

# MERRITTON MATTERS

SUMMER 2015 • Volume 11, Issue 2 • [www.merrittonmatters.ca](http://www.merrittonmatters.ca)



Photo by: Susan Fluellon

Located at 135 Bradley Street in Merritton, this residence was originally used as a lockmaster's house.



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Social Networking Sites
- Merritton Athletic Association
- Construction Sites
- DM High Voltage Robotics Team
- Merritton Legion Elections
- Historic Drill Team
- Merritton's Betsy
- Volunteer Recognition
- Universal Collision
- Lockmaster Cottage
- Tasker Street Habitat Homes
- Girotti: A Merritton Family Part 1

## Merritton Matters

Merritton Matters is distributed through The St. Catharines Standard and is also available at many of our community's fine establishments. If you know someone who might like to receive the Merritton Matters by mail, please call Sheila at 905-227-8988.

**CHECK OUT THE MERRITTON MATTERS WEBSITE AT [WWW.MERRITTONMATTERS.CA](http://WWW.MERRITTONMATTERS.CA)  
MERRITTON COMMUNITY GROUP – A PROUD PARTNER OF THE MERRITTON LIONS**

# MERRITTON MATTERS VOLUNTEERS

**Editor/Writer:**

Lorraine Giroux

**Article Contributors:**

Isabel Bachmann, Tom Barwell, David C. Craig, Gillian McWilliams, Denis Savoie and Debbie Tucker Thomas

**Advertising**

**Representatives:**

Morag Enright, George Hostick and Tony Morra

**Photographers:**

Susan Fluellon, Mel McInnis and Scott Rosts

**Graphic Designers:**

Lana Pesant and Karen Bashura

**Behind the Scene Coordinators:**

Arnold Hartnett, Sheila Morra and Phyllis Thomson

Send articles or ideas for future articles to the editor at: merrittonmatters@hotmail.com or by mail to 3 Capri Circle, St. Catharines L2T 3X4.



Michael Gander and Amanda Hancock salute after laying a wreath on behalf of Royal Canadian Legion Br. 318 during the Decoration Day service at Victoria Lawn Cemetery.

Merritton Ward Councillors David Haywood and Jennie Stevens, along with Legion members, placed wreaths at the Merritton Cenotaph to honour the 71st anniversary of D-Day and to recognize the efforts of soldiers in the World War II invasion of Normandy that led to the Allied liberation of Western Europe. Decoration Day ceremonies were held at Victoria Lawn later on Sunday, June 7 to pay tribute to the sacrifices of Canadian soldiers. The Merritton Legion had been active at the cemetery, along with other Legions from St. Catharines, placing new Canadian flags on the graves. It's a Decoration Day tradition to tend to soldiers' graves and "decorate" them with wreaths after the ravages of winter.

This newsletter is a volunteer effort by a small group of people who are determined to keep the spirit of the Merritton community alive through providing information to our readers about the past, present and future of our neighbourhood. The articles have been written by the contributors listed and articles without a byline are by the editor Lorraine Giroux. We gratefully accept ideas and articles for our upcoming newsletters. Send these by e-mail to merrittonmatters@hotmail.com or through the mail to 19 Wanda Rd., St. Catharines L2T 1S5. Your ideas and opinion matters!

Merritton Matters is a self-sustaining publication thanks to our advertisers. We don't expect to make a profit but we do like to cover our costs. If you are interested in advertising with us on a one-time basis or with a regular ad, we'll gratefully welcome your contribution!

**Sheri's Creative Edge**  
USING CREATIVITY TO THE MAX!

*Hair Stylist* Complete Unisex Hair Service 116 Hartzel Rd.  
St. Catharines, ON

Full Body Waxing

t: 905.684.7992 Mon. - Wed. 9-5  
Thurs. - Fri. 9-6  
Sat. 8-1

We are pleased to welcome **HEATHER WEARING** (formerly from Tangles) as an addition to our team.

Heather would like to take this opportunity to welcome her clients and any newcomers to join her at her new location. We look forward to welcoming you.

**DQ** SOMETHING DIFFERENT

**Dimitrios Ladas**  
415 Merritt Street  
**905-684-3763**

**\$3.00 OFF ANY CAKE** with this ad  
(except for logs) expires Sept. 30, 2014

# MERRITTON FOLKS - SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

by Sharon Sowrey

**MERRITTON MEMORIES** was created in 2010 to enlist current and former Merritton residents to reconnect with friends, neighbours, classmates. Merritton Memories is a place to reminisce. Membership is done by invite from current MM members and is open to any former or current Merritton residents.

We welcome you to join this group and we know you'll find it exciting to meet old colleagues and renew life-long friendships on this Facebook site. Look forward to seeing you there.

.....

**MERRITTON NOW** is quite new and was created in the Spring of 2015. Merritton Now was created to provide information about current and future events in Merritton and area and to let us know what people are doing in the community. The current membership grows each day as people request to be part of the site.

The site contains information on events and programs taking place in the region, highlighting Merritton of course. This site is open to any former or current Merritton residents. We welcome you to request membership in this group. You will find it interesting to keep abreast of the events taking place so you too can enjoy the area.

# Merritton Athletic Association Update

by Gillian McWilliams

The MAA's summer programs are well underway, with Soccer School and Bantam Baseball having started in May and we are looking forward to the fall and getting back on the ice for hockey!

Congratulations to our coaches for the 2015/16 season:

**Hockey School – Vic Bolibruck**

**Atom A/E – Chris Hockey**

**Peewee A/E – Bruce Lawrence**

**Bantam A/E – Jim Liddiard**



The MAA hockey school is a long-standing development program, teaching the basics of the game while having a tremendous amount of fun! We welcome all new hockey players (ages 3 – 7). Hockey school starts at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 24 and runs for one hour every Saturday until mid-late March. Registration is \$200 for the season. Visit [www.maasports.ca](http://www.maasports.ca) or like us on Facebook for more information.

The Merritton A/E teams will be wearing new uniforms this season, as part of the GCMHA family. All players will have brand new red helmets, gloves, pant shells and jerseys. If you are interested in sponsoring a player (\$150) or a team (\$500) please contact the MAA at 289-696-4976 or [gillian.mcwilliams@hotmail.com](mailto:gillian.mcwilliams@hotmail.com).

