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**ESSEX 73'S PICK UP  
TWO WINS**

Sharks, Jr. Kings go down to defeat

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Practice makes perfect – Five-year-old Carter Butchart of Essex gets some help from cousins Ben and Brandon Walker during the Tim Horton's free public skate held at Essex Memorial Arena, Dec. 27.

## 2006: Year in Review

2006 might best be described as the year that began with an election and ended with an election. But it was the many noteworthy events filling the space between that made 2006 a year to remember. In the following pages, Free Press staff review some of the events that happened in and around Essex throughout 2006 and offer a few photos that helped to define the year.

### January

The Essex Free Press started 2006 by celebrating 110 years of Brett family ownership and service to the community. The newspaper is the third oldest family-owned community newspaper in the province and is among 25 community newspapers in Ontario that continue to be family owned and operated. The newspaper displayed a collection of artifacts and photographs at the Essex Railway Station in June as part of a gala event to raise funds for the restoration of the antique caboose.

The federal election started to heat up following the holidays. Incumbent Conservative MP Jeff Watson faced veteran Liberal candidate Susan Whelan, NDP candidate Taras Natyshak, Green party representative James McVeity and Robert Cruise of the Marxist Leninist Party for the Essex seat. Watson was re-elected on Jan. 23 by a 3,600-vote margin over Whelan.

Three members of the Essex 73's were selected to compete in the annual Great Lakes Junior C Showcase game in Mooretown. Travis Ouellette, Chris Warren and Dave Roberts earned the right to participate in the game as 16 or 17-year-old players with noteworthy skills.

Morija Reeb of Woodslee, a 22-year-old graduate of EDHS and a fashion designer, spoke with the Free Press about representing Canada in the International Young Fashion Designers' Competition in Paris in December. Reeb's entry was judged best overall among the Canadian entries.

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## Councillor's query shows most don't favour name change

BY DANIEL SCHWAB

In an effort to gauge public opinion about the possibility of changing the name of the municipality, Ward 2 councillor Richard Meloche began an email poll Dec. 27.

Meloche sent the email to a confidential list of about 80 people from all ends of the municipality and so far nearly half of them have responded.

He decided to do the poll after Ward 1 Councillor Randy Voakes asked coun-

cil Dec. 18 to embark on a study to determine the costs of changing the name of the Town of Essex to something neutral.

Voakes sees it as an effort to help eliminate the "north-south" rivalry and as a way for those outside Ward 1 to "maintain their identity."

But Meloche says most of the responses he's received are not in favour of changing the name.

"Pretty well the consensus is that the name change is not going to change the north-south relationship,"

Meloche said. "I would say the majority, 90 percent, said that they feel we should be dealing with more important issues."

Meloche listed the new Essex arena project, the wine industry and attracting more businesses into downtown Essex as a few of the "more important" issues.

When the previous council came up with a rough estimate about how much a name change would cost, the figure was between \$50,000 and \$100,000, Meloche said.

Council would be forced to cut those dollars from other projects or raise taxes to make it happen, he said.

He expects town administration to have the new cost report back to council in time for its next meeting.

"If it would not cost us a penny to do, then what I'd like to see is something on the ballots that said, 'these are four different names you could choose, and the alternative is remain as Essex,'" Meloche said.

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