

OPAction Newsletter

June 2026

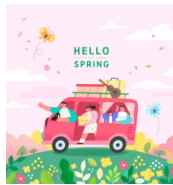


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Spring OPA Campout May 29—June 2

Where did it happen? How many attended? What did they do there? For answers to these questions and more, see pages 4 through 7.



Conservation Efforts

Our members continue to participate in their local conservation programs. See pages 2 and 3 to discover what they've been up to.



Memorials

Unfortunately we've had to say farewell to four more of our camping family members. Turn to page 6 to see whose gone from our campfire.



50th Annual Ontario Retiree Rally

Read all about the fun, food and festivities enjoyed by the campers at the 50th Annual Retiree Rally. See pages 8 through 13 to find out how much fun retirees have.



Visitors from "Down Under"

Visitors from New Zealand recently camped with some of our members. Turn to page 3 to learn about the RV Worldwide Exchange Program that facilitated their visit.



Membership Awards

Three couples have reached milestone memberships. To see who they are, turn to page 6.



Election Results

Turn to page 13 to learn who the new President of FCRV will be.





Catfish Creek Conservation Authority



Eleven couples from the Tri-County Travellers Chapter of FCRV Camping Club gathered at Springwater Conservation Area from April 24 until April 27, 2026 to operate the Opening weekend of the month-long Trout Fishing Derby. Shown left the campers enjoy the sunshine as they relax before Opening Day.



Above: Members took turns selling Day Passes in the booth.



Other members wore vests & walked around the pond, checking to see that all fishermen age 15 and older had Day Passes.



Opening Day brought fair weather and many eager fishermen.



When they were not working a shift selling Day Passes, the campers kept busy repairing damaged picnic tables and assembling completely new picnic tables. Lumber, power tools and hardware were provided. The campers were also supplied with limited power hookups, firewood and heated washrooms with showers.



Fresh air and busy hands led to hearty appetites. Each day a delicious soup was prepared by the campers and enjoyed together. Above Connie Skillings & Adele Waite prepare "Stone Soup" for everyone.



Overnight rains created a river of mud between the RVs so the clever campers built bridges using the damaged planks. Above Karen Chatfield and pup Charley "walk the plank" keeping boots and puppy paws mud-free.



At the end of the weekend, campers were satisfied with their accomplishments. Five new picnic tables were built and twenty-five damaged tables were repaired and approximately 90 Day Passes were sold.

In May, several members travelled to the Attawandaron Scout Reserve near Grand Bend where they split and stacked wood which is sold to support the Reserve's programs. While there, the campers enjoyed the fresh spring forests of oak, pine and tulip trees as well as fellowship around the ever-burning campfire and meals together.



Above: Nestled beneath the mature trees, the campers gathered for daily campfires, conversations and outdoor cooking.

Above: Dave Skillings works his "magic" on the grill, delighting his fellow campers with breakfast.



New Zealanders Visit Canada



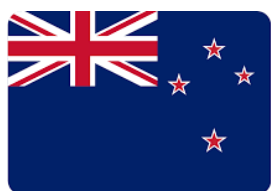
In May, Mick & Annie Leggett of Nelson, New Zealand attended a joint camp-out with members of FCRV and FRVA at Windmill Point RV park near Fort Erie, Ontario.

The Leggetts are members of a Worldwide RV Exchange program. After several video conferences with their host family, they flew into Toronto where their Woodstock hosts picked them up and rented them their RV for several weeks. In exchange the Ontario folks plan to fly to New Zealand in January where Mick & Annie will meet them and rent them their own RV. From Fort Erie, Mick & Annie plan to travel to the Maritime provinces, then back through Quebec, into Ontario to Algonquin Provincial Park, across to Sudbury, then back to Woodstock to return the rented RV.

This will be the 4th RV exchange they have undertaken.

Annie assured everyone that N.Z. is a great place to camp since it has no bears, lions, poisonous spiders or snakes. The following email was sent to Karen Chatfield after the campout.

"Thanks for the warmth shown to us both over the last week. It was an absolute pleasure listening to your stories and valued ideas regarding our adventure ahead....Keep New Zealand in mind as a destination."