We look forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming MAA fundraisers:

**Carnival Booth – Friday, September 4 – Monday, September 7**

**Bottle Drive – Saturday, September 12**

**Trivia Night – Saturday, October 10**

**Philly Fundraiser – Saturday, November 21**

## Upcoming Happenings In the Community

### UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY

Last year's Unity in the Community event celebrated the cultural diversity of the Queenston Street area through local music, food and art. Those who attended also had an opportunity to connect with local area agencies, services and residents. On Friday, October 9th, Westview Community Church will repeat the Unity event and will feature guest speakers, ethnic foods, art displays, Jamaican hair braiding plus much more. Plan on attending this community building event which will take place in the parking lot at the old St. Catharines General Hospital site at 124 Queenston St. (beside the church) from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

If you would like your agency to be represented, you may request a free table by contacting Jane LaVacca at the church office 905-687-4848, by calling her cell phone 905-351-2822 or by sending an email to [reachme@westviewc4w.com](mailto:reachme@westviewc4w.com).

### MERRITTON MEMORIES SOCK HOP

Merritton Memories have organized their second annual Reunion and Sock Hop scheduled for Saturday, September 5 at 2:00 p.m. at Merritton Legion Branch 138. Reconnect with friends, schoolmates and neighbours from the past at this event. This is a major fundraiser for the Merritton Legion Branch 138. This year's theme is the 50's and 60's and the logo....I LOVE MERRITTON. YOU CAN CHECK OUT ANY TIME YOU WANT. BUT YOU JUST CAN'T LEAVE is highlighted on royal blue hoodies. These are currently available to order by contacting Patricia McCabe through the Merritton Legion, 905-227-1821 or through Facebook. There will be music from that era and folks may wish to dress in the theme. Raffles, door prizes and 50/50 draws will be organized to assist in increasing the fundraiser.

So join us to go down memory lane with those you may have lost touch with from the past. We look forward to seeing you on September 5th!



# THE CABOOSE

by Tom Barwell

For many years Merritton was a bustling train depot. Huge steam trains hurtled through day and night, 24 hours a day. Quite often they stopped to shunt off or pick up cargo of all kinds. There was a good sized shunting yard and smaller engines worked around the clock to make up lines of boxcars for distribution all over the country. The sun was often blacked out by the huge columns of black and white smoke that resulted from their work. Not to be forgotten were the many passenger trains that snaked their way through as well. And of course the yards were a magnet for kids of all ages.

They became very familiar with the trainmen as the same crews often came through at various times. This was also true with the train whistles as each engine seemed to have its own particular pitch. And so one day as two young spirited boys were rooting around Granny's pond the sound of a strange whistle made Larry and Bob, who were indeed spirited, look up. In the distance from the west appeared

an engine with different markings. CP instead of CN. (Later they learned that sometimes a rival company would move over and use a competitor's track if the other was compromised.) The train slowly came to a stop and the caboose ended up almost opposite the pond. So the scene was set for some boyhood shenanigans.

Quite often the regular train crews would let them visit the caboose and show them around and even let them climb up into the upper gondola for a look at the scenery. Once or twice they actually were allowed to enter an engine and pull the whistle lanyard. But these guys on this train were not very friendly. No doubt because they had to travel out of their way and might be late to get to their destination. With barely a look, they disembarked from the caboose and stalked down the track to the station. The two boys looked at each other and decided to inspect this interloper that had invaded their domain.

Looking carefully around they pulled themselves up the steel stairs. Doing damage



CN Caboose in Merritton Yards

Photo by Mel McInnis

or theft never entered their minds. It was a mixture of curiosity and daring.

There was the usual items common to all cabooses. A small table and chairs. A desk for performing paperwork. A cot for a quick nap and the usual cribbage board. They climbed up into the gondola and it again contained the usual items. Nothing to get excited about. Then the fun began.

All along they had heard the dog whining wanting to take part in the action. Then two short blasts from the engines whistle. Panic set in as this meant the train was ready to move. Voices were heard and their dog began to bark

**The  
ReGift  
Depot  
Thrift Store**

**NEW LOCATION**

170 Hartzel Road,  
St. Catharines, ON L2P 1P1  
289-362-4433

SUPPORTING THE VILLAGE OF HOPE  
Make A Difference Today For Tomorrow

Donations Welcome  
FREE PICK-UP

ckeddy@thevillageofhope.ca

**30% OFF ON SELECTED INSTOCK PATTERNS TILL JULY 31<sup>ST</sup>, 2015**

**The Wallpaper Place**

Wallcoverings at great prices.  
In stock and book orders.

Large Selection of Pre-Pasted  
Wallpaper & Border - Vinyls

**OPEN MON - FRI 9:30AM-6PM  
SAT 9:30AM-5PM  
SUN 11AM-4PM**

20 Hartzel Rd. (Cartermill Plaza) St. Catharines

www.wallpaperplace.ca  
www.thewallpaperplace.701.com

**905-984-5660**

**NIAGARA**  
Toner+Ink

**905-641-2770**

Heath@tonerplusink.com

**Rocky Heath**  
Owner

Midtown Plaza  
120 Welland Ave. Unit # 5

with gusto. They literally jumped down the stairs and made a mad dash for the outside. No sooner had their feet touched the ground when they were roughly grabbed by the two trainmen. There seemed no escape. No doubt the railway cops would arrive on the scene. With a frantic struggle they shook from the men's grasp. The chase was on. Two cursing men, a barking dog and two young boys running as if their pants were on fire. Then a miracle. The train began to move. The trainmen had no choice. Yelling and cursing with fists shaking they ran back to their caboose. The boys, suddenly brave, returned the comments with gusto accompanied by the voice of a small black spaniel. It was close to a disaster.

The caboose is long gone now, replaced by a boring electronic apparatus attached to the last boxcar coupling. You will see them scattered around the country. Some in museums, serving as novel eating shacks or just rotting in a farmer's field. They served their purpose and now are regulated to train lore. Gone as well is the Merritton train yard. At one time a hustling bustling place for spirited kids.

## HARTZEL ROAD TRAFFIC UPDATES

City Council has now banned left turns from Hartzel Road to Keswick Street to avoid potential conflicts for drivers when a new stop light begins controlling traffic at the intersection. The stop light will also control traffic where Lincoln Street meets Hartzel Road, which is slightly offset. To help traffic move more easily at the intersection they also banned right turns on red lights from Keswick Street to Hartzel Road and right turns on red lights from Lincoln Avenue to Hartzel Road.

