

# Arson blamed in \$50,000 Christie Lake cottage fire

A fire that was apparently deliberately set destroyed a Christie Lake cottage Saturday night causing \$50,000 damage. Firefighters from the BBD&E department were called to the scene about 9:30 p.m., but the blaze had already spread out of control.

The cottage is owned by Theodore Strauss, of Santa Monica, California.

Ontario Provincial Police said the fire was allegedly started by a psychiatric hospital patient who was visiting the lake for the weekend. The investigation into the blaze is continuing.

## Block Race

Organizers are busy putting together the remaining details for the upcoming annual **Glen Tay Block Race**, which will be held Thursday, August 6th, starting at 6 p.m., in front of the Perth museum.

The course takes runners as far out as **Glen Tay**, across to the Scotch Line and back into town.

This year, participants will get a break on their entry fee,

if they register before the day of the **race**. Early birds under 20 years of age will pay only a dollar, while those older than that will pay two dollars.

Late registration will cost one dollar more, in each of the two age brackets. There will be the usual crests, certificates, and medals handed out, and there is a chance **race** organizers will also be awarding prizes.

## Harness Races

The August harness racing event at the Perth fairgrounds will take place August 2nd, beginning at 1:30 p.m. The races will feature pari-mutuel betting, as well as a barbecue dinner.

There will be eight races held throughout the day. At the last **race** a track record was established.

## Water Levels

Although the weather has been quite dry during the month of July, water levels do not appear to have been unduly affected, a Ministry of Natural Resources spokesman said

Tuesday.

Water levels at two ministry-operated dams at this end of the county are either above or at the levels they usually attain at this time of year.

At the Pike Lake dam, for instance, the water level at the dam is 2.7 feet, says Dave Durrie, of the ministry. Last year, it was 2.8, and in summers previous to that, water fluctuated in that range, touching at 2.75 and 2.6.

In the spring, those levels are about a foot higher. This spring, Pike Lake water level at the dam was 3.3 feet.

At White Lake, water levels are actually a bit high. "We're behind at drawing that down," said the spokesman. At the moment, the water stands at 4.3 feet. It should be at 3.5 - 3.8. In spring, the level is 5.0.

Agriculture officials haven't heard of farmers suffering any troubles with their wells or other water sources, either.

Ag-rep Russ Bradford said Tuesday: "I know it's dry, but I haven't heard of any wells running dry."

## Farm Grants

Farmers who had planned to apply to the Ministry of

## News briefs

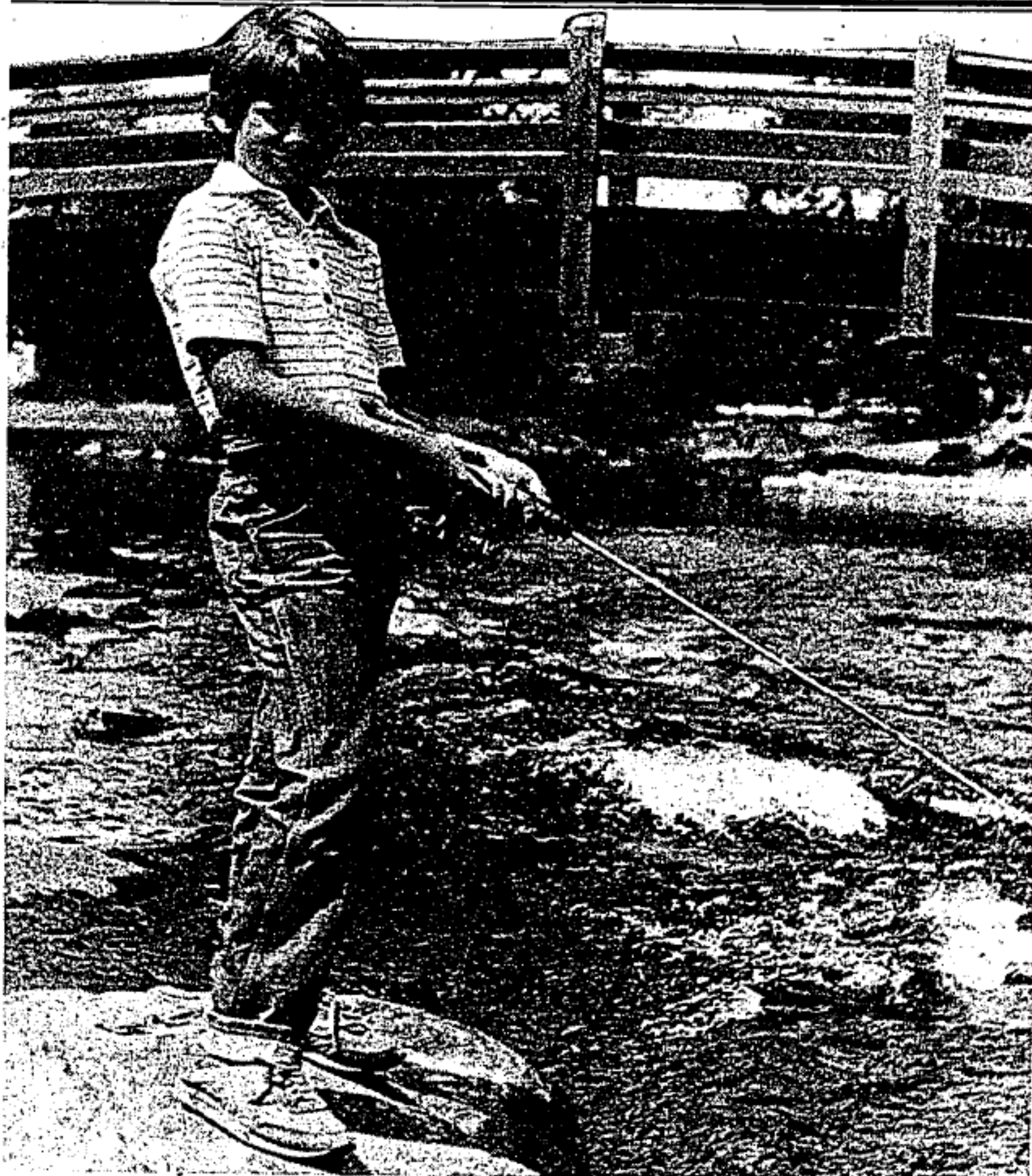
Agriculture for grants under the Ontario Farmstead Improvement Program, but who haven't yet done so, had better get cracking.