Spring OPA Campout Thursday May 28— Tuesday, June 2 At Flamboro Valley RV Resort



Croaking frogs and trilling red-wing blackbirds added to the charm of the nearby pond.

Eighteen families gathered in the beautiful Flamboro Valley RV Resort near Hamilton, Ont where the campers enjoyed sunny skies and warm fellowship for 5 days.



Above: Each campsite had 30 amp power, water and a picnic table. Many trees provided welcome shade during the unseasonably high temperatures.



Left: Independent members Michael & Ruth Taziar organized the casual campout which included a weekend.



Campers love to eat together and it was no surprise that 2 long tables soon filled up with the good-natured chatter at the “Breezy” family restaurant.



On Saturday morning, Karen & Brian Chatfield hosted a Coffee Break, providing not only the coffee but also a variety of baked goods.



HIGHLIGHTS of the Voting Delegates' Meeting Saturday May 30, 2026 1:00 pm

The above structure was rented for one day to provide shelter for the Voting Delegates meeting, potluck supper and evening entertainment.



Shown above: OPA Executive seated left to right: Secretary Jack Smye, President Lew Acre and Treasurer Dave Skillings.

Membership Report as of May 30, 2026

FCRV.....	1,309
Region 7.....	62
Ontario.....	49
Nova Scotia.....	8
British Columbia.....	3
New Brunswick.....	1
Quebec.....	1

Treasurer's Report

Dave Skillings reported that as of May 30th;

Bank Account.....	\$ 14, 816.75
G.I.C.s.....	<u>\$ 16,731.87</u>
Total Assets.....	\$ 31,548.62

Fall OPA Locations

Three members volunteered to contact the following campgrounds to check their availability to accommodate 20 RVs and provide a place for the Voting Delegates' Meeting and a potluck meal.

Cedar Rail (Chesley).....	Michael & Ruth Taziar
Harriston	Michael & Ruth Taziar
Lakewood (Plympton/Wyoming)	Lew Acre
Willow Lake (Woodstock).....	Karen Chatfield

The executive will make the decision on which location to hold Fall OPA 2026.

The membership will be informed via email.

OPA Membership

Currently we have 5 chapters;

Brantford Sundowners.....	2 families
Meandering Mohawks.....	5 families
RuP'n'Ready.....	3 families
Sarnia 4 T's	4 families
Tri-County Travellers.....	15 families
Independent members.....	<u>5 families</u>
Total OPA Membership.....	34 families

Scholarship Report

Bank Acc't.....	\$ 4,664.70
G.I.C.s.....	<u>\$14,651.56</u>
Total Assets.....	\$19,316.26

No applications have been received as yet. The deadline of June 1 is flexible.

Roll Call

Chapter Delegates.....	4/5
Executive Delegates.....	7/9
Committee Delegates.....	6/7

A quorum was achieved.

Webmaster Dave Warrington's Report

The OPA website has been updated to reflect all current and upcoming events.

I am pleased to confirm that the full particulars for the 50th Ontario Retiree Rally including the appropriate registration form is on the website for members to access and complete. As of initiating this report, we had 20 families registered. If you haven't already registered but plan to attend, please do so as soon as possible so that we have accurate numbers.

This website, your website, continues to have all the Camping Today issues for the past two years for your convenience.

Also posted of late are a number of photos of chapters supporting their communities with volunteer work and various other outings, as they continue to build on the friendships developed through camping.

The recent OPAction Newsletter and all previous issues are posted on the website as well.

If there is something you feel we should include on the website, please speak-up.

Membership Awards



55 YEARS

Provincial Membership Directors Rudy & Sharon Sandau, as well as their son Scott Sandau, received their 55 Year Membership Awards from Lynn Acre.



55 YEARS

Gerry and Helen Finkbeiner received their 55 year Membership award from Provincial Director Lynn Acre.



25 YEARS

OPA Treasurer Dave & Connie Skillings received their 25 year Membership award from Provincial Director Lynn Acre.



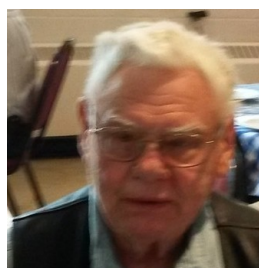
In Loving Memory



Don Adamson, of Tri-County Travellers died May 4, 2026



Ted Shelley, of Brantford Sundowners died May 22, 2026.