## DO YOU REMEMBER.....?

When the hungries hit back in the 1960's and 70's, did you ever hit the Red Barn? Many in the Merritton area did!

Red Barn restaurants were part of an American chain that began in the early 1960's. At the height of its popularity, there were almost 400 outlets across the United States and Southern Ontario. Our own Red Barn was on Merritt Street, just north of Seymour Avenue and this building followed the chain's guidelines of being barn-shaped. Commercials advertised the tasty 'Big Barney' and the 'Barnbuster' and the commercial encouraged us that 'When the hungries hit / When the hungries hit / Hit the Red Barn/'. Of course the meals were served in barn-shaped containers and served with traditional French fries or onion rings. Besides families having a fast meal, students from Merritton High could be seen forsaking the school cafeteria to grab lunch and Glen Merritt Grade 7/8 students often made a pit stop there on their walk to weekly programs at Ferndale. Merritton's Red Barn closed suddenly and many of the workers who were local students were left scrambling to collect their last pay. The building has housed several businesses since then.



From Owen James Williams' post in Vintage St. Catharines



**The Blind Referee**  
*Sports Bar*

**Wings and more...**  
**905-680-5050**  
**333 Merritt St.**

**BEAUTIFUL DOWNTOWN MERRITTON**

**SULLIVAN MAHONEY LLP**  
**LAWYERS**

**Thomas A. Richardson**

Sullivan Mahoney LLP  
40 Queen Street, P.O. Box 1360, St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 6Z2  
Telephone: 905.688.6655 Facsimile: 905.688.5814

4781 Portage Road, Niagara Falls, Ontario L2E 6B1  
Telephone: 905.357.0500 Facsimile: 905.357.0501  
tarichardson@sullivan-mahoney.com



**Sutton**

**KAREN BLACKLEY**  
BROKER

**905-646-9001**  
E-mail: kblackley@sutton.com

Sutton Group Skyway Realty Inc., Brokerage

Missing something in your life?  
*Come and Share the Joy  
of Christian Life*

**at Elm Street United Church**  
**11 Elm St. (off Merritt St.)**  
**Sunday Service – 11:00 AM**  
*with Sunday School*  
*Year round nursery school for children*  
*3 and under*

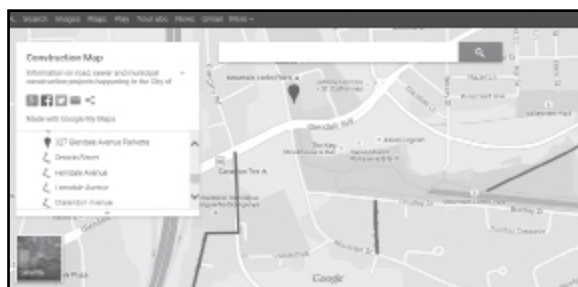
---

**Minister: Rev. Dr. Gordon Crossfield**  
**Organist: Michael Christopher**



# CONSTRUCTION SITES

Did you know that the City of St. Catharines has a website that provides updates on construction and utility projects happening in our area? For each project, the city provides a basic outline of the work and a contact person. Go to <http://www.stcatharines.ca/en/livein/ConstructionMap.asp> to access this map.



We've included a snippet of the map on the website that we accessed at the time of publication. The heavy lines represent road projects and the bubbles are facility projects. On the graphic, you'll see a bubble symbol beside Sobey's. On the live map, if you were to click on this symbol, an information box pops up to reveal construction on the parkette at 327 Glendale Avenue. The construction consists of the installation of hardscaping and landscaping as per City Project No. P15-134 with construction listed as possible this summer. For more information on this project

contact Stephanie Hussey 905 688-6501 Ext. 1646.

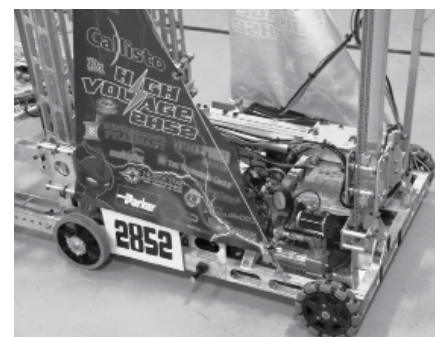
The projects are also colour coded to provide information on whether the project is active, completed or a future project. The Burleigh Hill / Glendale Ave CSO Control Project is shown as a heavy line in purple. We contacted Tim Marotta who is the Project Manager to tell us more about this. He let us know that Phase 1 of this project is the first of three intended to address sewer system constraints and issues related to basement flooding and Combined

Sewer Overflows (CSOs) in the area. Under Phase 1 they are going to build new sewers on Warkdale Dr. and upgrade the sewers on Burleigh Hill Dr.

They are also going to perform some road and intersection improvements on Burleigh Hill Dr. for the Region of Niagara. Phase 2 will be the construction of a 2,800m<sup>3</sup> below ground sewage storage tank in Glengarry Park. Under the third, and final, phase they will build a new sewer on Glengarry Drive to connect the new tank to the sewers built in Phase 1.

# DM HIGH VOLTAGE ROBOTICS TEAM

Comprised of Denis Morris Catholic High School students and industry mentors, the High Voltage Robotic Team 2852 develops, builds and programs robots designed to answer a problem under strict rules, limited resources, and time limits. These problems are posed as part of the FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC). FIRST ('For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology') is a non-profit organization with the purpose of exciting young people about science and technology. Teams from across Canada and the United States are challenged to raise funds, design a team "brand," hone teamwork skills, and build and program robots to perform prescribed tasks against a field of competitors. Volunteer professional mentors lend their time and talents to guide each team.



Students who have taken part in the DM High Voltage Robotics Team have been inspired to explore technical careers or post-secondary education in science, technology and engineering majors. Besides offering insights into careers, students get experience in leadership and teamwork as well as working under pressure. The team shares their experiences each year by hosting events, providing demonstrations and supporting other math and science-related programs for the area's students.

Students who live in our ward and attend Denis Morris are part of the team, which has several sponsors including the Merritton Lions Club. Andrew Kittel is the Lead Teacher for the team.

