

OPAction Newsletter

SUMMER & FALL 2025



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Retiree Rally 2025

Another successful Retiree Rally is “in the books”.

Organizers were pleased to welcome 3 “first-time” couples to this year’s Rally.

Twenty-six units were onsite at the Norwich Community Centre from Monday June 9—Friday June 13. You can see photos and read all about the Rally on pages 2-10.



Casual Campout at Blyth, Ontario. July 14-18, 2025

Karen & Brian Chatfield organized a casual campout inviting members from 2 separate camping organizations; FRVA (Family RV Association) and FCRV. See page 11 to see what these like-minded folks enjoyed doing together.



A Sticky Situation

Check out page 13 to see details of a local honey harvest witnessed at the Attawandaron Scout Reserve.



Fall OPA Campout 2025

Twenty-six people in 14 units attended the Fall OPA Campout at Lakewood Christian Campground near Forest, Ontario on the banks of Lake Huron.

See details on page 14

Voting Delegates Meeting

See page 15 for highlights of the meeting.

Milestone Birthday

Check out page 12 to see who recently celebrated a big birthday.



49th Annual Ontario Retiree Rally

Norwich Community Centre & Arena

Monday June 9-Friday June 13, 2025



Monday June 9, 2025: Twenty-six RVs were on site by the end of the day.

M.C. Lynn Acre welcomed fifty-two campers for ***Opening Ceremonies*** at 7:00 pm.

Included in that number were Don & Rocky Lumley from Michigan's Aquajet chapter, four guests from the Explorer club and 3 first time attendees.

After announcements, a lively game of ***Progressive Euchre*** was enjoyed by most, while others preferred to play other table games.

The Meandering Mohawks provided the evening's "hospitality" of various fruit breads.



Above: Lynn & Herb Lochbihler and Jim & Lynn Sampson of the Meandering Mohawks enjoy some leftover fruit bread & coffee on Tuesday morning.



Above: Bonnie Mather receives prize from Jim Sampson for Euchre Tournament.

Tuesday June 10, 2025

WASHER TOSS TOURNAMENT



Organizers Michael & Ruth Tazair registered 24 players for Tuesday morning's Washer Toss Tournament.



Four games were underway at the same time, which allowed the tournament to progress quickly through several heats. The beautiful sunny weather increased the enjoyment of those who played and those who came to watch.



After several eliminations, the final victors were;
First Place: Heather Rennalls & Don Blenkinsop
Second Place: Brian Chatfield & Barb Cronmiller



Dan & Jackie Boisvert, with their pup "Charlotte" cheered on the washer toss players.



Tuesday's Activities Continued.....

Golf Tournament: Thirteen campers drove to Creekside Golf Course near Woodstock for a 9 hole tournament on Tuesday afternoon.



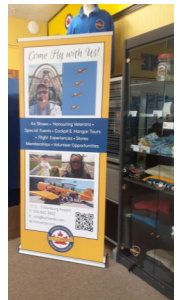
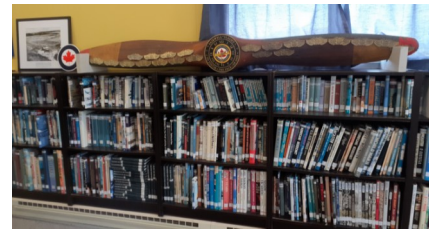
Organizer Lew Acre presents Sharon Sandau with lowest score for the ladies and Rudy Boogerman with lowest score for the men.



Lew Acre presents prizes for "Closest to the Pin" to Don Blenkinsop and Bonnie Mather.

