



**ElginCounty**  
Progressive by Nature

**E-NEWSLETTER • MARCH/APRIL 2018**

**In this issue:**

<b>Experience the Serenity of an Old Growth Forest</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>SWIFT Internet Survey</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>It's Time to Plan Your Summer!</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>International Plowing Match Scholarship</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The 8th Annual Vimy Lecture</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Zimmer Air - A Bird's Eye View of Elgin County</b>	<b>6</b>

**Tourism Profile**

**Experience the Serenity of an Old Growth Forest**



**Alan Smith**  
General Manager,  
Economic Development  
(519) 631-1460 Ext. 133

**Katherine Thompson**  
Marketing &  
Communications  
Coordinator  
(519) 631-1460 Ext. 180

**Lindsey Duncan**  
Tourism Services  
Coordinator  
(519) 631-1460 Ext. 164

**Jessica DeBackere**  
Economic Development  
Coordinator  
(519) 631-1460 Ext. 137

Nature lovers will soon have a new way to escape the hustle and bustle of urban life by delving deep into the peaceful Carolinian forests of Elgin County. The Dalewood North Trail will reopen this spring after being closed for two years for rehabilitation including new features and a new name.

The Dalewood North Trail traverses some moderately difficult terrain

including some higher elevation areas and takes hikers deep into the heart of the Kettle Creek Valley through lands hardly touched by civilization. The trail meanders through some of the wildest nature that still survives in the Kettle Creek watershed giving hikers the opportunity to see an array of local wildlife including song birds, beavers and great blue herons. This little piece of natural paradise is located minutes from

the City of St. Thomas; however, none of the noises of city life can be heard as visitors enter the serene silence of an old growth forest.

The trail was closed to the public in part because of erosion concerns and washouts along portions of the trail. The eight bridges located along the trail were also deteriorating. Additionally, in order to cross from the Dan Patterson Conservation Area to the Dalewood North Trail, hikers were forced to cross Highbury Avenue, a busy thoroughfare. This was becoming increasingly dangerous and was a deterrent for those wishing to tackle the entire trail.

The Kettle Creek Conservation Authority (KCCA) looked carefully at how visitors were using the Dalewood North Trail and sought out ways to make their experiences better. During the refurbishing process a sustainable trail builder was hired to redesign the trail in a way that would prevent future closures due to erosion and wet conditions. Where the trail would be placed and its features were considered as part of the process. The new design allowed for the elimination of six bridges, leaving only two and one rock feature.

These two bridges were created using in-situ materials meaning they were built on-site by the trail builder using materials from the forest surrounding the trail. The trail builder identified a nearby tree, logged it using a portable saw mill and constructed the bridges, avoiding the need to introduce pressure treated wood into a natural environment.

Educational signage is also being added along the trail detailing which trees and birds hikers may come across while visiting the area.

Unfortunately, the connectivity between the Dalewood North Trail and the Dalewood Reservoir Trail could not be maintained – but connectivity to the Dan Patterson Trail was added. Hikers using the Dan Patterson Trail can now pass under the Highbury Avenue Bridge eliminating the need to cross the busy highway when passing from the Dan Patterson Conservation Area to the new trail. Later this summer, a viewing platform will be added to allow visitors to properly view the depth of the Kettle Creek Valley System. A small circular trail was also added to the Dalewood Reservoir Trail so the total number of kilometres of trail was not impacted.

As an added bonus the trail builder was able to pass knowledge to the employees of the Kettle Creek Conservation Authority so that they could adapt some of the same techniques on the other portions of the trail.

The new trail system will be opened in June and renamed. An official launch event is planned for the spring to thank the many sponsors that contributed to the project including TD Friends of the Environment, Kettle Creek Environmental Trust and the Elgin St. Thomas Community Foundation.