During this year's season the team has enjoyed great accolades. The DM High Voltage Team competed in 3 Regional events, the Greater Toronto East Regional, New York Tech Valley Regional, and the Windsor Greater Essex Regional. DM High Voltage excelled in all three regionals. At the Greater Toronto East Regional they came away with their first regional win, awarded the prestigious Creativity Award for robot design, and won a spot at the World Championships in St. Louis. At the NY Tech Valley and Windsor Regionals, DM High Voltage had a strong semifinal showing in both events. In their first appearance at the World Championships they finished as quarter finalist and 6th overall in their division. DM High Voltage's season achievements are: ranked 38th in World out of 2900 teams, ranked 4th in Canada, and listed twice on FRC Top 25 Poll.

## Funky And Affordable

Quality Eyewear and Customer Service • Insurance Claims Accepted  
Frames not found in other stores

Tremont Plaza (ACROSS FROM PEN CENTRE)  
Eye Exams Available  
905-227-9937

[www.personaloptical.com](http://www.personaloptical.com)

40%  
JULY  
SUMMER  
BLOWOUT!



PersonalOptical

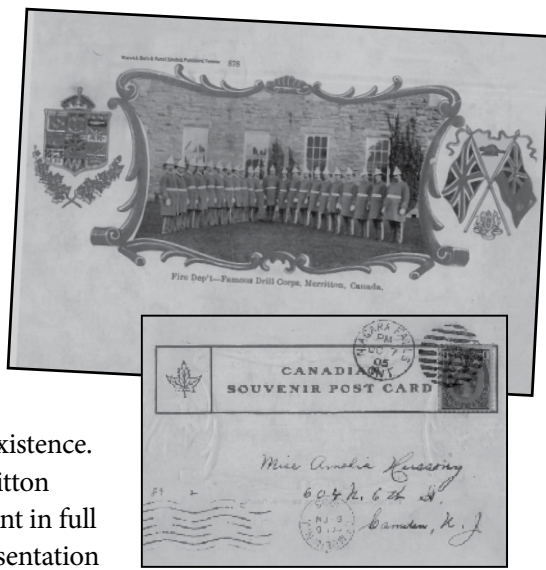
## MERRITTON POSTCARD

by Denis Savoie

The post card shown here is an extremely rare reproduction. In fact the original of this card (size 3 ½ by 5 ¼) may be the only one of its kind that remains in existence. The card shows the Merritton Volunteer Fire Department in full dress uniform and in presentation formation. The card dates back to the early 1900 and we believe it is from the 1902-1904 time frame. The picture location for the card is uncertain although we believe it is on the north south side of the town hall. The card was produced by the Toronto firm of Warwick Brothers and Rutter Limited Publishers of Toronto. Warwick Bros were a very renowned producer of high quality souvenir post cards and print memorabilia for many organizations in the province.

This particular card was posted from Niagara Falls, Ontario on October 7th, 1905 and addressed to Miss Amelia Hussong (we believe that is the spelling) in Camden, New Jersey and post marked by the Camden, N.J. Post office on October 8th, 1905 at 8 p.m. There is no other identifying information on the card nor is the name of the sender known.

The original post card was repatriated to Canada by a former Merritton resident and will eventually be presented to the local museum to take its place with other memorabilia from the Merritton Fire Department.



## MERRITTON'S BETSY

In the last issue of Merritton Matters, we featured the story of Merritton's historic fire engine that survived the fire of 1929. Our fire brigade was the proud owner of another fire engine, the first motorized fire engine in the area, nicknamed Betsy. Betsy was



Right to Left: Arthur Overholt, William Bradley, William Teasdale, Ross Savigny, Clarence Wessels, Thomas Shee, Jason Riley, Jack Riches, William Patterson, John Boyle (up).

destroyed in 1929. A picture taken in 1918 of Betsy and the drill team was featured in an 1986 article in The St. Catharines Standard and we've included the picture here.

Merritton's drill team competed in international events such as hose and ladder races and performed at the Chicago World's Fair.

A drill team uniform is now housed at the St. Catharines Historical Museum and is currently in storage. Last May it was part of a one-night exhibit series which was fascinating for all who had a chance to view it.

**Bocchinfuso Funeral Home**  
*"Let Our Family take care of Your Family"*

Pre-planning eases the burden on your family at a very difficult time. Let our family guide you through all of the available options with no pressure or obligation.

Under new family ownership with the fifth generation of Liddycoats to live in Thorold, we're still providing the excellent service you have come to expect.

**2 Regent Street  
 Thorold, Ontario  
 905-227-0161  
[www.bocchinfusofh.com](http://www.bocchinfusofh.com)**

 Mike Bocchinfuso Computer Technician	 Vanda Persia Italian Interpreter	 Rick Westlake Owner/Funeral Director	 Kelly Liddycoat Owner/Funeral Director	 Jessica Bocchinfuso Funeral Director	 Valerie McCartney Funeral Celebrant	 Judy Wright Receptionist
 Stacey Passmore Maintenance						 Freddy Borsella Maintenance
 Amelia Franceschini Receptionist						 Paul Fear Funeral Directors Assistant



# UNIVERSAL COLLISION: THE AUTO SHOP AROUND THE CORNER

by Debbie Tucker Thomas

Everyone in Merritton is familiar with all the car lots and businesses on Hartzel Road, but what they may not be familiar with is the little auto body shop around the corner called Universal Collision, situated on Turner Crescent. This business was built from the ground up in 1979 by owner-operator Wayne Tucker.

Wayne searched until he found the perfect setting to build his dream business. He and his wife Alaire (nee: Secord) wanted to stay in Merritton where they both grew up, and hoped to find a location that could sustain both a home and a business. They found the perfect site on Turner Crescent – a large home to raise their yet to be born daughters, next to a lot big enough to build an auto body shop.

Universal Collision is all about family. Wayne and his father Frank designed the building, and with a delegation of volunteers of friends and family (all five of his siblings helped out), the shop was built. The only requirement for the volunteers was a little skill and a willingness to work. They were rewarded with a lot of laughs and some wonderful memories. Wife Alaire and daughters Jackie, Jennie and Jill have all helped out in the office. Wayne's mother Doreen, has been his bookkeeper for the past 36 years and dad Frank – a jack of all trades (who recently celebrated his 82nd birthday) - continues to help out at the shop with anything that requires fixing.

