



Drive-thrus, like this one at a Tim Hortons in Kitchener, could soon be a thing of the past in some Ontario communities. However, no such plan exists at the moment for Guelph. RECORD PHOTO

City has no plans to apply brakes to new drive-thrus

BY STEPHANIE MACLELLAN
MERCURY STAFF

GUELPH

Like many cities in Ontario, Guelph has been discussing what to do about drive-thrus.

The city currently has no plans to put the brakes on new drive-thru facilities, but there has been some talk about looking closer at the issue from several perspectives — including pedestrian safety, the environment and urban design.

“I think there is a lot of interest in Guelph, both in terms of council and the citizenry, in looking into that,” said Councillor Lise Burcher.

Kitchener has been looking at its drive-thru policies after two recent decisions from the Ontario Municipal Board that supported the city in blocking drive-thru restaurants. Councillors there appear to favour new rules that would require buildings with drive-thrus to have direct access for pedestrians that keeps

them away from the car lanes.

London, Hamilton, Mississauga and Winnipeg already have policies that limit new drive-thru construction.

As part of the commercial policy plan adopted in 2006, the City of Guelph puts some restrictions on where drive-thrus can be constructed. A building cannot put a drive-thru between the building and the street, or at the intersection of two streets.

“It’s an esthetic thing,” said Scott Hannah of the city’s planning department.

When a drive-thru could raise pedestrian safety concerns, the city addresses that through the site plan review process before the construction can go ahead, he added.

Internally, city staff have been discussing the environmental implications of drive-thrus, Hannah said.

“Other municipalities are tackling the same thing,” he said. “There hasn’t been any direction from council yet.”

The city is currently looking at its

idling bylaw, which could affect drive-thrus, Burcher said.

In addition to the pollution from cars idling while their drivers wait for their burgers or coffee, drive-thrus can also discourage people from walking into the restaurant, she added.

“It creates an unfriendly pedestrian environment,” she said. “In general, it creates barriers, or breaks in the pedestrian network.”

“There are all kinds of things we need to look at comprehensively.”

Guelph resident Brian Holstein has been unofficially campaigning against drive-thrus for a while. He said he would support anything the city does to get more people turning off their engines and walking from their car to the restaurant.

“There is really no need for them,” he said about drive-thrus. “There is a want for them, but there is no need for them.”

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Residents invited to attend the ball

Funds collected will benefit Guelph Community Foundation

BY THANA DHARMAJAH
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GUELPH

Come as Scarlett O’Hara and Rhett Butler or Alice in Wonderland and the Mad Hatter.

Guelphites are cordially invited to take on the persona of historical figures, pop stars, musicians and popular characters in the city’s first-ever Masquerade, a costume ball.

Doug and Cathy MacMillan of the MacMillan Marketing Group have created a daring new charity event to raise funds for The Guelph Community Foundation.

“Part of the fun will be figuring out who’s who,” said Doug MacMillan, president of the local marketing company, which has partnered with Appetizingly Yours Events and Catering

and Fusion Homes to throw this Saturday’s ball at Old Quebec Street.

The mall will be transformed into a grand old ballroom, which is anticipated to be filled with about 150 people in costumes or in black tie wearing elegant masks. Buskers and magicians will be entertaining the crowd.

“The look of Old Quebec Street is so classical, it just beautifully fits the whole idea,” MacMillan said.

The couple wanted to create an event that was unique in Guelph and thought a charity ball in January, which allowed people to kick the winter blues by dressing up was ideal.

MacMillan and his wife will be attired as King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. Creative director of Appetizingly Yours, Ingrid von Cube, will be wearing a Venetian-style costume.

“It brings the elegance back into

fundraising,” said von Cube, who created the Taste of Guelph 10 years ago.

She said when creating the event, they wanted to target the younger generation.

“Our parents have been philanthropists in the past and it was our time to step up to the plate,” von Cube said.

MacMillan said the ball is also designed to be a “leave your wallet at home” type of charity event without silent auctions. There’s an open bar, prizes and free cabs for guests, he said. It’s why the ticket price is set at \$250 for each person.

MacMillan anticipates the event will raise between \$12,000 to \$15,000 for The Guelph Community Foundation.

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New screening tools helping dentists bring oral cancer to surface

BY LISA VARANO
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GUELPH

A dental checkup is about more than finding cavities, say local dentists who are using new devices to detect oral cancer.

The screening tools help dentists find oral cancer earlier than they could with the naked eye.

“If you are able to identify it at its earlier stages, then it’s easier to treat it. But if it gets out of hand, it’s actually very destructive,” said Wayne Wright, a dentist at Complete Family Dentistry in Guelph.

The Canadian Cancer Society estimated that 3,200 Canadians would be diagnosed with oral cancer in 2007 and 1,100 would die that year.

Wright has used the VELscope, or Visually Enhanced Lesion Scope, for about seven months. It shines a blue light into the mouth that makes normal tissue look pink and cancer cells appear brown.

At the two offices of Dawson Dental in Guelph, dentists have used a similar device called ViziLite Plus since last week. Patients gargle a solution and then the dentist shines white light into the mouth. If a lesion is detected, the dentist dabs a dye on it that turns blue for potential cancer.

“People are really excited about it, especially people who think that they may be at risk,” dentist Edward Gelfand said.

Dentists suggest yearly oral cancer screening for people over 40, including

denture-wearers. Sexually active 18 to 39 year olds and smokers of all ages should also be screened annually.