Tour of the Canadian Harvard Association

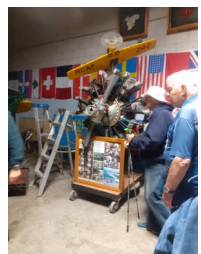
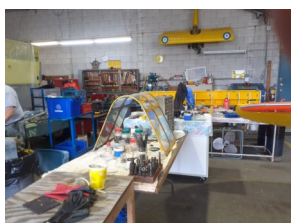
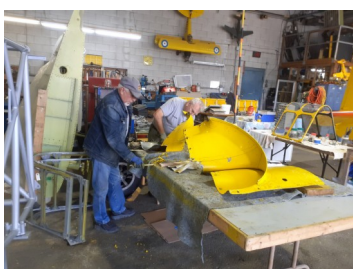
For those who weren't golfing or shopping, an optional tour of the Welcome Centre, Restoration Hanger & Maintenance Hanger of the Canadian Harvard Association was available. Six campers took the short trip to the Tillsonburg Regional Airport for an informative personal tour.



A small portable building onsite housed the Association's Welcome Centre, which is run by volunteers who initially welcomed our group and shared the history of the Association. Our personal tour guide Gary is shown above in the blue plaid shirt. The Welcome Centre has a lending library, Harvard –embossed merchandise for sale and a friendly volunteer who will schedule a flight in one of the Harvard. aircraft.



Tour Guide Gary led the group through the Restoration Hanger where volunteers were working to restore an aircraft for active duty. Campers were given a close-up view and detailed explanation of this process.



Tuesday's Activities Continued....

Maintenance Hanger

There are strict regulations regarding the regular maintenance of the aircraft which are being used for Memorial flyovers, personal flight experiences etc. All of the maintenance is performed by qualified volunteers.



Fireman's BBQ



At 5 pm the campers heard the wail of the siren from the Norwich Volunteer Fire Department calling them to "Come and Get It". The tantalizing aroma of barbecued burgers and sausages welcomed the hungry campers as they lined up for their feast. This year, rather than a set cost, a "donation boot" was there to collect donations from the grateful campers.



On Tuesday evening, Jack Smye (shown above left) introduced a video of a variety show that he and his late wife Sonya and his daughter Lynne participated. The lights were dimmed and the crowd enjoyed several musical/dance skits and performances.



Tuesday night's hospitality was provided by the Explorer group. Above Heather Rennalls, Charlene Jenner and Walter & Gerta Meixner set out a variety of cookies and squares.

Wednesday June 11, 2025

CAMPER'S OWN DEVOTIONAL SERVICE

Lynn Acre led the Devotional Service with a powerpoint presentation on Listening for God's Voice in our lives. A collection of \$309 cash plus some non-perishable food items were received for the local food bank.



RETIREE OLYMPICS

Wednesday morning campers enjoyed 9 activities including Kick the Shoe, Baseball Toss, Ring Toss, Washer Toss, Golf Putting, Golf Driving, Ladder Golf, Bean Bag Toss & Hackett Throw. These popular activities were organized & provided by the Meandering Mohawks.



Ruth Tazair and Bonnie Mather watch and Jim Sampson keeps score as Bob Mather attempts to kick his shoe. Dan Boisvert cheers Bob on.



Lynn Lochbihler points and explains to Walter Meixner what to do next, as Bob Mather watches from behind.



Sharon Sandau tosses a washer, Dave Skillings takes a turn at Ladder Golf and Rudy Boogerman tosses a bean bag at the target.



The "Hatchet Throw" was a new event this year. Although they were actually darts, the overhand throw was the key to success with this event.



Rudy Sandau prepares to toss 3 rings while Wayne Rosenberger watches from afar.



Dave Warrington, (seated) watches as Bonnie Mathers attempts the new Hatchet Throw event.



Lew Acre winds up for a long drive of the golf ball.



After all of the scores were added up, Lynn Acre & Rudy Boogerman won top scores. Above Jim Sampson of the Meandering Mohawks presented prizes to the winners..

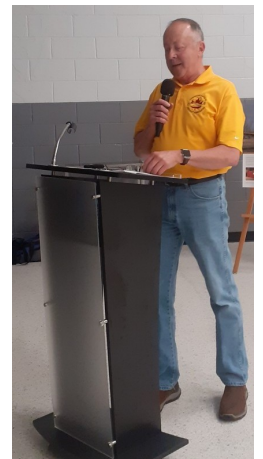
SOUP'S ON

Marilyn Rosenberger, shown below left, and friends provided Wednesday's lunch of cream of potato soup and Italian Wedding soup, rolls and fruit cups. Most campers tried both kinds of soup and none went away hungry.