Stepping inside the office at Universal Collision, one sees the walls covered with pictures of all of the sports teams that Wayne has sponsored over the years. He has been involved in coaching and coached both boys hockey and girls baseball in Merritton for several years. He has been involved in the Merritton Lions Club since 1991 and he may have served you French fries at the carnival some Labour Day weekend! He is also the guy towing the Merritton Lions float in the Labour Day and Santa Claus parades every year while his daughters Jackie and Jill dress in the Lion and Lioness costumes and pass out gum and treats to the little ones along the parade routes.

Prior to becoming a father, Wayne was also an avid stock car racer. He started driving when he was just 16 years of age and drove car number 15 in the Bomber class for over ten years, winning Championships at Merrittville, Humberstone and Ransomville Speedways. He has painted numerous stock cars over the years and sponsored many racers.

Universal Collision has also sponsored an annual Golf Tournament which has taken place every August since 1988! This tournament gives friends, family and customers an opportunity to enjoy a game of golf, a huge meal, a few drinks and a lot of fun!

Wayne's business has continued to thrive over the years and he has provided employment for numerous people including Carrie Smith, his right hand for over twenty-five years who sadly died in February 2014. He caters to seniors and is always patient and helpful with the elderly offering them a discount.

Universal Collision is representative of what can happen when a hard working Merritton boy puts his mind to something!



## Merritton Legion Elections

Elections were held in April for the new Executive for Royal Canadian Legion, Merritton Branch 138. The following members were elected for the 2015-16 year:

- **Alex Verdile, President**
- **Wayne Haslam, Immediate Past President**
- **Kevin Froats, 1st Vice President**
- **Ken Heath, 2nd Vice President**
- **Pat McCabe, Treasurer**
- **Mary Novarro, Sgt-At-Arms**
- **Colleen Bradshaw, Membership**

The Executive Committee is comprised of Renee Thompson, Ev Froats, Jim Froats, Emily Froats, Marg MacGregor, Ted Collins, Bill Borden, Ron Dollar, Michael Gander, Maggie Stewart and Bob Weir.

Watch for an exciting new year with the upcoming branch events. The Legion always welcomes new members.





## VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Several Merritton residents were among those recognized at the city's 27th annual celebration of volunteers. One of those was Tyler Manthavong who volunteers regularly at the Tufford Nursing Home on Queenston Street and has since 2013 when he started donating his time as part of his high school volunteer hours requirement. He was given the Margaret MacLennan Youth Volunteer Award on April 14th at the Holiday Inn and Suites Parkway Conference Centre.

## MERRITTON LIBRARY

I walked into the library one Saturday morning not long ago while having some car repair done at Randy and Linda's Midas Muffler and found it completely empty. Worried that this was a regular occurrence, I spoke with librarians who reassured me that they have many busy times. (Apparently Saturday morning at 9:30 on a beautiful sunny day wasn't one of them though). The children's programs at the Merritt Library are particularly well attended. It's good to hear that lots of young people still stop by to use the computers and check out the latest books.

## TEEN WRITERS TAKE NOTE

There is a creative writing competition for those short story and poetry writers between 12 and 18 years of age, who live or study in St. Catharines or the Niagara Region. Submit your works for the 15th annual Fresh Ink Writing Awards before July 31st, 2015. Professional writers will judge the entries on the basis of originality and style, general presentation, grammar and spelling. Cash prizes will be awarded in each category for entrants 12 to 15 years of age and 16 to 18 years of age with first prize of \$100.00 and the second prize of \$50.00. For more information see the details in the Merritt Library or online at the library website.

# LOCKMASTER COTTAGE

by Isabel Bachmann

Current address: 135 Bradley St., formerly #8 and 10 Lock St. Merritton

This stone worker's duplex was constructed by the Welland Canal about 1850. It is the typical structure that was built in several locations along the Second Welland Canal to provide housing for the canal employees. My understanding is that the men stationed here would handle the first stretch of locks along the Neptune's Staircase portion of the canal, the first of the series of locks that climbed the escarpment, perhaps Locks 16 to 19.

The foundation of the structure is red Grimsby sandstone, the type of material seen in the town hall, the Keg restaurant and other buildings around town. While the other lockhouses have pink walls of Grimsby Sandstone, this one is unique in having grey limestone



walls. The quoins, or corner stones, are a greenish limestone that has weathered to yellow and brownish hues. Some have the typical markings of the 'plug and feather' method for splitting stone and may in fact have come from the old quarry that was adjacent to the upper terrace property. The walls are two feet thick, with inner and outer walls filled with rubble. The visible stones were placed randomly, not in horizontal courses like bricks. The thick walls mean the front and back doors and all the windows are deeply set, and easily large enough for indoor gardening or a couple of kids with a dog. Each half had its own fireplace and narrow staircases were installed at each end of the building. The duplex halves mirror each other, with a living room and two bedrooms on the bottom level and three bedrooms on each side of the upper level. At a later date, a large single room was added to the rear of each half, and much later those two wings were joined by a wide hallway that left an open 'patio' in the middle of the building.

There's a huge spike on the outside of the house, set deep into the stone. Local historian and archaeologist Jon Jouppien suggests that this may have been used to tie up the horses or mules working the canal.

The first family members to live there, in #10 Lock St., were my great-grandmother Jessie Malcolm Florence and her young adult children, Charlie and Jessie, after they emigrated from Dundee, Scotland in 1906. My grandfather David also emigrated about that time and waited for his fiancée, Mary Niven, to arrive. After their marriage at St. Andrew's Presbyterian on Merritt St., they rented a house on Mountain St., to be near his family. Eventually Davy, Mary and their growing family moved into the second half of the duplex, #8 Lock St., in the early 1900's. Charlie left for the Western Front. He survived Vimy Ridge to die in April 1917 while on a nighttime foray. He is memorialized on the Merritton Cenotaph.

My grandparents, David and Mary Florence (nee Niven) purchased the structure from the federal government in 1937, including an L-shaped strip of land around it, for a grand price of \$800. That was a significant amount for a working man back then, but their children were old enough to be leaving home and perhaps money was easier to save then. They built a magnificent garden on the plateau beside the house, and hundreds of people would drop by on Sunday afternoons to visit. After my grandparents passed away, four of the children settled there, including Daveina and her husband Bill Armstrong. Their daughter Janet Gunn and husband Jim are now the homeowners.