In traditional oral cancer screenings, which are part of comprehensive dental exams for everyone, the dentist looks on the cheeks and tongue for areas that have been slightly raised for more than two weeks. If any are found, the dentist may perform a biopsy to check for cancer.

Now some dental offices in Guelph are offering extra screening with the new devices to all patients.

Complete Family Dentistry charges \$68, unless the test is requested in advance of a comprehensive exam. There is no additional cost in that case. The charge is \$54 at Dawson Dental, regardless of whether it is performed during a regular exam or separately.

Although the screening devices are catching on, there is some debate in the dental community about whether they produce too many false positives, indicating cancer when none is present, said Don Russell, president of Ontario Dental Association. He is watching the debate before deciding whether to get one of the tools for his dental practice in Burlington.

Catching oral cancer early is important because that increases the chances of successful treatment, he said.

“But it also is one of those cancers that if it’s not caught soon, it can have very, very dire results. If the patient notices something, get to see your dentist,” Russell said.

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Historic company closes

KITCHENER

A 76-year-old Kitchener company once known as a parts supplier for the Avro Arrow has closed its doors for good.

Ledco Ltd. shut down its plant yesterday after unionized workers failed to reach a consensus over whether to accept wage cuts of 25 per cent.

The sudden decision had workers questioning their union’s leadership as they packed up their belongings and said their goodbyes last night.

Elgin Dezell, a 30-year veteran of the plant, said he was in favour of accepting a wage cut to save his job, but his position was at odds with his union.

Dezell organized an employee vote in the hopes of persuading his co-workers to accept a 25 per cent wage cut and 20 per cent benefits cut.

The Canadian Auto Workers has a policy of not negotiating wage and benefit cuts.

“The company gave the union until 3 o’clock in the afternoon to change their stand,” Dezell said.

“We were willing to give the company

something, but the union would not allow that. That puts us out on the streets.”

The union said Local 1524 of the Canadian Auto Workers represents 67 employees at Ledco.

Tim Mitchell, president of Local 1524, said the vote was not authorized by the union and did not reflect the wishes of the majority of the workers. “Quite a number of people chose not to participate,” he said. “Some left the meeting.”

Kim Austin, human resources manager at the plant, said when the decision was made to close the plant in the late afternoon, there wasn’t even enough time to write individual letters to employees.

Instead, a letter was posted in the plant and “we basically shook hands with people as they walked out the door, as much as we could,” she said.

The rising Canadian dollar, along with increased foreign competition, rapidly escalated the company’s financial woes, Austin said.

“We couldn’t be competitive the way we were,” she said.

• The Record

LOCAL BRIEFS

WELLINGTON COUNTY
Police issue warning to motorists: Slow down

The winter storm that pounded parts of the county Tuesday caused dozens of accidents over a 12-hour period.

Wellington OPP recorded 23 mishaps, mostly minor in nature, between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.

The extreme weather prompted police to issue a plea for motorists to change their driving habits to reflect the presence of ice and snow on county highways.

“Slow down!” Wellington OPP spokesperson Constable Mark Cloes implored in a press release. “Driving at reduced speeds is the best precautionary measure against any misfortune while driving on slippery roads.”

“Be alert. Ice may make a road look like shiny new asphalt.”

Cloes also advised drivers to not use cruise control, allow extra travelling time, postpone or delay trips in inclement weather, drive with low-beam headlights and lengthen the following distance between cars.

He said drivers shouldn’t make sudden lane changes, should remain in the right-hand lane except when passing and travel cautiously over bridges that may be iced over.

“Pass other cars only when it is safe to do so,” Cloes said.

Guelph Police reported 17 minor collisions during the same period.

GUELPH
Charges laid after road rage sparks heated confrontation

A man wielding a tire iron in a dispute is scheduled to make a court appearance in March.

The man became involved in a confrontation with another man Tuesday at 8:30 p.m. in a Silvercreek Parkway plaza parking lot. Police said the confrontation was a result of a driving incident.

The incident escalated from a verbal argument when a 22-year-old Guelph man grabbed a tire iron from his trunk and threatened the other man, a 47-year-old Guelphite, police said.

The 22-year-old man is to appear in court in March, charged with assault with a weapon, possession of a weapon dangerous to the public and uttering a threat.

GUELPH
Driver charged following two-vehicle collision

Damage is estimated at \$4,000 after two vehicles collided on Wellington Street shortly before 8 p.m. Tuesday.

A Guelph woman travelling south on Wellington in a 1997 Saturn was struck by a westbound 2001 Chevrolet car as she approached Gordon Street, police report.

The driver of the Chevrolet, a 28-year-old Guelph man, was charged with several Highway Traffic Act violations including failing to have a clear view of the road. He is to appear in court in March.

GUELPH
Police seeking public’s help after Emma Street theft

Guelph Police report that a gold ring, digital camera and flat-screen television were stolen during a residential burglary Tuesday.

The incident occurred early Tuesday afternoon on Emma Street.

Anyone with information is asked to call Constable Darren Gould at 519-824-1212, ext. 7356 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS.

KITCHENER
Man who burned down grandstand sentenced to community service

The man who burned down New Hamburg’s landmark grandstand avoided jail yesterday.

Nathan McNitt, 21, was sentenced to 15 months of house arrest and two years on probation, including an order to perform 200 hours of community service.

Justice John Lynch says the volunteer work sentence was the most he has ever imposed. Lynch says it will allow McNitt to pay something back to the community after taking so much away on Jan. 7, 2007.

McNitt pleaded guilty earlier this month to arson.

Replacing the structure will cost \$1.7 million. Renting equipment for events in the meantime will cost another \$450,000.

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