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## Picture perfect

Thanks to the generosity of its members, community organizations, local businesses and the Town of Essex, the Essex and Community Historical Research Society is preparing this week to become the first tenant of the Essex Community Centre on Gosfield Townline.

And none too soon.

Society president Linda Iler's home is close to bursting with historical materials, book donations, office supplies and used equipment.

Other members are storing furniture, boxes of books, and odds and ends. Needless to say, local historians and historical groups have been eager to deposit their collections with ECHRS, many of them haphazardly stored in basements and closets for lack of suitable space.

### editorial

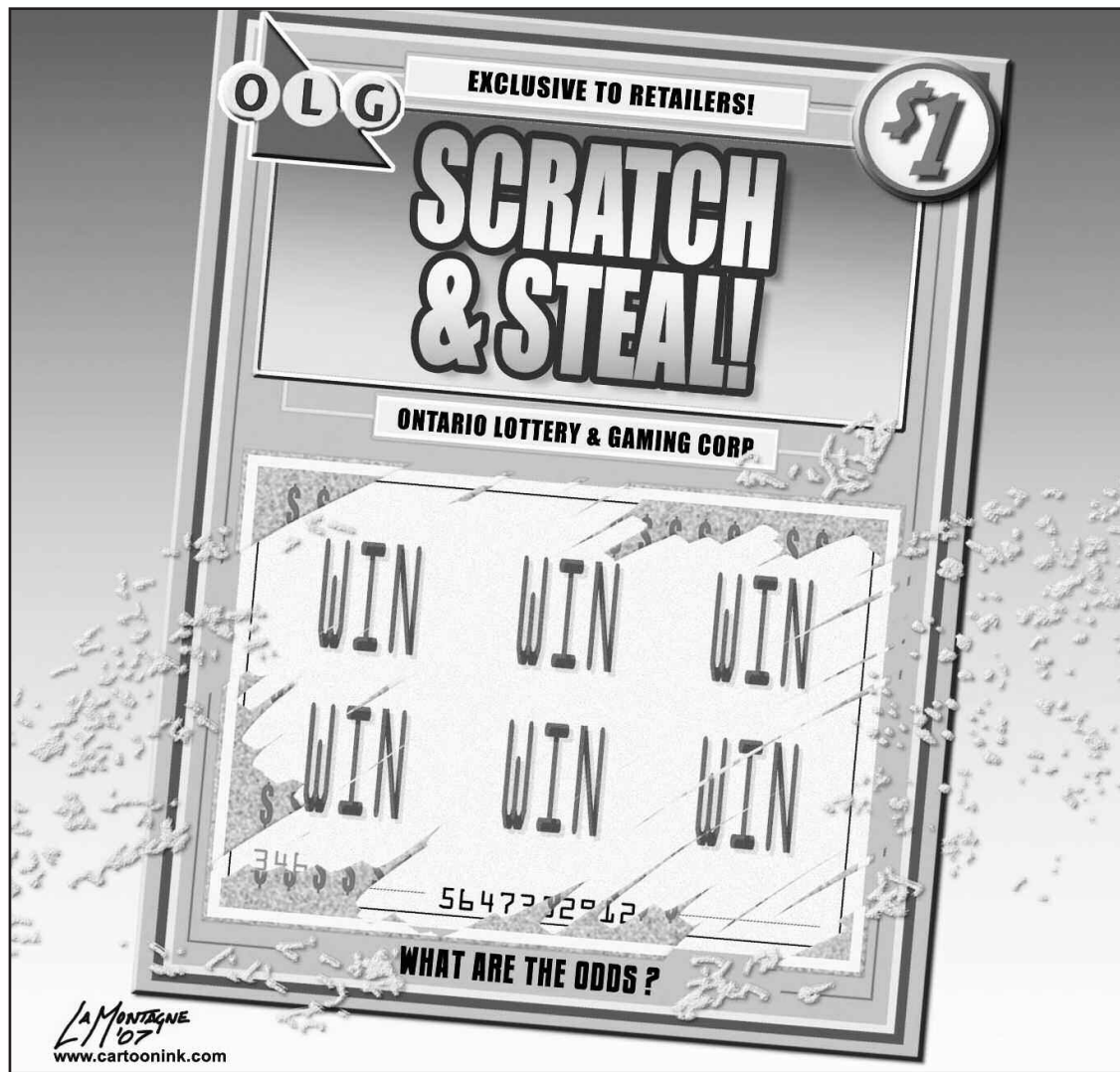
*laurie brett*

The work of getting started on this project is now set to move into the next phase – the opening of an historical research centre that promises to become an important community asset. A place to meet, learn and discuss local history. A place that brings together young and old and helps to bridge the generation gap. A place where people can discover that they have roots and a shared identity. A place that inspires community spirit and promotes pride and a sense of community identity. It's a tall order to fill, but one that promises to enhance our community in ways not yet explored.

In advance of opening the doors of the research centre to the public, ECHRS has a lot to do. The work of collecting, sorting, organizing and indexing will go on for months if not years. But the group is dedicated to opening the centre as soon as possible to ensure that the community begins to benefit from having a centralized repository for local history.

In the meantime, the group is sharing some of its enthusiasm for history by offering for sale sets of note cards that have been collected as part of the "Scenes of Essex" series. The streetscapes of long ago hardly resemble Talbot Street today, but observant folks may notice a few familiar street corners and landmarks. At a cost of \$10 for six cards, the fundraising project is enjoying brisk sales and ECHRS hopes to make this part of their ongoing effort to offer historically relevant keepsake items to the community.

As the oldest business in the town of Essex – over 111 years old and going strong – the Essex Free Press is proud to be assisting the Essex and Community Historical Research Society by displaying the cards at our front counter and offering them for sale. All proceeds go to support ECHRS. This first set of cards will be available while quantities last. ECHRS expects to produce a number of series – as many as history will support and the photographs will yield!