Dave Turner, former member of Sarnia 4 T's Died June 4, 2026



Norma Copeland, former member of Meandering Mohawks died June 5, 2026.



With the death of Ted Shelley came the death of the Brantford Sundowners. Their charter was returned to the Provincial Director and their assets were donated to charity.





Saturday night everyone gathered again in the rented Hall for a delicious potluck meal. The chapter provided thinly sliced roast beef and buns while the remainder of the food was contributed by the campers. All of the food groups were represented in the bountiful meal. Plates were filled, and refilled and nobody left hungry.



John Tuin and Melyna Foss, two local musicians, joined forces to entertain the crowd.



Melyna Foss, who works with disabled students by day, shared some of her original folk style songs as well as a variety of Celtic tunes.



Although at first reluctant to perform in public, John Tuin showed remarkable skill on the violin, despite being self-taught.



50th Ontario Retiree Rally

Twenty-seven units and 56 people attended the 50th annual Retiree Rally in Norwich, Ontario from Monday June 8th until Friday June 12th. Opening Ceremonies took place at 7 pm on Monday evening. Jim Sampson organized a Progressive Euchre tournament as the evening's entertainment. The evening concluded with a "Hospitality" sponsored by the Meandering Mohawks.



Above: Jim Sampson oversees the euchre tournament.



Above: Partners concentrate on their cards, as competition runs high.

Left: Dave Warrington, Herb Lochbihler & Marian Warrington of the Meandering Mohawks relax after serving an assortment of fruit breads and muffins.



Left: Jim Sampson awards Jack Smye first prize in the Euchre Tournament.

Tuesday June 9, 2026



Above: Ruth & Michael Taziar organized a Washer Toss Tournament. With five separate games underway at the same time, the tournament progressed rapidly. Unfortunately rain interrupted the play, and campers scrambled to take cover. The tournament resumed later that day so the semi-finalists could compete.



Left: Ruth & Michail Taziar announce Second place winners Robert Chamberlain and Lynn Acre.
Right: Ruth & Michael Taziar congratulate First Place Winners John Waite and Chuck Mielkie





Pizza Lunch

Members of the Explorers club prepared a tasty lunch of Godfathers Pizza, fresh lettuce salad and cookies.

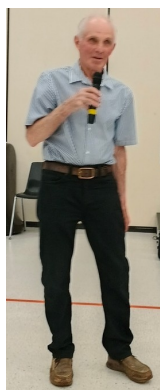


Above: Gerry Neutel drove to Norwich for the afternoon to conduct a "hands-on" workshop on Greeting Card making.

While the ladies were either making cards or shopping, seven of the men drove to Woodstock to play golf.



At 5 pm the fire sirens blared calling the hungry campers to another tasty meal of BBQ'd burgers, sausages, potato salad & cold drinks provided by the Norwich Volunteer Fire Service. This fundraiser helps them buy necessary equipment.



Mayor Jim Palmer brought Greetings from the Township of Norwich.

Jack Smye introduced the Norwich Community Band.

Using jokes and local trivia, Vic Whitcroft, a local newspaper editor, introduced each song with wit and charm.



Fifteen members and a conductor performed an hour's worth of musical numbers for the campers. Their professional renditions prompted a standing ovation at the conclusion of the show.

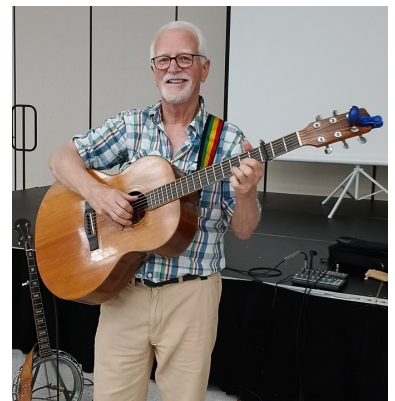
Wednesday June 10, 2026 Camper's Own Devotional Service



Lynn Acre led the Devotional Service on Wednesday morning with a Powerpoint Presentation entitled Stone Soup. Over the course of the campout, \$222 and 2 bags of non-perishable food items were collected for the Norwich Food Bank.



