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Goderich August 21 2011 F3 Tornado  
Associated Files

Goderich Ontario August 21 2011 F3 Tornado

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8-22-2011

## London Free Press August 2011 Goderich Tornado

Craig Glover  
*London Free Press*

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# The London Free Press

## INTO TRIPOLI

Rebel fighters take capital

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Jays say no to sweep, on strength of homer by Bautista and stellar pitching from Perez, game story **D3** and at [lfp.com/sports](http://lfp.com/sports)

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### SUSPECTED TWISTER HITS GODERICH

- One death reported, many injured, scores left homeless
- Historic Square, Benmiller Inn ravaged by direct hit
- Shocked municipal leaders declare state of emergency

# 'Like an atomic bomb'

Full coverage, Pages A2, 3; Video, photo galleries, updates at [lfp.com](http://lfp.com)



**Victoria Street United Church stands in ruins after a severe storm ripped through the heart of Goderich Sunday afternoon, overturning vehicles, ripping off roofs and sending the picturesque lakeside community into a state of emergency. Early reports indicated injuries, but no fatalities, among area residents.**

CRAIG GLOVER The London Free Press

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# twister ingoderich

## VOICES FROM THE STORM

“I’ve never seen anything like it. The wind went one way and it came back the other way.”

Bill Gould

“When we saw an intense storm over Lake Huron, which was just approaching the (Goderich) shore — we immediately put up a tornado warning for the area.”

Sarah Wong  
Environment Canada meteorologist

“We had a storm like this in '95, but the damage is far worse today.”

Deb Shewfelt  
Mayor of Goderich

“The main emphasis is on crowd control. The fire department is concerned because there’s been a number of gas line breaks.”

Capt. Jeff Worthington  
Goderich fire department

“I saw all the stuff swirling in the sky. The tornado was right across the road.”

Joe Roosemales

“I could only see one tree left on the Square. And the Square is known for its trees. Walls are off the houses, roofs gone.”

Jenna Uyve  
tourism marketer  
for Huron County



CRAIG GLOVER The London Free Press

A path of destruction is seen from the air after a suspected tornado ripped through Goderich Sunday afternoon.



DALE CARRUTHERS The London Free Press  
Fay Kennedy looks at her barn destroyed when a devastating storm hit the Benmiller area Sunday.

## Newly finished dream home no match for nature's might

DALE CARRUTHERS  
The London Free Press

**BENMILLER** — After 10 months of building their dream home, Fay Kennedy and her husband were getting ready to move in Monday.

Now the couple, who live in the quiet village of Benmiller east of Goderich, are homeless after a tornado ripped through the tiny community Sunday shortly after 4 p.m.

“We put the finishing touches on it Friday and basically we were going to move into it tomorrow,” Kennedy said.

The tornado blew out the windows of their new home, tore a hole in the ceiling, ripped off siding and pelted the two-storey home with debris.

The twister also flattened a 100-year-old barn on their property and tore the roof off the house they’re living in, leaving

them without anywhere to stay.

Down the road at the historic Benmiller Inn, Darren Coulombe and his wife, Jen, just arrived to celebrate their seven-year anniversary.

The couple had just checked in and decided to go for a romantic drive.

Barely 100 metres from the hotel, it started to hail “golf ball-sized” pieces of ice, Darren Coulombe said.

“I looked up into the sky and I could see debris flying around the air in a circular pattern and I knew something was happening.”

Coulombe threw his truck into reverse and backed up to the hotel.

That’s when the tornado hit the Benmiller Inn.

The truck shook violently while the couple held each other tight.

“All I could think about was my kids,” Jen said. “I just thought, ‘I’m going to die and they won’t

have parents.’”

After what seemed like an eternity the truck stopped shaking. The couple got out to a scene of unimaginable destruction.

The roof was torn off two of the hotel buildings, windows were shattered and huge trees were toppled.

The hotel was evacuated. Stunned guests gathered outside with the community’s residents — most still in shock — to assess the damage.

Within hours men with trucks and chainsaws started the long cleanup process.

Kennedy and her husband began clearing the fallen trees from their property Sunday night.

The family is already planning a new move-in date.