A few years ago, while talking to an avid hockey fan, I mentioned that Russian star Igor Larionov, then playing for the Detroit Red Wings, reminded me of Jean Beliveau. My friend had heard the name, but said he'd never seen him play. Then a little math gave the answer. My friend was about 35 then, so when Beliveau hung up his skates in 1971 he was only three years old! That's the thing ... after so long, one gets to thinking everyone is as old as you are.

Jean Beliveau was honoured last Thursday at the Bell Centre in Montreal (the ice palace that replaced the Montreal Forum) on the occasion of his 75th birthday. And the event raised more than a million dollars for children's hospitals.

Two dozen former Montreal players joined Beliveau on stage including 89-year-old Elmer Lach. Beliveau noted that the players represented more than 100 Stanley Cups. Gordie Howe, his nemesis from the old Detroit – Montreal rivalry, attended



### opinion

*bill gay*

having himself just turned 79.

I recall the teams used to play Saturday night in Montreal, then board the last train out of town bound for Detroit and a game Sunday night at the Olympia. Depending on the outcome of Saturday's game, these trips could have some tension, especially when walking through the other team's car through to the dining car.

Beliveau's last stop before Montreal was the Quebec Aces, where long-time Windsor sportsman and Bulldog hockey star, the late Walt Pawlyshyn played 20 games as Jean's teammate.

During 18 seasons,

Beliveau won 10 Stanley Cups, two Hart Trophies (for most valuable player), the Conn Smythe Trophy for most valuable player in the playoffs, a scoring championship, and was a 10-time All Star.

In this country, the name Jean Beliveau stands for the class act he has always been on and off the ice. In 1994 Prime Minister Jean Chretien wanted to name him Governor General of Canada. Beliveau turned it down. His son-in-law, a police officer, had died tragically a short time before leaving Jean's daughter Helene to raise her two girls on her own. So Jean felt he was needed at home more than in Ottawa. Family came first.

At the Bell Centre soirée, the hockey players were joined by the politicians, including former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion.

In his remarks, Prime Minister Stephen Harper put it well when he said, "You are an ambassador for the ideals Canadians see in themselves."



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