

# Kids' Fishing Derby gets a boost

By Bryan Jessop

An event near and 'deer' to the heart of a former Wheatley native is being treated to a hefty show of support.

The 13th annual Southwest Outdoors Club Kids' Fishing Derby reeled in a donation of an even \$1,000 offered by the Quality Deer Management Association's Southwestern Ontario branch, which represents an area stretching from Windsor to Kitchener. The contribution was presented by the group's lottery co-chairs Lawrence Beckett and Lou Geauvreau to SWOC members Larry McDonald and Ron Bell Thursday, May 26 at the Wheatley Royal Canadian Legion. The gathering was a reunion of sorts for the four, who attended school together in their youth.

"We like to give raffle money to kids' events and this is a good kids' event," Beckett said of the Kids' Fishing Derby.

The most local outlet of the QDMA has supported the Southwest Outdoors Club in the past, offering half the proceeds from ticket sales the local group makes for some of its fundraisers. As advocates of youth outdoor activities, the association has even offered SWOC all funds generated from some of its more successful raffles.

"They're very kind to us," McDonald said. "They help everybody, and not just with the environment."

The local QDMA has made \$50,000 in donations over the past two years, often supporting programming for children with cancer, including Camp Trillium in Waterford. In addition to fishing, archery and other outdoors programs, the association has also supported the Shriners, Rotary International clubs, the Brant County Youth Association, the hospital in Ingersoll and more locally, kids' activities on Pelee Island. The latter has included Christmas parties, movie nights and pizza nights, organized in conjunction with the Pelee Island Sportsmen's Club. Such Pelee Island programming has benefited from \$1,000 in donations from the QDMA last year and another \$1,000 in 2014, dispersed through Pelee Island



Lawrence Beckett (far left) and Lou Geauvreau (far right) of the Southwestern Ontario Quality Deer Management Association present a donation of \$1,000 to the Southwest Outdoors Club's Ron Bell (second from left) and Larry McDonald Thursday, May 26. The money will be used to help fund this year's Kids' Fishing Derby, to be held Saturday, July 9 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Wheatley Harbour.

Township.

The association includes branches in Canada — where it originated — as well as successful groups that have expanded into the United States. Beyond Ontario, chapters have been established in Quebec and the Maritimes and more recently, into Manitoba and Alberta. Currently, there are about 80,000 members throughout North America. In Ontario, the QDMA works with the Ministry of Natural Resources, monitoring deer populations and helping the MNR establish bylaws while serving as a conservation education group.

Beckett's family operated a plumbing business from an office in Wheatley situated across Erie Street from the current Subway restaurant. Lawrence, now living in Kitchener, frequently makes trips back to cabins he owns on Pelee Island.

This year's Kids' Fishing Derby will take place at the Wheatley Harbour Saturday, July 9 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. The free-of-charge event will include a hot dog, pop and chips for participating youth, who will also receive a free toy and be entered in a draw to win one of eight new bicycles. An average of 500 youths participate in each year's derby, which operates at a cost of about \$3,500.

# Graduating to survive

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It is an eye opener when we realize that the walls we have spent money adorning, refurbishing and many times showcasing are empty when we leave with our memories; we left a fresh palette for a new family to create their own story within.

Like anywhere else, days can become mundane or mediocre on the island. Best of times can always be better and the worst less challenging, especially if we have friends closer to share them with. We realize the importance of community, no matter how small, and work on fostering relationships daily.

On Saturday, Mark and the guys headed over to a nearby island where they salvaged many things that had been left behind as ruins: a perfect example of how things that humans regard as invaluable items often become worthless when they are ready to move on. Their junk became our 'gold'. On their return we made plans for a cookout at the harbour. Ham, ribs, scalloped potatoes, French green beans and cornbread brought us together again.

Monday morning we went over our island list that includes routine maintenance and repairs, as well as short and long-term projects. Doing this is critical for my sanity and probably drives Mark a little insane. The balance that we have found somewhere between his way of doing things and mine has been key to our survival.

Life on the island, or anywhere else, I suspect, is not a frozen drink with an umbrella in it and graduation is not complete when you receive your diploma!

Check out my blog at [islandmanager.me](http://islandmanager.me)

# New tourism and culture development officer for Leamington

Kyra Knapp will be joining the Municipality of Leamington's team as the new Tourism and Culture Development Officer.

Knapp brings skills and a breadth of tourism industry experience to the corporation. She comes to Leamington highly recommended and is well connected with regional and provincial government branches.

"Kyra's passion for tourism and the future of Leamington were clearly evident during her interview," said Peter Neufeld, Chief Administrative Officer. "We are excited for Kyra to take on this key position at a pivotal time for tourism in Leamington."

Knapp starts with the municipality on Monday, June 6.

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Sat 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30  
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Come out and celebrate HM Queen Elizabeth's 90th birthday. This is a fundraising event for The Bank Theatre's 'Royal Throne Project'. Event will take place at The Flamingo, Erie Shores Golf and Country Club. Tickets are \$30 PRESOLD only. Please check our website for more information.

**JUNE 11 @ 2:00 PM  
GLORIA WHITE'S JAMBOREE CONCERT**

**AUDITION CALL FOR 'ON GOLDEN POND'**  
June 12, 1:00 - 5:00 pm at The Bank Theatre  
Needed: 1 male in his 70's, 1 female in her 60's, 1 male in his 40's, 1 female 35-40, 1 male between 40-60 and 1 boy between 12 and 17. Need a one minute monologue and a cold read.

**JUNE 18 @ 7:00 PM - 9:30 PM**  
Come out and celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Hippie Movement with C.C. New Band. For more information contact Ed at 519-566-3494 or Neil at 519-562-6848.

**KIDS' SUMMER CAMPS**  
**SUMMER DRAMA CAMP** will run from **July 11 - 22**. For information: melinda.lewsaw@publicboard.ca.

**DANCE AND DRUM CAMP** for ages 8-13 will run from **July 25 - 29**. To register or for more information call 519-839-4347.

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