Deadline for applications is this Friday at 4:30 p.m.

The program allows up to \$2,000 in grant money, to be used toward paying laborers for such projects as repairs and maintenance of the farm. To be eligible for the assistance, additional labor than is usually hired around the farm, had to have been employed.

"The program was well-received by applicants," says OMAF ag-rep Russ Bradford. Over 100 applications were made in Lanark County alone. The provincial government had originally allotted \$5 million for the program, but that sum was later raised to \$13 million.

"It looks like the additional funding is going to be fully utilized."



Nine year-old Jacob Lambert shows off the fishing form that won him first prize in the under 14 category, last week in the **Tay River** fishing derby sponsored by the Perth Crime Prevention Team. Jacob took the honours with

a one and one-half pound bass. Upcoming events sponsored by the crime prevention team include a bike-a-thon today [Wednesday] and a campout at Murphy's Point on August 9-10.

# The Perth Courier

Price: 35 cents

Wednesday, July 28, 1982

No. 2

Serving Perth since 1834

## Merchants knock over-zealous enforcement Wilson parking ban lifted

A group of Wilson Street West businessmen have succeeded in having rush hour parking restrictions removed from that street.

Barely a month since the inception of rush hour parking restrictions, Town Council has reversed its decision and decided to leave things as they were.

Earlier this year Council accepted a recommendation in a traffic study that parking on Wilson Street West be banned during noon and evening rush hours.

The public response to the move has been overwhelmingly negative and culminated with a delegation of six businessmen

## Deadline

Due to Monday August 2nd being a Civic Holiday, the Courier office will be closed. The deadline for advertising for the issue of August 4th will be advanced to Friday, July 30th at 5 p.m.

at the Council meeting Tuesday.

Led by John McLenaghan the businessmen were unanimous in their disapproval of the parking restrictions and what was described as "overzealous enforcement."

Mr. McLenaghan said on-street parking is "vital" to Wilson Street West businesses.

With no parking restrictions Mr. McLenaghan said, "It's (the traffic) a little bit slow, but there's nothing wrong with that."

The group of businessmen said regular customers and tourists have been incensed over the issuing of \$5 tickets during the rush hours.

Angry motorists have also complained to the Courier about the rush hour parking restrictions.

"It is obvious now the experiment hasn't worked," commented Councillor Peter Burchell.

Acknowledging he was a supporter of the changes originally, Councillor Burchell said the regulations not only disturbed business on the street, but also increased traffic speed.

By retaining rush hour parking the speeding may be decreased, he said.

The topic led to a general discussion of traffic problems in Perth and led Councillor

Chuck Montgomery to describe the street as "the Wilson Street speedway."

Council unanimously approved a motion by Councillor Frank Mahon to remove the rush hour restrictions and return to previous parking regulations.

Swimming Pool  
Town Council also received word that valve malfunctions

which have plagued the Perth and District Swimming Pool have once again closed the facility.

Swimming pool committee member, Deputy-Reeve George Ashley was the bearer of bad tidings, but said the wheels are in motion to repair the valve and re-open the building.

"I don't know how long the taxpayers of Perth are going to

go on supporting this pool," was the reaction of Councillor Burchell.

"You can tell the taxpayers we're paying now for what we should have paid for when the place was built," stated Councillor Tony Noonan.

In other business Council gave approval for the removal of two parking meters at the

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## Doraty found not guilty

A not guilty verdict was handed down in county court here last week ending the lengthy arson trial of a Carleton Place lawyer.

The 30-day trial of John Doraty was one of the longest in recent Lanark County history and Judge John Matheson said the trial has been described as a "war of experts".

