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Valentine's Day Special
Feb 14-18
1 hr Trail Ride
Homemade Soup or Chili, Hot Chocolate & Bonfire

Family Fun Day Special
Feb. 19th • Time: 10:30-1:00 or 2:00-4:30
1/2 Hour Trail Ride, Hay Ride, Crafts
Homemade Soup, Hotdogs or Chili, Hot Chocolate by the bonfire

Western Riding Club
9:00-4:00
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THE NEWS

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NEWS



Metroland File Photo

The investigation into the death of 65-year-old Frederick (John) Hatch is more than two years old. The Ottawa man's remains were found Dec. 17, 2015, in a wooded area off Wellington Road 124 near Erin.

Transient's 2015 murder remains an open case for OPP

JAMES MATTHEWS
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A small, early morning brush fire near Erin in December 2015 led to a body's discovery and, so far, years of blank mystery.

Members of the Erin Fire Department and Wellington OPP responded to a call Dec. 17, 2015, about a brush fire in a wooded area along Wellington County Road 124 east of 10th Line near Erin. It's an area not uncommon in rural Ontario littered with garbage and where refuse is dumped.

Through the course of extinguishing the small fire, firefighters and police found the body of a 65-year-old man in the wooded area.

Frederick (John) Hatch, of no fixed address, was last seen a day before in Ottawa at about 1 p.m. while shopping at a Dollar Tree Store there.

He wore a denim vest with Mickey Mouse characters on the back. The vest was worn over a black leather jacket. He had a blue and white bandana, glasses and black Harley Davidson boots. Hatch carried a red duffel bag. He was described as five-foot-six with a heavy build.

The distance between Ottawa and Erin is about 516 kilometres. Police say they don't know how Hatch travelled that distance, which could take about five hours to drive. Investigators say Hatch was known to hitchhike frequently.

OPP homicide detectives have remained steadfast in keeping secret Hatch's cause of death. Those involved with the case say that detail, the means of Hatch's death, is an important investigative tool.

Initial speculation held the body had been dumped and set on fire, one of the theories being Hatch was murdered somewhere else and that his body was transported to the dump site where police and firefighters found it.

As testament to the lack of chatter surrounding Hatch's death, Wellington County OPP have employed a number of tactics to unravel details about the victim's last day and murder.

● See OPP, page 12

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