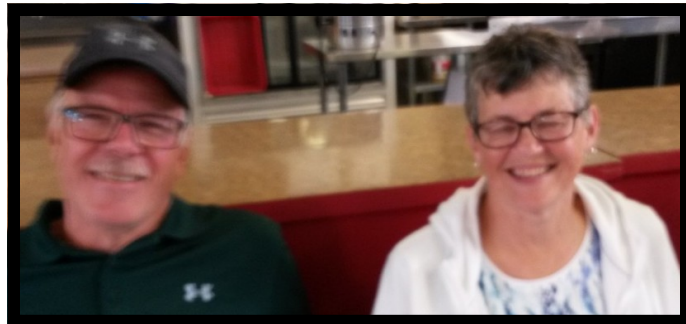


### PENNY SALE

Below right: Three tables were piled high with donated items for the penny sale. Below right: Connie Skillings, Karen Chamberlain, Camy Hicks & Ben Vandevyvere assist with the drawing and calling of the lucky winners. The sale raised \$89 for the "Ways & Means" fund.



Left: Karin Brown Reily and her mother Mary Brown, sold copies of all the cookie recipes collected after this year's Spring Camper Cook Contest.



## First Timers Enjoy Corny Country Campout

Bob & Bonnie Mather of Chatham enjoyed every minute of their first ever OPA campout. They participated in washer toss, cornhole, the penny sale, the church service and the campfire sing-a-long.

They first learned about FCRV and OPA at the London RV Show in January 2023. By the time they left Fall OPA, they were the newest members of the Sarnia 4T's.

## Ice Cream Social

After the Penny Sale, ice cream sundaes were sold for \$2.50 each which raised \$ 62 for the local food bank.



## Door Prize Pick Up

After the Ice Cream Social, campers arrived at the Door Prize table to find out which door prize they had won.

Every family won a prize!

Shown Left: Prizes ranging from mini coffee makers, space heaters, puzzles, shirts, gift certificates etc. filled the long table.



## Time to Relax

Hosting an OPA Campout isn't all work., especially when you partner with another chapter to spread out the tasks. Shown Right: Members of the Tri-County Travellers and Sarnia 4Ts gathered to enjoy a refreshing beverage and a few laughs before the evening entertainment began.



## Resolution Quartet

### *Saturday Evening's Entertainment*



### “Resolution Quartet”

Four retired gentlemen with a love for fun and melody joined us on Saturday night for 2 sets of harmonized tunes. Some were traditional, some were adaptations from movies and many were hilarious.



During hospitality, the quartet invited Dale Cull and Jack Smye to sing a song with them.

# Sunday's Activities

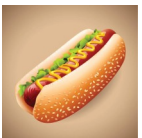
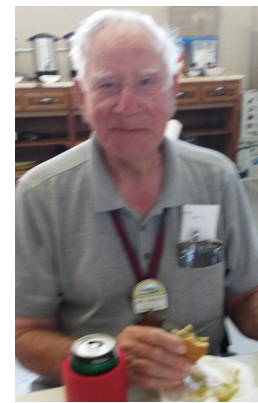


## Camper's Own Devotional Service

Following the theme of the campout, Lynn Acre examined scarecrows from the perspective of a crow, from the perspective of a farmer and from the perspective of the Wizard of Oz—all while finding life lessons for us all to follow. An offering for the local food bank was received which totaled \$191.65.

## Poor Person Lunch

**Right:** Dave Skillings and Robert Chamberlain, both of Tri-County Travellers, fire up the grill to cook up some tasty hotdogs & hamburgers. Far Right: Don Johnson, of the Sarnia 4Ts, enjoys his hamburger while below right: Lynn & Herb Lochbihler, of the Meandering Mohawks, receive their burgers from Connie & Dave Skillings. The Poor Person lunch raised \$103 for the local food bank.