Elizabeth VanHooren, General Manager of the Kettle Creek Conservation Authority is excited for the public to see the reopened trail. She reminds visitors that dogs are welcome, as long as they are leashed (except of course in the Kettle Creek Dog Park and that KCCA's other trails are open from April 1st – November 30th annually.

For more information about all Kettle Creek Conservation Authority Trails visit <http://www.kettlecreekconservation.on.ca>.

---

## Business Resource

### SWIFT Internet Survey

The Southwest Integrated Fibre Technology network is collecting information about how residents, farms, businesses and public sector organizations currently use internet across the region. This information will help them determine where they will invest funding and support in achieving its goals of efficiently and

effectively building broadband for everyone. Click below to fill out the survey:



Tourism Resource  
**It's Time to Plan Your Summer!**



The Elgin County 2018 Official Visitor's Guide is now available! The revamped guide includes business listings, upcoming events, and editorial content to help you plan the best summer ever! There is so much to do this summer that you will barely be able to fit it all in. Soak up the sun at one of the areas pristine sandy beaches, enjoy newly paved cycling routes, indulge in fresh local cuisine, explore your inner creativity at area art galleries and live theatres, and shop 'til you drop at quaint village boutiques.

This spring the County has also launched a new Elgin County Lakeshore brochure. This new publication includes a map of Elgin County's 120km lakeshore with a listing of marinas, fishing spots, conservation areas and provincial parks, and beaches in Elgin. The brochure also includes tips on how to take the perfect sunset photo, information on

taking up the sport of fishing, boat safety tips, and dog-friendly locations in Elgin.

Cruise along the coast of Lake Erie's north shore with the Cruise the 2018 Coast Motorcycle Map. This map contains a route along Lake Erie's north shore from Windsor to Dunnville along with ten additional shorter routes across southwestern Ontario. The map also includes a list of fun attractions along the way and events to attend. The best part about this map is that it is waterproof!

A new edition of the Elgin-St. Thomas Hiking and Cycling Trail Map is now available. This publication includes maps of the hiking and cycling trails in Elgin County and the City of St. Thomas. New this year are the Whistlestop Trail, a route from St. Thomas to Port Stanley along Sunset Drive, and the Highwheel Way, a paved trail from Aylmer to Port Bruce along County Road 73.

Pick up a copy of any of these guides at the Elgin County Tourism Office at 450 Sunset Drive, St. Thomas or visit us at the Grow Wild Go Wild Show in London on April 7, or at the Aylmer Home and Garden Show April 13-15, 2018.





## INTERNATIONAL PLOWING MATCH **SCHOLARSHIP**

---

ARE YOU A RESIDENT OF ELGIN COUNTY OR ST. THOMAS AND STUDYING AT A POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION IN CANADA IN A DISCIPLINE RELATED TO AGRICULTURE?

YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PLOWING MATCH LEGACY AGRICULTURAL SCHOLARSHIP!

---

**For more info call: (519) 631-1460 ext. 180  
or visit [www.elgincounty.ca](http://www.elgincounty.ca)**

**DEADLINE TO APPLY MAY 30TH**



This year's guest speaker is Tracy Gordon, a Dutton resident, historical seamstress and World War I Re-enactor. For many years she has re-created the persona of her great-great-grandmother, Alberta Gregg, a Bluebird, the name given to the nurses at the front during WWI because of their distinctive blue uniform. In 2017 she was present at Vimy Ridge for the events marking the 100th anniversary of the battle. During her visit she toured other parts of the western front as well as the final resting place of Lance-Sergeant Sifton. Join us for her talk illustrating highlights from the events marking the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge.

Parking is at the rear of 450 Sunset, the adjacent County of Elgin Administration Building.

There is no charge for the event.