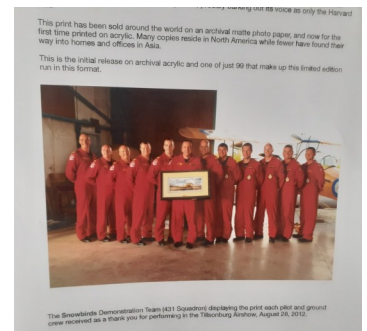
Guest Speaker

Terry Scott, (shown far right) from the Canadian Harvard Association, showed slides & videos to supplement his talk about this volunteer association. Private flights cost \$450 for a 20 minutes in-air or \$250 for 10 minutes of in-air time.



Local Artist

Norwich resident Vic Whitcroft, displayed his award winning photograph of a Harvard on Wednesday afternoon. Vic was honoured to have copies of this limited edition photo presented to the pilots and ground crew of the Canadian Snowbirds Demonstration Team as a "Thank You" for performing at the Tillsonburg Airshow August 28, 2012. Contact Vic - vwhicraft@execulink.com if you're interested in purchasing Vic's photo.





Catered Dinner

Once again Chrissy's Catering of Tillsonburg, rose to the occasion and provided another mouth-watering feast. This year's menu included stuffed pork, chicken cutlets, mashed potatoes & gravy, fresh asparagus, garden salads and a variety of pies. The delightful staff were on hand to slice up the pork and keep the food hot and replenished. Pictured above are hungry campers filling their plates, the helpful staff from Chrissy's Catering, and grateful campers enjoying the meal.



First-Timers Recognized

Three couples attended the Ontario Retiree Rally for the very first time.

Left: MC Lynn Acre presented potted plants to (left to right) Rudy & Lorea Boogerman of Chatham, Bob & Bonnie Mather of Chatham and Deb & Charlie Hulet of Ingersoll.

The Boogerman's are new members of Sarnia 4Ts and the Mathers & Hulets are members of Tri-County Travellers.

Celtic Entertainment

On Wednesday evening, the campers barely had time to digest their supper when the lively tunes and harmonized voices of Johnny & the Shenanigans energized them. Guitar, fiddle, bodhran & kilts blended with traditional celtic songs thoroughly engaged the crowd.

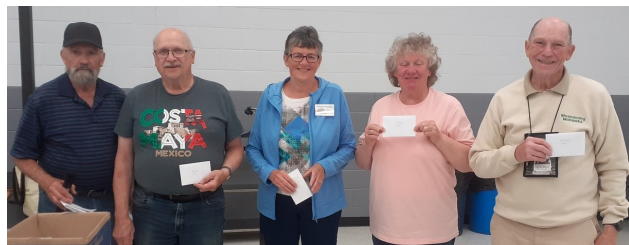


First-timers Deb & Charlie Hulet took to the floor to dance to the lively Celtic tunes.





Bocce Ball Tournament: Sixteen players participated in the Bocce Ball Tournament organized by Wayne & Marilyn Rosenberger., shown above far left.



Left: Wayne Rosenberger presents 2nd prize to John Scott, Bonnie Mather, Lorea Boogerman & Jack Smye.
Right: Wayne presents 1st prize to Rudy Boogerman, Karen Chatfield, Sharon Sandau & Charlie Hulet.



Charlene & Duaine Jenner and Gerta & Walter Meixner provided Thursdays' lunch.



Thursday's Lunch

Charlene & Duaine Jenner and Gerta & Walter Meixner, of the Explorer group provided a delicious lunch of pulled pork on a fresh bun, coleslaw, chips and homemade cake.