# Centennial Florist

*"You can say it better with flowers from Centennial Florist"*

**Richard Boyce**  
*Flowers by wire*

Tel: (905) 682-8183  
Tel: (905) 687-9977  
Fax (905) 687-8911

All Canada & U.S.A.  
1-800-461-2708

172 Welland Avenue  
St. Catharines, ON., L2R 2N6

## Westminster United Church

180 Queenston Street, St. Catharines  
905-682-6143 • [www.westminsterunitedchurch.org](http://www.westminsterunitedchurch.org)  
(Inside the old General Hospital)

Minister: Rev. Elliston Bridger  
Organist: Jude Kudera



### Mark Your Calendar!

Sunday, November 7, 2015  
Westminster's Annual Christmas Dinner

10:00 AM Worship Service  
Sunday School and Nursery Provided  
Plans Available

"Pulling together to get things done to the Glory of God."

Ample Parking



## Tasker Street Habitat Homes

**V**olunteers with Habitat for Humanity are building a set of semi-detached homes in our neighbourhood. The group of dedicated volunteers from longtime Habitat Niagara supporter, Walker Industries, and a crew of professional framers under the lead of Habitat Board Member and construction professional, Dave Wiens and his son Jon have helped create a new beginning for families who will live at 38 and 40a Tasker Street.

A Build Celebration was held in early May and brought together local politicians, donors and supporters of this project, along with family and friends of the Habitat Partner families. This special ceremony kicked off a very busy day of work for everyone on site, constructing and placing the walls, trusses, doors, roof sheeting and windows for both sides of this semi-detached home. As part of Habitat's Adopt-a-Day program, volunteers from our community will continue to build this two-story semi-detached house over the next few months.

These homes are the 44th and 45th that Habitat Niagara has built in the Niagara Region since its inception in 1993. This will be the fifth build on Tasker. The first build in Merritton happened on Merritt Street and Birch Lane on the north-west side across from the former St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. That house was completed in 2009 and was a joint project with Habitat for Humanity and the Merritton Community Group with major donors including The Rotary Club of St. Catharines and Merritton Lions and Lioness Clubs. The build team included students from the construction program at the District School Board of Niagara

Moving into 38 and 40A Tasker Street are two families with a total of 10 children. Both families have immigrated from Sudan, making the courageous decision to start again in a new country in order to provide the best life possible for their children. Both families are very close-knit and cannot wait to move into their new homes. They have long finished their 500 hours of sweat equity volunteering in the community. These Habitat homes are expected to be completed at the end of July with a Home Dedication Ceremony planned for that time.





# Griffin Hub

1904667 Ontario Inc.

**Amy Brown**  
MANAGER

289 362 5681      905 932 9169  
165 Hartzel Road, St. Catharines, ON, L2P 1N6

# DOG POUND Pizzeria



455 MERRITT ST.  
ST. CATHARINES  
ON L2P 1P2



**(905) 984-6598**

Visit and order online @ [www.just-eat.ca](http://www.just-eat.ca)



ISO 9002  
Registered

INDUSTRY LEADERS IN QUALITY ASSURANCE

- Inspection
- Rework
- NDT
- Packaging
- Assembly
- Machining

15 CUSHMAN RD., ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO L2M 6S7

Tel: (905) 227-2892  
Fax: (905) 322-0329  
Shipping: (905) 227-5088  
E-mail: [rling@torainc.com](mailto:rling@torainc.com)

**RAY G. LING**  
President

[www.torainc.com](http://www.torainc.com)

# Rick DYKSTRA

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR ST. CATHARINES

61 Geneva St.  
St. Catharines, ON  
L2R 4M6

905.934.6767      [www.rickdykstra.ca](http://www.rickdykstra.ca)



# MR. COPPOLA'S BARBER SHOP

## Services

- Hair Cuts
- Buzz Cuts
- Bald Fades
- Head Shaves
- Beard Trims
- Line Ups
- Tapers
- Hot Towel Straight
- Razor Shaves

**Joe Falconi**  
**Rick Silvestri**  
Professional Barbers

email: [mrcoppolas@gmail.com](mailto:mrcoppolas@gmail.com)  
[www.mrcoppolas.com](http://www.mrcoppolas.com)

302 MERRIT STREET, ST. CATHARINES, ON

No Appointment Necessary

# THE KEG® STEAKHOUSE & BAR

KEG STEAKHOUSE & BAR

344 GLENDALE AVENUE  
ST. CATHARINES, ON L2T 4E3

TEL: 905-680-4585 FAX: 905-680-1974

RESERVATIONS ACCEPTED SUN-THURS

[www.kegsteakhouse.com](http://www.kegsteakhouse.com)



**Anthony DeMita**

186 Merritt Street  
St. Catharines, ON  
L2T 1J6

Tel: 905-227-7571  
Fax: 905-227-3305  
[anthony@suncollision.ca](mailto:anthony@suncollision.ca)  
[www.suncollision.ca](http://www.suncollision.ca)

You're Driving Home Our Reputation™



Auto & Truck Service Ltd.



Accredited Drive Clean Test & Repair Facility

**Mark Falconer**

215 Merritt Street  
St. Catharines, ON L2T 1J7  
905.680.5472  
905.680.6135 fax  
[scottysauto@telnet.ca](mailto:scottysauto@telnet.ca)

**Complete Auto Maintenance & Repair**  
Licensed MTO Inspection Station  
Domestic & Foreign Automobiles  
Fuel Injection, 4 Wheel Alignment  
Air Conditioning & Electrical

# Memorial Projects On the Go

## FALLEN CANAL WORKERS

In 2017, a memorial will be constructed at the St. Catharines Museum to honour the 131 men who died in the building of the Welland Ship Canal. The Welland Canal Fallen Workers Memorial Task Force, co-chaired by Mayor Walter Sendzik and St. Catharines MP Rick Dykstra, was charged with the task of developing plans for this memorial. The project began in 2013 but the timeline has been constrained due to scheduled construction by the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation on the canal tie-up walls. In the Parks, Recreation and Culture Services, June 2015 report to City Council, the Task Force laid out plans for the three phases of the project, along with their hope to fundraise approximately \$700,000 to cover various costs including the design, implementation and unveiling ceremony.

## VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

A committee is exploring the idea of raising a plaque to commemorate the Merritton Fire Department for their decades of service to our community. In the very early stages of investigation, the group has found a preferred location at the Cenotaph Plaza to the right and behind the monument and City Councillor David Haywood is investigating to see if there would be an objection from the city as to that location, as well as any requirements and costs involved in using that particular spot. This point was chosen as the closest possible distance from the original fire hall at the rear of the town hall, where the side entrance doors and archway are still visible. Information will be reported back and open for further discussion on the Merritton Memories Facebook page.

**MERRITTON COMMUNITY PHARMACY**  
491 Merritt Street  
St. Catharines  
Fast Friendly Service  
905-685-4777



*Come in and meet our staff!*

**Refill Buddy**  
The most convenient way to get your meds!  
TRY OUR NEW APP – AVAILABLE ON THE APP STORE/GOOGLE PLAY

**HAINES FUNERAL HOME & CHAPEL**  
26 Ormond Street South, Thorold  
*Celebrating 78 Years*  
*Family Owned & Operated Since 1937*

3 Visitation Rooms  
200 Seat Chapel  
Reception Facilities

No Cost Preplanning  
**905-227-1732**



*Katrina & Daniel Haine*





# PRESIDENT'S AWARD

When we tell you the exciting news that Penny Coles has been recognized for her stories about the people who live in Niagara-on-Lake, you might be forgiven for wondering how this connects to Merrittton. Penny is the editor of the Niagara Advance and in January of this year, was celebrated a Chamber of Commerce event with a President's Award for her dedication and hard work in shining the spotlight on those in Niagara-on-the-Lake. But, of course, our regular readers will recognize that Penny contributes to Merrittton Matters too. Only a true Merritttonian could write knowledgably about the five-pin, eight-lane bowling in the Merrittton Community Centre that has been there for decades and that it is used for weekly league play. Remember the great French fry controversy of 2013? Penny wrote about the memorable Merrittton Labour Day carnival organized by the Lions for our community over Labour Day 2013 weekend where fries were mysteriously absent. Her most recent piece was about shuffleboard at the Community Centre. It's obvious by these topics that Penny must live in our community!

**PIRIE**  
APPLIANCES  
LTD.

*"We Service What We Sell"*

905-227-3953 • 324 Merritt Street  
St. Catharines, Ontario • L2T 1K4

## YOUTH DARTS

The Merrittton Youth Legion Dart Team competed in Napanee on April 25/15. The Junior team, comprised of Ian Hawkes, Mac Levesque, Connor Harden and Dryden Smith, captured Silver medals. The Senior Team captured the Gold in Doubles (Denver Jones and Brian Tiner) and Silver medal in Doubles (Olivia Dykstra and Dillon Wall). Congratulations to all the players for their fine efforts!



Dillon Wall and Denver Jones represented Ontario at the Canadian National Youth Dart Championships

For more information about youth darts, please contact Debbie Burch or Bruce Davey at 905-227-3308.



106 Rockwood Ave.,  
St. Catharines, ON

TAKE OUT  
and  
Delivery

905-685-1585

Domestic  
Bottles

[www.fatcatspizza.ca](http://www.fatcatspizza.ca)

BEERS 7 DAYS A WEEK UNTIL 6:00PM \$2.99  
TAXES ALL IN



HOME BREW SUPPLY

383 Merritt St  
St. Catharines, ON  
L2P 1P7  
(289) 362-0330

[www.thebrewmonger.ca](http://www.thebrewmonger.ca)



[www.homehardware.ca](http://www.homehardware.ca)  
Register and receive  
special offers

BUY 6  
GET ONE FREE



Beauti-Tone

111 Hartzel Rd.  
St. Catharines, ON

T. 905.684.9438 • F. 905.684.0201 • [homehardware2@bellnet.ca](mailto:homehardware2@bellnet.ca)



Randy Hicks  
Manager

135 Hartzel Rd.  
St. Catharines, ON  
L2P 1N6  
Tel: (905) 688-6011  
Fax: (905) 688-8320

A FRANCHISEE OF MIDAS INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION

# GIROTTI: A MERRITTON FAMILY (PART 1)

by David C. Craig

"If I have seen further, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants." (Sir Isaac Newton)



I was born in 1942, son of Scottish immigrants, growing up on Maple St. (now Maplecrest) in Merritton. Don Girotti was also born in 1942, grandson of Italian immigrants, growing up on William St. (now Dunn) in Merritton, a stone's throw from our house. After Grade 1, we took different paths in life. The road Don took forms only one piece of the remarkable saga of a successful entrepreneurial Italian-Canada family - the Girottis. This is their story.

Domenic Girotti and his wife Teresa were born in rural Italy before the turn of the 20th century. In 1921, they emigrated to Canada with their two young sons, Silvio (b.1918) and Nello (b.1920). They settled in town of Merritton at 12 William Street (now Dunn St.). Domenic learned the plumbing trade and every two years, a new member was added to the family: Marino (1922), Dino (1924), Mary (1926), Mario (1928), and Guerino "Scotty" (1930).

Then the depression of the 1930's hit, and the Girotti family had to struggle to make ends meet, as did every other Canadian family. WWII began in 1939, and Nello, Marino, and Dino were called up: Nello was sent to Petawawa with the army artillery, Marino was sent out west with the air force, and Dino was sent to Jamaica with the Brockville Rifles. Silvio was an excellent machinist at Clark Machine Shop, opposite the abattoir on Merritt St. and he was instructed to stay at Clark so he could use his skills for the production of shell casings and

other war material. The war ended in 1945.

In 1946, Silvio and Marino, both machinists by trade, joined with Nello and Dino to form Girotti Machine Shop, in their dad's garage at 12 William St. They knew that with seven paper mills and at least one steel mill in the area, there would be a demand for quality machine parts. Their original equipment consisted of one drill press, one lathe and one shaper. Nello was in charge of the office - he kept the books, and was responsible for the payroll. He was assisted by Anne, Marino's wife. The other three boys worked in the shop.

