



May 21, 2025 Blog

Oxford County is installing seven new Community Safety Zones this month and one of them is in Embro. Community Safety Zones are designated areas where safety is a concern, for instance, near schools, community centres, recreation areas, playgrounds, hospitals, or seniors' centres and residences. Community Safety Zones allow for increased fines for speeding and are also eligible for future application of automated speed enforcement (photo radar) which will be considered by Oxford County Council at a later date.

Through the work of the Town of Ingersoll we have discovered that at least one waste management company is lobbying the Ontario government to change or remove a municipality's right to say "no" to a private landfill. I was very proud to sign a letter with Mayor Petrie of Ingersoll and Mayor Mayberry of South-West Oxford, and also in my capacity as Warden of Oxford County that clearly outlined our firm opposition to any changes that would reduce or eliminate this ability.

The Canadian Index of Wellbeing Survey in Oxford County is now open, inviting every Oxford resident over the age of 16 to take part to help shape a better future for Oxford. By taking part, participants will have a chance to win one of ten \$100 gift certificates from a local business. Oxford County and Safe and Well Oxford are sponsoring the Canadian Index of Wellbeing survey in Oxford to support the highest possible quality of life for residents. Results from the survey will be used to update the Safe and Well Oxford Plan to ensure it reflects local priorities and needs, and to help show trends in which aspects of our quality of life are improving and which still need attention.

To learn more and to complete the survey online, visit www.oxfordcounty.ca/wellbeing-survey. To request a paper copy, call 1-800-755-0394. The survey closes June 15, 2025.

On May 1st a residential school survivor was disinterred from a cemetery in Oxford. He had spent time in institutions in Zorra and Woodstock. But his family never knew. Percy Onabigon was taken to a residential school and hospitals without the family's consent. They spent decades looking for him, and that's how I met them.

Percy Onabigon was taken from the northern Ontario Long Lake #58 First Nation as a young child and put into St. Joseph's Indian Residential School in Thunder Bay. From there, he was sent to a number of hospitals and institutions, on account of being epileptic and partially paralyzed. His family was never told where he was sent or what became of him after he was removed from St. Joseph's by a federal Indian agent.

They never saw him again. After years of research and advocacy, Percy's niece, Claire Onabigon, found him: in a cemetery in Oxford, more than 1,200 kilometres from home. He died at age 27 of tuberculosis.

On the 59th anniversary of Percy's death, seven family members and a pipe carrier travelled here to exhume his remains.

I was invited by the family, along with several Chiefs, to attend the disinterment. "It's a real truth that there's a person in a grave here who was involuntarily taken from his community, from his nation, and sent to another part of the province without anybody's apparent permission," "There is an actual real opportunity for meaningful truth and meaningful reconciliation, and we have to take every one of those opportunities." Ryan said.

"Seeing all the support from everybody else, that people saw our cause for once and they wanted to help and they recognized that it was important," "Because it is important, because it's our family - and just if it was anybody else's family, you'd want them to be home." said Riley Labelle, Claire Onabigon's 15-year-old granddaughter.

Coverage from Sarah Law, CBC

#everychildmatters #doingourpart #growingstrongertogether

As always, feel free to contact me on any issue:

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