Victoria's Quilts Canada Presentation "Mission Statement"

...to provide handmade quilts to people living with cancer in Canada. By providing these quilts, we hope to bring physical comfort to those dealing with cancer and let them know that they are not alone in their struggle. The quilts are a gift and no cost is ever passed along to the requester or the recipient.



Lorea Boogerman shared information to those interested in Victoria's Quilts Canada, on Thursday after lunch.



Card Making Craft

For a small fee, Gerry Nuetel, (standing) provided supplies and guidance to those interested in learning how to make greeting cards on Thursday afternoon.



Retiree Rally Business Meeting

Shelley Scott, the 2025 Chairman, seated centre, opened the annual Business Meeting at 3 pm. Jim Sampson, seated far left, is the outgoing Treasurer and Karen Chatfield, seated far right, is the outgoing Secretary. A round of applause from the attendees thanked this excellent executive for their leadership during the past several years.

Our Presence Is Appreciated

Long after our departure, our involvement in Norwich was making an impact. See below a "Thank You" letter from the Salvation Army.

Jun 17, 2025

Dear Lynn and FCRV's Retiree members,

Thank you for being so generous and thoughtful with your donation towards the Salvation Army Food Bank. With rising costs on everything from groceries to rent, we continue to see more people using our services.

We are blessed to have donors like yourselves!

Enjoy your many blessings and Happy Trails!

April Greenwood
Community Ministries Coordinator



Financial Impact In Norwich

Based on the receipts submitted during the Rally, which includes local vendors, the Community Centre and the Food Bank, our campers infused \$7,345.56 into the local economy. This does not include donations made to the volunteer Firefighters BBQ.

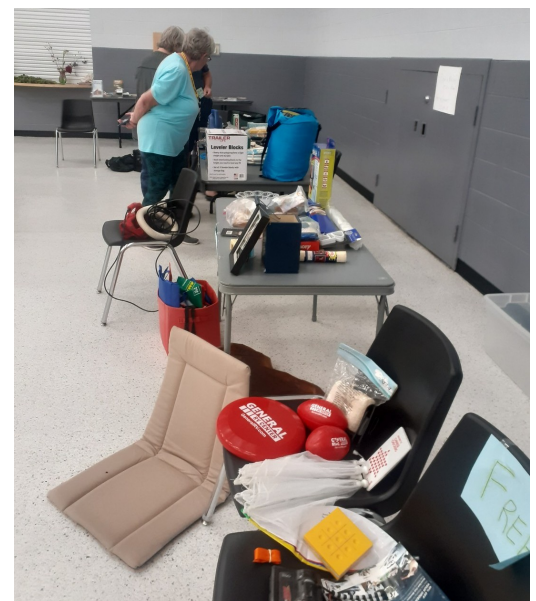


Hanging Up the Keys

Rocky & Don Lumley, of the Michigan Aqua Jets chapter, have decided to "hang up the keys" and give up camping. A small indoor rummage sale was held on Thursday, (shown right) to empty out their RV.

The photo on the left was from last year's Rally, when Don's fingers were still limber enough to play the guitar.

They hope to attend next year's Rally and have located a local motel where they can stay during the Rally.



Casual Camping at Blyth, Ontario

By Karen Chatfield

Brian and Karen Chatfield invited FCRV members to join The FRVA (Formally FMCA) group, called the Ontario Great Lakers, for a camping week in Blyth. There were 18 units in attendance at the Community Centre Campground, about equal amounts from both groups. As is common in July, it was very hot and sunny but with 30 amp service, water, awnings and the OGL tent shelter, we managed. We had coffee time, happy hour and a campfire each day. Many of us did a walk each morning in the village. Some rode bikes on the G to G trail (Guelph to Goderich) which is on the north end of the campground. There were lots of places to visit just a short drive away like Goderich and Clinton. About 15 people attended plays at the Blyth Festival indoor and outdoor venues and most of us went to The Cowbell Brewery for drinks and dinner. We even had an evening and morning visit with former FMCA, OGL and FCRV member Ian Almond (Now living in Alberta) and his friend Sharon. The booking was done through the North Huron office and required members to pay Karen and then one payment was sent to them after the Rally. It all worked out well. *See photos below of this campout.*



