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Tourism Resource

Elgin County Tourism Kiosks Open for the Season!

Summer is just around the corner and it is time to start planning your staycation! With kilometres of sandy beaches, four quaint port-side villages, Carolinian forest hiking and cycling trails, peaceful campgrounds, rich cultural heritage attractions and an abundance of mouth-watering culinary attractions, Elgin County is the place to be this summer!

Elgin County Tourism is pleased to kick-off tourism season with the opening of our summer tourism information kiosks. In addition to our 450 Sunset Dr., St. Thomas location (open year-round) our summer kiosks at the Port Burwell Lighthouse and the Port Stanley Festival Theatre are open for the season and will provide tourism information to residents and visitors until September. The County also has a Tourism Cruiser that will be travelling across the County to promote tourism in different locations throughout the season! Look for the cruiser at events and attractions this summer to enter contests, pick up great giveaways, local attraction brochures and, of course, a copy of the Elgin County Official Visitor's

Guide. Also pick up a copy of the Savour Elgin/Elgin Arts Trail Discovery Guide promoting the best art and culinary attractions the area has to offer.



Elgin County Tourism Cruiser

For more information, virtual copies of guides and maps and local event listings visit our website www.elgintourist.com, follow us on Twitter [@ElginCounty](https://twitter.com/ElginCounty) or search Elgin County on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ElginCounty) or follow us on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/ElginCounty) for daily updates.

Business Resource

Recognizing Signs of Mental Health Issues in Agriculture Course



The importance of identifying and supporting mental health needs in agriculture is increasingly being recognized particularly in relation to a disease outbreak, euthanasia or other stressful situations. Being able to identify the warning signs in a farmer client, veterinarian colleague, or yourself, is very important in order to get the help needed. Join the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) for this two-day course that will help identify risk factors, signs and symptoms for mental health conditions and issues using examples specifically related to agriculture.

Participants will receive a certificate of completion in Mental Health First Aid from the Canadian Mental Health Association.

Registration includes: course material, coffee breaks, and lunch for both days.

Who should attend? Veterinarians, agricultural

association employees at the office and field level, extension services staff, and anyone involved in providing agricultural services.

June 1 and 2, 2015

Day One - 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Day Two - 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

OMAFRA

6484 Wellington Road 7

Elora, Ontario

Cost: \$200 + \$26 (HST) = \$226/person.

Registration Form:

<http://www.ontlpc.ca/pdfs/OLPCMentalHealthWorkshopRegistration-Form.pdf>

Tourism Profile

A Walk Along the Pier in Port Stanley



Port Stanley West Breakwater concrete safety wall.

There is something almost magical about a walk along a pier in the summertime looking out over the water's edge as the waves lap peacefully against the shoreline. Soon visitors to Port Stanley will be able to do just that when the West Breakwater opens to the public later this summer for the first time in nearly seventeen years.

The project includes the construction of an accessible 12 foot wide walking surface, benches for resting and a concrete wall along the west side acting as a railing system to

protect people from strong wave action. The wall will also have lowered portions, with glass, for those with mobility issues to view the water while on the walkway. Construction on this project has already begun and is estimated to be completed by the end of June 2015, weather permitting.

The West Breakwater was closed by Transport Canada in 1998 because of safety concerns and the Municipality of Central Elgin originally intended only to repair the concrete and timber that hold the Breakwater together. A Breakwater is extremely important to a portside Community,

blocking large waves to create a calm harbour and stemming the flow of sediment into the harbour. When the construction company doing the repairs created a concrete surface for their machinery to travel on, the Municipality determined that the next logical step would be to use that surface for pedestrian traffic and thus the Breakwater project began.

Reopening the Breakwater is part of a larger project to improve the harbour for recreation and to grant greater public access to the water. In the Fall, Central Elgin plans to dredge the harbour and use the sediment to reclaim 6 acres of the harbour creating Hofuis Park, which will be located on the north end of the Breakwater. The Municipality also plans to rehabilitate the East Berm and create more park land, making the

village of Port Stanley even more welcoming to tourists and recreation enthusiasts.



Port Stanley West Breakwater walkway under construction.

Community Resource

Technological Innovation at the Aylmer Library - Maker Space Opens

The Aylmer branch of Elgin County Library will now be home to one of the first Maker Spaces in the region thanks to a generous donation from the Dorothy Fay Palmer Estate. The space aims to engage the community in new ways by enabling access to cutting-edge technology and software. Providing youth access to technology is essential to igniting the spark of innovation for future generations and highlights the quality of place in Elgin County.

Interview with Sandra Poczobut, Manager of Programming and Community Development for Elgin County Library

What exactly is a Maker Space?