## Corn Hole Tournament

Twenty-three people competed in the tournament by tossing 10 beanbags into holes on wooden boards. First prize went to Mabel Douglas with 23 points. Second prize to Ron Lumley with 22 points. Third prize to David Pegg with 21 points and 4th prize to Bob Mather with 20 points.

# Highlights from the OPA Voting Delegates Meeting



## Membership

<b>FCRV International.....</b>	<b>1,793</b>
<b>FCRV Region #7.....</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>FCRV Ontario.....</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>OPA Members.....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>OPA Chapters.....</b>	<b>8</b>



## Nominating Committee

As per the Constitution, a nominating committee must be formed to prepare a slate of officers for the 2024 election.

Past President Mabel Douglas was appointed chair. Camy Hicks & Lynn Acre volunteered to serve on this committee.

The positions of President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary & Treasurer are all up for re-election in 2024.

A list of nominees must be presented to the voting delegates at the March 2024 meeting.

## Scholarship Report

Claire Rosenberger received a cheque in the amount of \$2,000 from Maureen Blenkinsop, chairman of the Scholarship Fund.

Claire is the daughter of Tim & Lynne Rosenberger. She is the grand-daughter of Wayne & Marilyn Rosenberger and Jack Smye.

She was only 1 week old when she attended her first OPA campout. She was crowned Pre-teen Princess in 2016 and Teen Queen in 2019.

Claire will be studying Baking and Pastry Arts Management at Algonquin College in September 2023.





**Pull Tab Report**  
*submitted by Wayne Rosenberger*

Aluminum collected May–Aug. 2023 totaled 56 pounds of tabs + 138 pounds of cans which brought in \$165.

During Fall OPA campout another 36 pounds of tabs and some crushed cans were collected.

The \$165 will be added to the “Pop Tab” fund. Wayne Rosenberger will continue to collect tabs and cans at all OPA campouts. He will also gladly receive deliveries of tabs/cans at his home at 1505 Ottawa Street, #511, Kitchener, Ont. Call to arrange a drop off.

519-501-4331



**Website Report**

*by Webmaster Dave Warrington*

Printable forms are now available.

Click on “Camping Today & Printable forms” at the top of the homepage to access printable forms.

Also a new “Blog” tab offers interesting reading.

**Fall OPA Campout Financials**

Total # units on site.....	25
Total income.....	\$4095.00
Total expenses.....	<u>\$3370.00</u>
Profit.....	\$ 725.00

*Profit split as follows;*

<i>OPA =</i>	<i>\$262.50</i>
<i>Sarnia 4Ts =</i>	<i>\$231.25</i>
<i>Tri-County Travellers =</i>	<i>\$231.25</i>

*Total monies raised for the local food bank was \$356.65.*

*See photo on pg 23 of the presentation of this money.*



**Treasurer’s Report**  
*submitted by Dave Skillings*

**Bank Balance (Aug. 29) .....\$17,493.67**

**GICs valued at .....\$15,477.66**

**Total Assets.....\$32,971.33**

***Monies held “in trust”***

***Teen Association.....\$ 1,822.44***

***Pop Tab Fund.....\$ 612.50***



## Campvention 2023 Report

Fourteen families from Ontario traveled to Richmond, Indiana for the 2023 Campvention. Our Ontario "Hospitality" was well attended. We served our traditional maple leaf cookies and bottles of water. We had a Canadiana trivia contest as well as live entertainment during the event. Almost every family participated in the parade entry, which won the "Trustees Award".



## Campvention 2024 Update

Herkimer, New York will be the location of the 2024 Campvention, which is another short trip for Ontarians. The date has been moved forward to June 23 - 29, 2024. Since Region #5 is smaller than Ontario, Region #7 has offered to partner with them to enable them to fill their positions. It is expected that they will return the favour in 2027 when it's our turn to host Campvention. The following chairman's positions are open. If you feel that you can take on one of these positions, let Faye Swanburg know.