Dominic, assisted by Mario and Scotty, continued his plumbing business. While working on a job in Niagara Falls, NY, he observed a company manufacturing concrete laundry tubs. Now, there was a revolutionary change in the art of washing clothes in Canada and the USA. Wringer (agitator) washing machines were becoming a fixture in every housewife's basement. After passing the soapy clothes through the wringer, they were rinsed in a double laundry tub, and then rung out again, before handing them



to dry. Domenic wisely decided that they could make these tubs and arranged for an Italian employee of the US firm to come to Merritton and teach the technique. He spent a week at 12 William St., sharing a room with Scotty. He taught in the morning and went to the track in the afternoon!

But the technique wasn't as easy as it looked. The first double tub was made in Marino's basement, using a metal mold produced by the Machine Shop. Unfortunately, it wouldn't separate from the mold and was so heavy that the boys had to break it up with sledge hammers to get it out of the basement! But to Marino, failure was not an option. Girotti Machine was in



the concrete laundry tub business and in 1948, the division of Hygrade Concrete was formed with the plant being on Lock St. (now Bradley), west of the Interlake Paper Mill. Before long, their product line had expanded to include patio squares, burial vaults, residential steps, etc. Scotty, Marino and Mario together ran the concrete division.

In the 1950's the plants outgrew their humble beginnings so they both moved to Glendale, at the bottom of Burleigh Hill. In 1959, a third division was added - Girotti Sculptured Art. Their products included beautifully sculptured wall art and clocks. Mario ran this division until the mid-1970's when demand for this type of art faded away. Both plants again needed more room for expansion, so they moved to their present locations: Girotti Machine to Seapark Blvd. in 1979 and Hygrade Concrete Products to First St. Louth in 1982.

Today, Girotti Machine employs between 35-60 workers. The president is Don Girotti, Silvio's son and my first grade classmate. Don has been with the company for 52 years. They provide machine parts for Canada's paper, steel, textile, automotive and nuclear industries.

Hygrade Precast Concrete employs 80 people. The president is Domenic Girotti, Mario's son. The day of the laundry tubs has passed, but they now make highway barriers, retaining walls, stairs for multi-story buildings, precast modular buildings, etc. for markets in Canada and in the US.

The Girotti family have been successful entrepreneurs - that's clear. But what factors hold the key to this family's rise from its humble beginnings? The answer is found in Girotti: a Merritton Family (Part II).



# WHO LOVES A PARADE

We are inviting you to be in our Annual Merritton Community Days Parade.  
As always entry is free.  
Please contact Parade Chairman Lion Jeff White  
at [jwhite57@cogeco.ca](mailto:jwhite57@cogeco.ca) or 905-684-3078.

## J & A ATHLETICS

MANUFACTURERS OF SPORTS APPAREL  
AND MORE

315 Merritt St.  
St. Catharines  
Ontario

JOHN SHERIDAN  
[john@jathletics.ca](mailto:john@jathletics.ca)  
905-359-7667  
905-227-8466

[www.jathletics.ca](http://www.jathletics.ca)

## S&F Seymour • Fair Insurance Brokers Inc.

**Rick Seymour** R.I.B.  
Senior Partner


200 Welland Avenue  
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 2P3  
T 905-685-8500 Ext. 12  
F 905-685-8590  
Toll Free 1-866-685-3247 (FAIR)  
[rick@seymourfairinsurance.com](mailto:rick@seymourfairinsurance.com)  
[www.seymourfairinsurance.com](http://www.seymourfairinsurance.com)

## MILK MAID SHOPPE

325 MERRITT ST.

*Serving the Merritton  
Community for over  
20 Years*

OWNERS:  
MAC & YOUNG





**PETE'S PIZZA**  
313 Merritt Street  
St. Catharines, Ontario  
**905-680-8080**


**DINE-IN SPECIAL ONLY**

- 12 Slice Pizza, 3 Toppings
- 20 Chicken Wings / 2 lbs.
- Garlic Bread w/ Cheese,
- 4 Pops

**\$24.95 + TAX**



**Jim Bradley, M.P.P.**  
St. Catharines



Constituency Office  
2-2 Second Drive  
St. Catharines, Ontario L2N 1K8  
T - (905) 935-0018 F - (905) 935-0191  
E - [jbradley.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org](mailto:jbradley.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org)

## Universal Collision

Insurance Work Welcome • Competitive Rates  
(Special Rates for Seniors) Restoration & Fibreglass Repairs  
Monday - Friday 8 am - 5 pm  
Towing Service Available - Owned & Operated by Wayne Tucker

**Free Estimates**  
45 Turner Cr., St. Catharines  
**905.684.3765**



ACROSS FROM THE FLEA MARKET



MERRITTON LIONS CLUB  
*Annual*  
**COMMUNITY DAYS**  
CARNIVAL  
AND LABOUR DAY PARADE

**FRIDAY**  
SEPTEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>  
4 PM - 10 PM

**SATURDAY**  
SEPTEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup>  
12 PM - 10 PM

**SUNDAY**  
SEPTEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>  
12 PM - 10 PM

**MONDAY**  
SEPTEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>  
11 AM - 7 PM

**COMMUNITY DAYS DANCE ON FRIDAY**  
September 4<sup>th</sup>, 8 pm - 1 am.

**LABOUR DAY PARADE**  
Monday September 7<sup>th</sup>  
starting at 11 am from Pen Centre

**MERRITTON LIONS COMMUNITY DAYS**  
Raffle for \$5,000 to be drawn Monday  
September 7<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm.

Buy one get one  
french fries  
at the  
merritTon lions booth.

limit 1 per customer.  
(original copy only, no photocopies accepted)

# MERRITTON LIONS CLUB

## Annual COMMUNITY DAYS CARNIVAL AND LABOUR DAY PARADE



### FRIDAY

SEPTEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>  
4 PM - 10 PM



### SATURDAY

SEPTEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup>  
12 PM - 10 PM



### SUNDAY

SEPTEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>  
12 PM - 10 PM



### MONDAY

SEPTEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>  
11 AM - 7 PM

### COMMUNITYDAYS DANCE ON FRIDAY

September 4<sup>th</sup>, 8 pm - 1 am.

### LABOUR DAY PARADE

Monday September 7<sup>th</sup>  
starting at 11 am from Pen Centre

### MERRITTON LIONS COMMUNITY DAYS

Raffle for \$5,000 to be drawn  
Monday September 7<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm.

Buy one get one  
french fries  
at the merriton lions booth.

limit 1 per customer.