Retiree Olympics were hosted by the Meandering Mohawks. Shown above from left to right are; Robert Chamberlain tosses a washer towards the target; Connie Skillings throws a yellow softball towards the bucket, David West hurls tethered golf balls at the ladder; Bonnie Mather tosses rings towards spikes; Dave Skillings kicks his shoe past the finish line and Linda Vandevyvere putts the golf ball but misses the cup. Not shown were beanbag toss and golf driving range. Shown below: Despite grey clouds, participation was high for the Olympics. Jim Sampson presented first place prizes to Ruth Taziar (Women's high score) and Duane Barham (Men's high score).



Left: Staff from Crissy's Catering of Tillsonburg once again supplied a delicious meal of stuffed pork, fried chicken, mashed potatoes, gravy, beans, salad & cream pies.



Charlie & Deb Hulett enjoy their meal.

Bernie Gilmore of London, Ont. entertained on Wednesday night singing both original and folk songs accompanied with guitar and banjo.



On both Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, Don & Rocky Lumley of the Michigan Aqua-Jets, led the campers in a sing-a-long as they gathered around a propane fire-pit for an hour of laughter and music.



Thursday's Lunch

Members of the Tri-County Travellers were busy all week, preparing the jello-inspired dessert well in advance and gathering on Thursday morning to bake and assemble chicken burgers. Homemade cole slaw and a gelatin dessert completed the meal.



The oven racks were filled with crispy chicken burgers.



Above from far left: Brenda Barham, Adele Waite, Dave Skillings and Robert Chamberlain place the cooked burgers onto the fresh buns.



Sharon Sandau, shown above, slices the colourful gelatin dessert into squares.



The hungry campers add condiments to their burgers. Ketchup, mustard, relish, mayo, lettuce and cheese were available.



First Prize Winners of the Bocce Ball Tournament are shown above; Sharon Sandau, (organizer Wayne Rosenberger,) Jim Sampson, Don Blenkinsop & Lorea Boogerman.

Bocce Ball



Wayne Rosenberger presents second prize to Linda and Ben Vandevyvere, Brian Chatfield and Walter Meixner.

Annual General Meeting

2026 Rally Chairperson, Karen Chatfield, (shown left) welcomed everyone to the 50th Annual Retiree Rally AGM on Thursday afternoon. The following decisions were made.

1. The Entertainment Budget was increased to \$1,000
2. The “Meal Program” was eliminated.
3. The Camping Fee was increased to \$200/unit with 2 people or \$175/unit with 1 person.
4. The 51st Annual Retiree Rally will be held in Norwich June 14 –18th, 2027.
5. The 2027 Chairman is Lew Acre.



THANK YOU!

A big “Thank You” to Karen for her leadership and to everyone who signed up for a task at the 2027 Retiree Rally.



Rally attendees are encouraged to support the local Norwich merchants. Receipts for local purchases were added up and the total funds spent in the community were \$ 5,083.54. Then one receipt was randomly drawn and the winner won a potted plant, also purchased locally.



Karen Chatfield presents Shelley Scott with a plant when her receipt was drawn.



Charlene Jenner, an avid quilter, donated one of her creations to be given as a door prize. Shown above Charlene presents a quilted picnic basket to the winner Marion Warrington.



Rudy & Sharon Sandau sold 50/50 Raffle tickets each night resulting in a profit of \$325 for the Rally.

Shown Left: Sharon Sandau measures off “arm’s length” strips of tickets.



50th Annual Retiree Rally Ends.....



In honour of our 50th Anniversary of hosting an Ontario Retiree Rally, Brian Chatfield, shown above, created a series of questions based on 1970's trivia. Participants formed teams of 5 or 6 people. Together the teams brainstormed answers to 3 sets of 10 questions. The winning teams received boxes of "Smarties" as their reward.



The final evening of the Rally ended with a special 50th anniversary cake and ice cream.



Campvention	South Dakota (Register online fcrv.org)	July 5-12, 2026
Casual Campout	Blyth, Ont. (Contact karenchatfield@rogers.com for details)	July 13 –17, 2026
Fall OPA	"To be Announced"	September



Linda Hennie will become the new President of FCRV at the 2026 Campvention.