2 p.m. Monday, April 9, 2018

Elgin County Heritage Centre

460 Sunset Drive, St. Thomas

Of the 600 Elgin County men present at the Battle of Vimy Ridge, one played a role that has become part of Elgin's community history and lore. Lance-Sergeant Ellis Sifton, a Wallacetown native, on April 9th, the first day of the battle, single-handedly eliminated a German machine gun emplacement at the cost of his own life. He was posthumously awarded a Victoria Cross, one of four presented to Canadians for actions during the battle.

To honour him, the museum will display, for one day, his Victoria Cross, marking the 101st anniversary of his act of courage. The Victoria Cross, at the time, was the highest award for bravery in the Empire. Sifton's was presented to his father, John J. Sifton, by the Governor General, the Duke of Devonshire.





As the whirr of a helicopter breaks the silence you can't help but look up and wonder who is flying it and where it might be going. Helicopters tend to be shrouded in mystery; however, the staff at Zimmer Air Services wants to change this.

"Helicopters are a part of aviation that tends to fly under the radar," said Dan Haupt, Helicopter Pilot at Zimmer Air Services. "People are intimidated by helicopters, but we want them to feel comfortable coming to our facility to learn about what we do and maybe take a tour."

Zimmer Air was started in 1975 by Howard Zimmer, as a fixed-wing airplane operation called Zimmer Air Spray. In 1981 the company federally incorporated as Zimmer Air Services and in the mid '80s it converted its operations to helicopters.

Zimmer Air Services has three locations, one in Blenheim, one in Thunder Bay and a 13,500 square foot hanger complex at the St. Thomas Municipal Airport.

Built in 2009, the St. Thomas location was originally used as a helicopter flight training facility but has now grown to become the main base of operations with the most helicopters being housed on-site. All maintenance of the fleet is done out of this location.

Most of the work Zimmer Air does is in the form of Aerial Application Services in the agriculture and forestry industries. Crop Protection Applications can be done from the air in a process where granular or liquid products are spread from a helicopter either from underslung buckets or an attached tank with booms and nozzles. This highly-regulated process is used to spread fertilizers, fungicides, biological controls for insect outbreaks, and to seed grasses, grains and cover crops. Aerial application is much faster than ground spray and prevents damage to mature crops that can occur when using a ground machine.

From time to time Zimmer Air Services is called on to provide Frost Flying Services. This occurs when crops such as Ginseng, Strawberries, or Apples



have bloomed early and a frost is expected. In order to protect these delicate blooms and save the crop, the helicopter flies above the plants in the early morning just as the frost is scheduled to arrive. This process moves the air over the plants and pushes down a layer of warm air to prevent the frost from settling in.

The company also does extensive forestry work, controlling infestations of pests like Forest Tent Caterpillar or Gypsy Moths. Also aerial seeding, and herbicide applications which aid in reforestation of harvested or fire devastated plots are done by their helicopters.

For those wishing to rise above the rest, Zimmer Air also offers helicopter adventures seasonally out of the St. Thomas location. Offering everything from corporate charters to customs tours, clients can choose from short rides over Port Stanley to longer day trips to local tourist attractions. Arrive in style at locations such as Long Point Eco-Adventures, Burning Kiln Winery, the Elm Hurst Inn and a series of wineries and breweries in the region. No matter your budget, Zimmer Air Services can work with you to design an unforgettable experience.

“A trip in a helicopter is an experience that can’t be missed,” says Dan Haupt. “It is a totally different experience than flying in an airplane, helicopters can go places that airplanes can’t and can land almost anywhere. An airplane can only land on a runway.”

Safety and quality is of the utmost importance at Zimmer Air Services. Staff are highly skilled, trained,

and dedicated professionals. In order to receive a helicopter license Transport Canada Requires that a pilot have at minimum 100 hours of in-flight training and pass a rigorous series of written tests. Zimmer Air further trains all pilots for an additional 100 hours. There are some employees who have been with the organization for over 25 years which translates into considerable experience and exceptionally high standards.

For more information about Zimmer Air Services or to enjoy a bird’s eye view of Elgin County visit <https://zimmerair.com/>.