A Maker Space is a place where the community gathers to make, create, brainstorm, learn and collaborate. A Maker Space does not have to be large nor is it always defined by technology or equipment. Many libraries already use the idea of

Maker Spaces when offering making-focused programs where patrons create, craft and learn. Knitting circles, crafting clubs, photography workshops, county-wide gaming tournaments, and game design cyber camps are all ways that the Elgin County Library is already connecting with “maker culture” at its 10 branches.

Why libraries as Maker Spaces?

Books are still a strong aspect of libraries, both in print and digital format; however, libraries are increasingly becoming places of access and community engagement through dynamic programming, comfortable seating, working areas, Wi-Fi, and staff that can help find and access the right information in a sea of digital resources.

Maker Spaces are a natural fit for libraries where learning and knowledge gathering has been core. As school curriculum focuses more on project



based learning that incorporates STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math), Maker Spaces become ideal to support tinkering, exploring and sharing of ideas in exciting ways. A youth, for example, can now come to the library to see 3D printing in action, learn how to create a 3D model, and possibly become interested in a career path. This can lead to further exploration through books, and resources available at the library and open exciting never before considered possibilities.

What is available at the Aylmer Maker Space?

The Aylmer Maker Space has a 3D Makerbot printer, as well as a 3D Markerbot Digitizer scanner. The 3D printer is connected to a Mac computer providing access to an online community through “Thingiverse” – collaborative software that enables patrons to try 3D printing by designing a project or trying one that has already been created. A library staff member recently broke her mailbox flag; rather than purchasing a new box she was able to find a file online and print a new flag to attach. Amazing!

Anything else?

Yes, the library also has video and photo editing software. For patrons wanting to dust off their old VHS, the library has VHS to DVD conversion equipment, as well as equipment to digitize negative and positive slides into JPG files. (This service is available at the Dutton branch as well).

The Aylmer branch will also have Raspberry Pi kits. No, not kits for baking. Raspberry Pi kits are small computers that can be used to program, create circuits and even act as the brains of a robot.

Small easy to use technology is also being implemented in some library drop-in programs, and will be used during the upcoming TD Summer Reading Program that begins at the end of June. These include such items as circuit “Makey Makey” boards that can turn bananas and playdough into musical instruments and gaming controllers, “Google Cardboard” that lets patrons experience virtual reality from their smart phone, and kits that teach about solar energy.

Join the Elgin County Library at the Aylmer Maker Space Open house on Thursday, May 28th from 6pm – 8pm to see the space in action. Visit the website www.elgincounty.ca/library, follow the library on Twitter [@LibrElginCounty](https://twitter.com/LibrElginCounty) and Facebook www.facebook.com/elgincountylibrary, or pop by the branch and see the equipment during regular branch hours. In addition to regular programs, the library is also looking to connect with community experts wanting to share their knowledge or start a group that can utilize the new technology for community-led projects. Interested? Please send an email to spoczobut@elgin.ca.



Local Event

The Rosy Rhubarb Festival – Slow Down and Listen to the Rhubarb Grow



For over 20 years, visitors have been coming from far and wide each June to pay tribute to the plant that put Shedden, ON on the map - Rhubarb. This leafy vegetable with red celery-like stalks is one of the earliest local produce items to make an appearance in Elgin County gardens and farmers' markets each spring. Rhubarb stalks are tart in taste and are usually cooked with sugar and used in pies and other delicious desserts.

The Shedden Rosy Rhubarb Festival that takes place each year on the second weekend in June is part street festival, part carnival and part country fair. The kick-off event each year is a fierce competition between locals to bake the best pies, cakes and tarts - all using Rhubarb of course. These delicious confections are judged and the winners are auctioned off to the public. The locals are crazy about Rhubarb, competing not only in baking contests but also to see who can pull the longest stalk from lush patches of Rhubarb that fill the gardens of Shedden, making the village the Rhubarb Capital of Ontario.

The idea for a festival was originally conceived by a small group of Shedden locals who wanted

to do something to promote their community while raising money for a new community complex. At the time the Shedden Country Club was nearly 50 years old and the community needed something larger and more modern. As a result of the success of the Rosy Rhubarb Festival and other community groups, the Shedden Keystone Complex is now a reality and the Rosy Rhubarb Committee have turned their fundraising efforts towards a new library for Shedden.

Now in its 23rd year, The Shedden Rosy Rhubarb Festival has grown to a three-day extravaganza of family fun! Events include old favourites like baking contests, yard sales, petting zoos, pony rides and local musical entertainment as well as new and exciting additions like helicopter and monster truck rides, air bouncers and a breakfast sponsored by Denny's.

This year's event starts on June 12 and runs until June 14 at various locations in and around Shedden. For a full schedule of events visit:

<http://www.rosyrhubarbfestival.com/schedule.html>