CHAPTER REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS

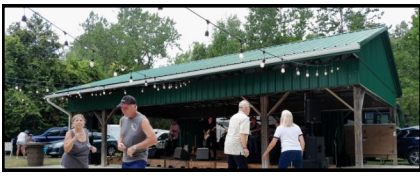
Lynn Acre, the Ontario Provincial Director, reminds all chapters to undertake a review of their current by-laws and Constitution before October 1, 2025.

If no changes are made, simply send Lynn Acre an email stating that the review has been done with no changes. If changes have been made, your email should include details of the changes.

Send confirmation of your review to lynnacre1957@gmail.com by October 1, 2025

Regular reviews are a good idea because they help to refresh our memories of what our by-laws and Constitutions expect of us. As our membership declines, making changes keeps us up-to-date on current practices.

** Most Constitutional changes require 2/3 approval of membership and several weeks notice prior to the vote. It is expected that most changes will affect the by-laws, which are easier to amend. .*



THUNDER IN THE VALLEY

Eight families from the Tri-County Travellers attended a weekend fundraiser named “Thunder In



The Valley” from Friday August 22 until Monday August 25, 2025.

This dry camping event included back-to-back bands, ranging from country to rock’n’roll to Celtic.

All proceeds from the event were distributed to local charities.

ATTAWANDARON SCOUT CAMP ADVENTURES

From August 26—31, 2025 four families from the Sarnia 4Ts and seven families from the Tri-County Travellers , as well as the Lumley’s from Michigan, attended a campout at the Attawandaron Scout Reserve near Grand Bend, Ontario. The week-long campout among the towering oak and pine trees (photo 1) included activities such as cutting up logs into chunks for the splitter (photos 2 & 3), group breakfasts cooked outdoors (photos 4 & 5) and a tasty snack of fresh corn roasted over an open fire.(photos 8, 9 & 10).

Since there were 4 members celebrating their birthdays in August, including a milestone 80th birthday by Rudy Sandau, (photo 6 & 7) a birthday party and delicious meal was enjoyed together. The highlight of the meal was a beef brisket which was smoked all night long over the campfire. A special treat during this campout was the invitation to observe the “Honey Harvest” process. See page 13 for details.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



HONEY HARVESTING

A Sweet Adventure

1. Scouts Canada sponsors 4 beehives at the Attawandaron Scout Reserve.
2. The beekeeper and his helpers don their protective clothing.
3. Shawn Jeansonne, the Beekeeper, starts the smoker before approaching the hive.
4. The Beekeeper removes the lid from the top chamber to reveal the “frames” of honeycombs. The top 2 chambers contain honey. The bottom chamber contains the Queen & larvae.

1



2



3



4



5. The frames are covered with active bees which have to be shaken off in order to get a good look.
6. Each frame is carefully examined to see if there's enough honey to harvest.
7. Acceptable frames are then “swept off” with a brush to remove excess debris or stubborn bees.
8. A helper shows a fully loaded frame, which is quite heavy.

5



6



7



8



9. The honey-laden frames were taken to the harvesting centre inside the Beaver Building.
- 10 & 11. The beekeeper's daughter removes excess wax from each frame. The wax is later mixed with coconut oil to make natural creams.
- 12 & 13. Manual and electric centrifuges spin the honey from each frame.

9



10



11



12



13



14. The extracted honey then is poured into the top of a gravity fed filter to remove the “Bee Bits”. (The filter is seen in photo # 15)
16. Helpers pour the filtered honey through a tap, into plastic bottles. (Shown photo 17)
- 18 & 19. All of the sticky equipment was left outdoors for a few days after the harvest, and the bees then became the “clean up crew”.