- \* Secretary
- \* First Timers
- \* Door Prizes
- \* Youth
- \* Advertising
- \* Campvention Office
- \* Signs/Bulletin Board
- \* Equipment/Building Set Up
- \* Pet Parade
- \* Golf Carts
- \* Information
- \* Emcee
- \* Volunteers
- \* Info/Locator

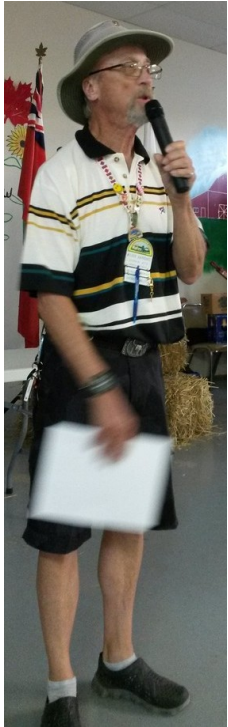




# Corny Country Campout's Conclusion

## Sunday's Entertainment/Hospitality

### CORN BOIL & CAMPFIRE SING-ALONG



Chairman Rudy Sandau ( left ) officially closed Fall OPA 2023 and the flags were retired. Campers then devoured several dozen cobs of fresh sweet corn as Bob McColl of the Sarnia 4Ts (shown below left ) built a cheerful little blaze for the evening's campfire. Once everyone was settled around the fire, Rocky & Bullwinkle ( aka Rocky & Don Lumley of Michigan) led the group in a lively sing-along until long after sunset.



And just like that, another Fall OPA was over. Campfires and friendships were kindled, laughs were had, stomachs were filled and memories were made.



**After Fall OPA.....**Mabel Douglas presents a cheque to the Petrolia Food Bank in the amount of \$356.65 which were the total funds raised from the Ice Cream Social, the Poor Folks Lunch and the Devotional Service Collection.





# River Time Fun at the Blue Water Mixer



Friday September 22—Sunday September 24, 2023

Ten families from Ontario attended the Blue Water Mixer in Imlay City. The campout began with a Scavenger Hunt and card bingo on Friday night, followed by a washer toss tournament on Saturday morning. Then a chicken noodle soup lunch, jewelry making craft, and evening program of talent and prize give-a-ways. The campout ended Sunday morning with the Praise Gang Puppets.



Above from left to right: The washer toss tournament attracted lots of players and spectators. Lynn Acre anxiously waits to see the outcome. Sharon & Rudy Sandau received flashlights from Don Lumley as their second place prize. Jeremiah Blanketship and Lynn Acre receive “finger flashlights” as their first place prize .



Above from left to right : Lew Acre scoops out a ladle of delicious chicken noodle soup. Faye & Terry Swanburg enjoy the soup. Joyce Williams provided all the supplies & instruction for the jewelry making craft. Faye Swanburg works on a group puzzle while Rudy Sandau watches.

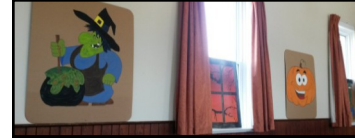
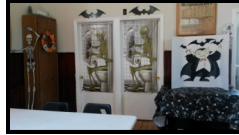
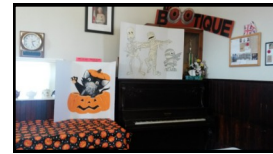
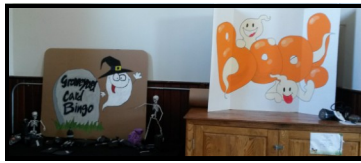


Above right to left: Don Lumley as Emcee for the evening program, also played his guitar for a sing-along. There were lots of “Grand Prizes” given away. A bench made of recycled bottle caps was presented to the Eastern Michigan Fair Board. The Lay-Zee Hayseeds chapter celebrated their 50 year anniversary. Below: The Praise Gang Puppets “sang” lively gospel songs & serious songs of healing. A devotional message focused on “rivers of blessings” reminded campers that despite our challenges, we’re never alone.