Mr. Doraty was charged with arson in connection with a fire which destroyed his Bridge Street home in Carleton Place on October 13, 1980.

Judge Matheson said the case against Mr. Doraty was based upon circumstantial evidence and he noted it was possible Mr. Doraty had accidentally set the fire.

"It is within the realm of

possibility this fire was accidentally caused in the living room by the careless placing of a lighted electrical heater under or beside a box spring by Mr. Doraty before he retired for bed," stated Judge Matheson.

During the trial Mr. Doraty categorically denied setting fire to the house. He was sleeping in the house when the fire erupted.

Judge Matheson also commented on the "careless and casual manner" in which samplings of debris were taken from the fire scene.

"Much of the initial investigation gives evidence of sloppy work despite the production of many helpful photographs," said Judge Matheson.

He also noted officials from the Ontario Fire Marshall's Office did not arrive at the fire scene until a number of days after the fire, during which time the area was accessible to the public.

The judge also commended Crown Attorney John Waugh for "his thoroughness and abiding sense of justice."

Defence counsel Donald Bayne came in for particular praise when Judge Matheson said, "I should state that without Mr. Bayne's exhaustive attention to relevant scientific detail and his tenacity the results herein might have been otherwise."

Crown Attorney Waugh said he has no plans to appeal the verdict.

## Perth handicapped affected by planning board decision

Handicapped people from the Perth area are among those affected by a ruling made in a Smiths Falls planning board meeting, on Thursday night.

The Lanark County Lifeskills Program, for developmentally handicapped people over the age of 18, had applied to that town for permission to run a day program out of a home on Gladstone Avenue.

But residents in the area opposed the idea, claiming they had no objection to the program, just to the suitability of the location.

The daily program has been

in operation since October, out of quarters at the Civitan Hall in Perth, and it is sponsored jointly by the Great War Memorial Hospital here in town, and by the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

Some 18 students from across the county attend the school, including students from the Perth district.

In the Lifeskills Program, they learn about personal care, clothing care, housekeeping, cooking, money management, community awareness, social skills, and some pre-vocational skills.

The manager of the program, Debbie McEwen, had told the planning board meeting that one of the reasons for wanting to move to Smiths Falls was that it would provide a more realistic atmosphere in which to teach home-related skills. At the same time, because nine of the students are from Smiths Falls, the busing costs could be cut significantly.

Ivan Bird, the acting administrator of the Great War Memorial Hospital, said that at present "They travel an immense number of kilometers a day to pick up the clients and to deliver them back at home at the end of the day."

"The problem is that a lot of

these people are from the Smiths Falls area. Consequently, if the facilities were in Smiths Falls, it would reduce the driving time immensely.

"Basically, that's what we were endeavouring to do. The residents in the area felt otherwise."

During the meeting, residents living near the proposed quarters argued the location is unsuitable. Ms. McEwen responded that the property was particularly suitable because of its proximity to the downtown area, and because of its large number of rooms for individual and group training.

Parents whose children are

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## Armyworms marching

Although the possibility of infestations may have passed, the Ministry of Agriculture in Perth is warning area farmers to be on the lookout for armyworms.

The Perth office had noted that this is the time to be on the lookout, particularly since adult moth flights had been reported to be quite heavy across the province. And they warned that crops of hay, cereal, and corn should be observed just before sunset for any sign of the pests.

Armyworm populations are usually kept in check by parasites and predators, but every few years, the armyworms tend

to exceed the capacity of their natural enemies.

Agricultural representative Russ Bradford said Tuesday that locally "We haven't heard of any incidents of armyworm, although this is the time of year you're apt to find them."

"We haven't heard, seen evidence, or heard comments about any. But if we're going to see them, we would see them now. We're probably past the season for them to be a problem locally."

The insects are brown to dark green in colour, have five stripes, and reach four centimeters in length when they are fully grown.



Bruce Guthrie turned on the pitching power, during lobsball action Friday evening, in the early sets of a massive lobsball tournament held here over the weekend. Over 40 men's teams participated in the event, which drew 1,800 spectators through the fairground gates. The Crain & Schooley team, which showed

some panache in fielding, but weakness in offense, was kept in play primarily because of Mr. Guthrie's pitching, says a team-mate. Two Smiths Falls teams won the "A" and "B" Division Championships.

## Weekend roundup

A busy long weekend is in store for Perth and area and Ontario Provincial Police are warning motorists and boaters to take extra care when travelling over the holiday.

This Thursday evening the Trans-Canada Hell Drivers are at the Perth fairgrounds for an action-filled show featuring a variety of driving stunts.

From July 31 to August 2, the 3rd Annual Pioneer Fiddling and Step Dancing competitions take place at the Lanark and District Community Centre.

There are seven classes of competition including novelty and twin fiddling events.

On August 2, the Perth and District Agricultural Society presents an afternoon of harness racing at the Perth fairgrounds.

To date the Perth area has been fatality free, with no local drownings or fatal highway accidents and members of the Perth OPP detachment are hoping this trend continues.