

Independent Shorts

• Thorndale Agricultural Society's dinner theatre presentation of Arsenic & Old Lace opens next month at the Thorndale Community Centre. Tickets are available at Thorndale ACE Hardware. A \$35 ticket gets dinner and show. The preview shows Feb. 19, with show dates running Feb. 21, 22, 27 and 28.

• Auditions continue for the St. Marys Community Player's upcoming spring production of Harvey! Come out and audition this Friday, Jan. 16 beginning at 7:00 pm at St. Marys United Church. Please contact Maggie@maggiwhitcroft.ca or 519-301-6771 to schedule an appointment.

• Mark your calendar for the Family Day Winter Carnival on Feb. 16 from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm at the Thorndale Fairgrounds. It will be hosted by I Love Thorndale and all of the service groups and churches in the area. They are looking for volunteers to help out - email info@ilovethorndale.ca for more information.

• The St. Marys Beer Store located on Queen Street West will be closed Jan. 19 for interior renovations. It is scheduled to re-open Thursday, Jan. 29.

• Today is National Nothing Day. This is an event that was proposed back in 1972 by a columnist by the name of Harold Pullman Coffin and has been observed annually ever since. Its purpose is to provide people with one National day when they can just sit without celebrating, observing or honoring anything.

BUSINESS OF THE WEEK

River Valley Winter Tube Slide

Our Business of the Week is River Valley Winter Tube Slide, located at 4725 Elginfield Road, Perth South Line 1, just off Highway 7, south of St. Marys. Its owners, Walter Tkaczuk and Danny Seguin, have been operating the facility since 1995, making 2015 its 20th anniversary.

Two hills of four runs each are open for thrill-seekers to slide down on custom winter tubes. Then, rather than lugging the tube back up the hill, River Valley's "magic carpet" can whisk visitors back atop the 100 ft. hills. "We used to have a couple of tow ropes which could move about 900 people an hour, but we now have a 'magic carpet' which can run 1,500," Tkaczuk said. "It's also more user-friendly for people with disabilities."

Each winter, depending on the weather, around 25,000 people from all over southwestern Ontario make the trip to River Valley, he said. Although, thanks to some of the machinery they have on hand, they don't have to depend entirely on snow that falls from the sky. "We have three fan guns and two stick guns and, when they're going at full



tilt, they'll push out 400 gallons of water a minute," he said. "So, when we're making snow, we're making a lot of snow."

Tkaczuk and Seguin were pioneers in the winter tube sliding world. When they started, they were the first tube sliding destination in the province, Tkaczuk said. When they first started, they couldn't find the kinds of tubes they were after, and began manufacturing them themselves. Gradually, "resorts from across Ontario came to check it out and see how it operated," he said. Soon, some of those resorts, and others from locations from Whistler to Qatar, were getting in touch to have River Valley manufacture some tubes for their own hills.

When River Valley tube sliders need a break, they can head up to the chalet (the name given to the course's clubhouse during the winter) to be warmed up by a menu of fast food favourites such as hamburgers, cheeseburgers, pizza and hotdogs, as well as a stocked bar.

River Valley Winter Tube Slide is open Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Saturdays from 10:00 am to 10:00 pm, and Sundays from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm. Two Hour Passes for kids 12 & under are \$16, and passes for ages 13 and up are \$18. Tube all night for \$14 Wednesdays and Thursdays. Minimum age for riders is 4, and children 12 & under require helmets

on the hill. "We encourage people to bring their own helmets alone, and we also them for \$3.50 plus tax," he said. The hills are also open 10:00 am to 2:00 pm through the week for school groups of up to 300.

The season, which began on Dec. 14 last year, runs until the end of March Break. "Then Danny will get his groomer and start moving the snow around so it melts faster, and we get ready for the golf season," he said.

For more information, visit RiverValleyGolfandTube.com or search River Valley Golf & Snow Tube Slide on Facebook. To book a group or for other inquiries, call 519-225-2329, or, toll free, 1-800-795-9405.

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