

Page Three

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Weimar Line fatality

A 24-year-old man was killed early Sunday morning Weimar Line near Maplewood Drive in Wellesley Township after his vehicle left the roadway and caught fire. The driver was pronounced dead at the scene after emergency crews were called out about 3 a.m. Weimar Line was closed for approximately 10 hours while police conducted an on-scene investigation.

From the archives

Waterloo Region plans to get traffic flowing around, and not through, the village, are getting a less-than-enthusiastic welcome from residents. Opened in the fall of 2004 at a cost of \$1.6 million, the bypass – formally Reg. Rd. 17, or Fountain Street – has not been widely adopted by drivers.

From the Sept. 24, 2005 edition of The Observer

Region says there's leeway in speed cameras; few speeders fined

Julian Gavaghan
Observer Staff

MOTORISTS CAN'T GET TICKETS FROM Region of Waterloo speed cameras by going only slightly faster than the limit, the authority admitted, as it revealed only a fraction of those caught are fined.

The municipality told The Observer it is not possible to be ticketed for going only one km/h quicker than what's posted on signs, after critics accused it of entrapping drivers for "cash grab" purposes.

"Speed thresholds are in place to ensure a balanced approach to enforcement that is fair and not punitive," a spokesperson said.

However, the region refused to reveal the exact leeway that is allowed to drivers, despite many other jurisdictions around the world making that information public.

"Municipalities across Ontario, including the Region of Waterloo, do not release details on threshold speeds, as it goes against the intended goal of increasing compliance with posted speed limits," the region's spokesman continued.

"The posted speed limit is the law, but publicly communicating a threshold speed results in some drivers perceiving that there is a new speed limit above the posted speed limit."

However, the region has revealed that only three per

cent of speeders captured at 17 school sites over a six-month period were actually issued tickets.

Out of 1,963,097 vehicles captured going over the speed limit, just 55,899 fines were issued between February 3 and July 31.

"What limits the total number of tickets issued is primarily staffing capacity," said a spokesperson, who also revealed that the same vehicle is never ticketed more than once in a week, and that a few images are rejected because of poor quality.

But the secret threshold also plays a role in reducing the number of fines issued, the region admitted, amid plans to expand its camera program.

Such leeways are used around the world, ensuring that a driver trying to stay below the limit is not unfairly caught out, perhaps due to a miscalibration of their vehicle's speedometer.

Sometimes, they are based on a percentage over the posted limit, while other times, fixed differences are used.

In the UK, where cameras have been commonplace since the 1990s, the National Police Chiefs' Council recommends a leeway of 10 per cent plus two miles per hour, in what is known as the 10+2 rule.

This means that in a 30 mph (48 km/h) zone, a driver would not receive a ticket unless they drove

→ SPEED CAMERAS 6



Jacob Steinmann runs the Elmira Children's Choir every Tuesday evening. Julian Gavaghan

New children's choir in Elmira is now recruiting members

Julian Gavaghan
Observer Staff

A PUNK-ROCK BAND AND A children's choir might seem incredibly different, but they do have at least one thing in common, says Jacob Steinmann.

"They're both a very powerful way of bringing people together," said the former Summer Heights bassist, who previously used his fretwork skills to provide low-end muscle and rhythm to its shredding sound.

"The people I played in the band with were some of my closest friends.

"And having a place

where you meet to prepare for and get excited for a concert is always a big feature of any group."

However, the music teacher's new Elmira Children's Choir, which is free to join and meets weekly at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays at Elmira Mennonite Church, is designed to sound more soothing than Sex-Pistolesque.

"We're focusing on songs that have themes like friendship and seasons changing," he explained, adding: "It's more about the voices than instruments."

"So, vocal tone is a much bigger thing with choirs than punk rock music, and

so we're looking to make your voice sound fuller and richer."

Steinmann, 27, a West Montrose native who recently completed a teaching degree at Western University, says anyone between Grades 3 to 8 is welcome to join.

He believes anyone can sing and that, even if you think you can't, it really is possible to learn.

"I was in that boat as a kid," he explained.

"I felt like I couldn't sing, and I even thought I was tone deaf because I couldn't hit any notes."

"But eventually, I learned."

→ CHILDREN'S CHOIR 5

Saturday's ABC Festival in Wellesley a sure sign of fall

Andrea Eymann
Observer Staff

THE CALENDAR SAID IT BECAME autumn on Monday, but this weekend's Apple Butter and Cheese Festival in Wellesley really makes the season official.

It's the 50th anniversary for the event, which started in 1975 as a way to promote two local businesses, a local apple cider mill and Dan Snyder's cheese processing plant. The latter is gone, but cheese remains an integral part of the ABC Fest.

"The cheese has just been there forever," said festival president Jamie Reid. "We have cheese vendors in and around the area as part of our craft market."

This year, they are offering a few new things, such as a petting zoo, said Reid, noting it will be a "nice addition for the young families that are attending."

However, for the adults, "we have expanded our craft cider tasting to a craft cider and beer garden," he said, noting customers can purchase full drinks this year instead of samples.

Celebrating the 50th anniversary is "just a fantastic milestone for something that started back in 1975. It's a real tribute to the volunteers and the town itself to last this long and be able to put it on for this long – it's run solely by volunteers,"

→ ABC FEST 5



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