

OFF TO QUEEN'S PARK

Grade 8 student to become government page

See NEWS Page 3

'HORSE SPORTS'

McGregor equestrian centre hosts team sorting events

See COMMUNITY Page 11

'BUSINESS CLOSURES'

Several 'chain' stores call it quits, vacancy rate rises

See BUSINESS Page 21



The ESSEX FREE PRESS

Wednesday, March 7, 2007

\$1.00 (GST included)

Whole Number 6228
Registration No. 08565

Volume 128 No. 10

Phone: 519-776-4268
Fax: 519-776-4014

<http://essexfreepress.reinvented.net>

Need It Fixed?

HELP IS ON THE WAY!

24 hr Service

ARMSTRONG AIR

SX HEATING & COOLING

519-776-4021 32D Arthur Ave., Essex



"Serving Essex and Community Since 1896"

A CENTURY OF SONG –
Members of the Brampton Salvation Army Young People's Band perform for a near sell-out crowd in Essex Saturday night. The musicians, most of them under the age of 16, were in town to play two performances over the weekend. For the full story, please turn to page 12.

Free Press Photo / Daniel Schwab



Fun Fest makes 'Top 50'

Local volunteer recognized for 15 years of service

For the third consecutive year, Essex has been given the coveted designation as one of the "Top 50" festivals in Ontario.

Festivals and Events Ontario held their 20th annual convention and trade show in Toronto last weekend. It turned out to be a memorable one for the Essex Fun Fest.

"Top 50 puts Essex in select company with events like the Norfolk County Fair, K-W Octoberfest, and with the only other local event receiving Top 50 status, the Tecumseh Corn Festival," said festival chair Morley Bowman.

Tecumseh councillor Rita Ossington accepted the award for the Tecumseh Corn Festival.

The "Top 50" designation allows Essex to use the "Top 50" logo on all advertising and communications.

Bill Gay took home the Ontario Volunteer of the Year award for 15 consecutive years of service with the Essex Fun Fest committee.

"Here at Essex it's all about the team, not about

individuals. The Fun Fest is proof indeed Essex is the home of volunteerism in Southwestern Ontario."

Last year Fun Fest committee member Steven Richardson received the same honour.

Carol Crooks, better known as Clarol the Clown, was chosen as Best Children's entertainer in the Supplier Awards competition. After accepting the award in front of over 250 attendees of festivals and suppliers, Carol praised the Essex Fun Fest.

"I couldn't have done it without you guys," she said.

Crooks is already booked for this year, as the Fun Fest rolls out its 20th edition – July 12 to 15.

Coun. Bowman says the support of Essex and the community has been a key factor in the Fun Fest's year-after-year success.

"Many other festivals have experienced hard times, but our dedicated people, with fewer resources, keep the Essex Fun Fest known across the province," he said.

OPP investigate possible murder-suicide

BY ANDY COMBER

Essex OPP and the OPP Regional Crime Unit are conducting a joint investigation with Leamington Police to determine what happened Friday, March 2 during what they believe to be a murder-suicide.

Reports indicate that two people were found dead, a man from Windsor and a woman from Leamington.

Police reported that 36-year-old Jean-Claude Gallant of Windsor was found in his vehicle, a Chevy Blazer, on North

Talbot Road in Kingsville around 12:30 p.m., just east of the Town of Essex, while 26-year-old Lyndon Wiper was discovered at her home on Road 7 in Leamington around 4 p.m.

Police said it appeared both had died from gunshot wounds. It is believed that Gallant and Wiper had been in a relationship that ended in January. Police are releasing few further details, but it is believed that Gallant shot himself after shooting and killing Wiper. The investigation is continuing.



UNDER INVESTIGATION – Two OPP cruisers block off North Talbot Road, just outside of Essex after a Windsor man, Jean-Claude Gallant, 36, was found dead in a Chevy Blazer, pictured above, Mar. 2. Police believe Gallant committed suicide after shooting and killing his ex-girlfriend, Lyndon Wiper, 26, of Leamington.

Spring into a new you!



Amanda lost 34 lbs. and 40 inches in 7 months!



3rd Anniversary Special

- Lose up to 7 lbs. a week using grocery store bought foods and powerful herbals
- Specialized programs for men, women and teens such as: diabetic, menopausal, adolescent and much more!

50% Off Full Program*

*Limited time only. Based on full programs. Products not included.



CALL 519-322-4672

129 Erie Street South
by Eye on Video
www.herbal-1.com

HERBAL ONE
Weight Management Nutrition Centres

The ONE that really works for you!