# SPOOKY WOOKY

September 29—October 1, 2023



Thirteen RVs and 2 families with “day passes” attended the 2023 Spooky Wooky Halloween Campout sponsored by the Tri-County Travellers. This year the campout was held at the Community Centre and grounds in Fairground, Ontario. Friday night’s program opened with Greetings followed by popcorn & a movie. Saturday was filled with activities starting with a pumpkin carving contest, ghoulish games, wicked washer toss, site decorating, trick or treating, costume parade & contest and ending with graveyard card bingo. The weekend concluded with a brief camper’s own church service.

**Shown below left to right:** Emcee Dale Cull dresses the part on Friday night. Campers gather for pumpkin carving in the Hall. Alan Cull and his son Everitt team up to carve a pumpkin.



Below and right are a sampling of the finished jack-o'-lanterns.



Many families got “into the spirit” and decorated their campsites.







## Ghoulish Games

The beautiful summer-like weather attracted forty-four participants to the adjoining ball diamond to try their hand at 9 different ghoulishly fun games.



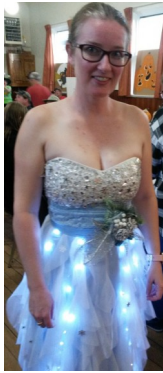
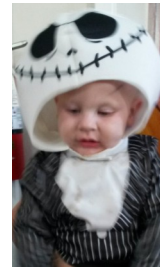
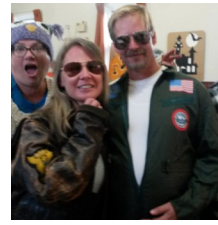
Ghoulish Games shown above left to right: Eyeball toss, Which Pitch, Slime Pit, Toast the Ghost, Kamakazee Bat Toss, Mummy Cat Mini Putt. Shown left: Pin the Grin on the Jack-o'lantern, Shown right: Flying Saucers. Below: Monster Mash Bowling.



## Wicked Washer Toss Tournament

Twenty-eight participants of all ages gathered at 3 pm to play washer toss—some for the very first time. Even the spectators enjoyed the sunshine and friendly competition.





## Trick or Treating & Costume Parade

Twenty-six costumed youth went “trick or treating” from RV to RV for 30 minutes and then gathered in the Hall for a costume parade and contest. Even the adults had fun dressing up.



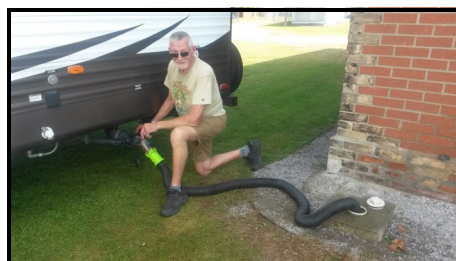
## Graveyard Card Bingo

Young and old alike enjoyed several games of card bingo after the costume prizes, the pumpkin carving prizes, the ghoulish games prizes and the washer toss prizes had been awarded. Delighted cries of “BINGO” were heard as winners rushed to the prize table to choose their prize.



## Spooky Wooky Conclusion

After the brief church service on Sunday morning, campers began the packing away their Halloween decorations and saying good-bye to old and new friends. And of course, no campout is over until the tanks are dumped. Shown below: Ben Vandevyvere, President of the Tri-County Travellers, gets the job done.



**UPCOMING**

# EVENTS



Voting Delegates Meeting via ZOOM.....Sunday Nov. 5, 2023  
Voting Delegates Meeting via ZOOM..... Sunday March 3, 2024  
International Retiree Rally, Mineola, Texas.....March 18– 24, 2024  
Blue Water Mini Mixer, Port Huron, Michigan..... May 3-5, 2024  
Spring OPA Campout.....May 17 –20, 2024  
Retiree Rally, Norwich, Ont. ....June 10 –14, 2024  
Campvention 2024, Herkimer, New York.....June 23 - 29, 2024  
*Early bird days June 21 + 22*