14



15



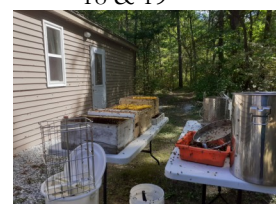
16



17



18 & 19



Fall OPA 2025

Monday September 1—Friday September 5 Lakewood Christian Campground, Forest, Ontario

Twenty-six people, in 14 units, attended the Fall OPA campout at the lovely Lakewood Christian Campground. Everyone made their own reservations and paid their own fees. We all had full hookups with at least 30 amp of power. We had the use of the Fellowship Hall for our Tuesday Voting Delegates' Meeting and the evening potluck supper and Wednesday evening for card playing. An empty campsite was given to us for our group campfires and the Washer Toss Tournament.

AGENDA

Monday: Arrive & set up

Tuesday: 10 am: Morning walk to beach,
1 pm Voting Delegates Meeting in Fellowship Hall
6 pm Potluck supper in the Hall

Evening: Campfire & sing-along

Wednesday: 9:30 am Pancake Breakfast

11: am Depart for Golf Tournament

5:30 pm French Fry Supper (Optional)

Evening: Games in Hall

Thursday: 11: am Washer Toss Tournament

5 pm Supper at local restaurant

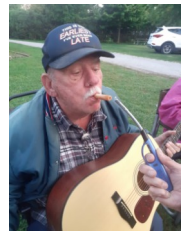
Evening: Campfire & sing-along

Friday: Pack up & head home



Left: Campers gather in the shade for fellowship.

Below: Evening campfires were enriched with music & laughter provided by Don & Rocky Lumley



Left: Rocky Lumley teaches Ruth Taziar & Marion Warrington how to play a dice game called Farkle.

Right: Bonnie Mather, Mike Taziar, Mabel Douglas and friends enjoy a game of Seven of Spades.



Left : Dave Skillings serves up hot pancakes to the hungry campers.
Right: Jack Smye comes back for seconds.



Above: Rocky Lumley keeps score for the Washer Toss Tournament.

Below: An empty campsite was used for the tournament. Ruth Taziar and Don Blenkinsop were the champions.



Twenty-two campers car-pooled to a local restaurant and filled two tables. They enjoyed a tasty meal, some live entertainment and good conversation.

HIGHLIGHTS OF VOTING DELEGATES MEETING

Tuesday September 2, 2025

1:00 pm

Fellowship Hall at Lakewood Christian Campground



Above left to right: Recording Secretary Jack Smye , OPA President Lew Acre and Treasurer Dave Skillings preside over the Voting Delegates' Meeting.

Roll Call

OPA Paid Members.....41
(36 in chapters + 5 Independent = 41)

Voting Delegates

Chapter Delegates4/5
Executive Delegates7/9
Committee Delegates6/7
A quorum was achieved

Constitution Bylaw Reviews

The following chapters have completed their reviews.

Brantford Sundowners
Meandering Mohawks
Sarnia 4 T's
Tri-County Travellers
OPA

Membership Update

FCRV International.....1548
Region 7.....80
Ontario.....69
Nova Scotia.....9
Quebec.....1
New Brunswick.....1



Above: Grace Cammaert (centre) receives her scholarship from her grandparents John & Shelley Scott.

Scholarship

No new donations will be accepted. The OPA Treasurer has assumed management of the funds.

One scholarship application from Grace Cammaert has been awarded.

Treasurer Report

Bank Balance.....\$7,664.70
GIC.....\$14,649.84
GIC.....\$12,400.00
TOTAL.....\$34,717.54

Spring OPA Campout

Michael & Ruth Taziar have volunteered to organize the 2026 Spring OPA campout. They will seek to reserve some dates that straddle a weekend in May (Thursday to Tuesday) to allow working people to attend.

International Wildlife/Conservation Grant

The Attawandaron Scout Reserve has been awarded a \$1,000 grant to be used for conservation initiatives.

Right: Acting Regional Director Lew Acre presents the grant to Attawandaron Representatives.

Rudy Sandau (far left) submitted the application for the grant.