“We’ll just have to put in more love,” Kennedy said with a smile.

## yourweekontheweb

Highlights from the last week on lfp.com

### TOP STORY

#### Trainer possibly died in his sleep:

The sudden death of mixed martial arts trainer Shawn Tompkins, a Tillsonburg-area native, was the most popular story on lfp.com last week. Readers left comments of condolences and memories, and most cited Tompkins’ accomplishments and legendary status in the MMA world. Though he worked in Las Vegas, Tompkins died at a friend’s house in Ingersoll Sunday at the age of 37.



Shawn Tompkins

### COMMENTS GALORE

Computer filters gain committee support: Readers responded strongly, both for and against, filters being placed on library computers to prevent patrons

from looking at pornography. Megan Walker, executive director of the London Abused Women’s Centre, asked city hall to consider a recommendation to the library board to place filters on their computers and Wi-Fi access. The community and neighbourhoods committee agreed. Walker also was successful in convincing Mayor Joe Fontana and councillors on the committee to put in motion the development of a policy that would prevent events funded by the porn industry from leasing public space.

### ELECTRONIC MAILBAG

More than 130 letters poured in to lfp.com last week, most of them about the name change of the Canadian military, air force and navy. From now on, Maritime Command, Air Command and Land Force Command will be called the Royal Canadian Navy, the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Canadian Army respectively.

LOTTERY NUMBERS, FREE PRESS ACCESS ARE ON PAGE A7

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# twister ingoderich

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## VOICES FROM THE STORM

“It’s like an atomic bomb hit (the Square)”

Greg Rau

“We’re asking people to stay away at this point — it’s a bad situation.”

Larry McCabe,  
clerk-administrator,  
City of Goderich

“I heard the wind and knew it was bad.”

Tyler Nicholson

“I looked up and saw a bunch of newspaper just swirling. It was huge. It’s hard to gauge how enormous it was.”

Ian Gould, who was golfing at Maitland Country Club

“I saw the dark skies and got a real bad feeling. Everyone in the (KFC) store got to the back.”

Kris Reilly

“The windows blew in. And then the building fell on my car.”

Brent Lawrence

# State of emergency



Buildings around Goderich's historic Square were heavily damaged when a suspected tornado touched down about 4 p.m. Sunday.

DEREK RUTTAN The London Free Press

## Roaring like a freight train, a suspected tornado rips through the heart of town

JOHN MINER

The London Free Press

**GODERICH** — A state of emergency was declared here after a tornado tore the roofs off houses, businesses and churches, toppled trees and knocked over power lines.

“We had a storm like this in '95, but the damage is far worse today,” Goderich Mayor Deb Shewfelt said Sunday.

The twister that touched down around 4 p.m. caused heavy damage to buildings near the historic square at the heart of Goderich.

The roofs of several buildings ringing the square were torn off. The green space around the courthouse at the centre of the square was littered with tree limbs and trees that had been ripped out of the ground.

“It’s like an atomic bomb hit it,” Greg Rau said.

Powerful winds shattered win-

dows in the courthouse so “you can see right through it,” he said.

OPP Sgt. Dave Rektor confirmed people were hurt in the tornado, but he didn’t know how many or how badly.

The town declared a state of emergency about 30 minutes after the tornado hit. A command post was set up at the Knights of Columbus hall at 390 Parsons Crt. People who couldn’t stay in their homes because they were unsafe were told to go to the hall, where residents were dropping off water and supplies.

Damage was widespread throughout Goderich, a town of 8,000 on the shores of Lake Huron about 100 kilometres north of London. The town’s motto is Canada’s Prettiest Town.

The tornado left buildings without roofs, trees and utility poles toppled on houses and debris scattered on the ground and in trees.

Police, firefighters and volunteers were trying to secure the downtown and keep out onlookers because of the number of damaged buildings and natural gas leaks. The power was out throughout the town, and the natural gas system was shut down because of ruptures that left an odour of gas in the air.

Sarah Wong, an Environment Canada meteorologist, said the tornado was spawned by a fast-moving storm that moved in from Lake Huron.

“We have had reports of roofs being removed from buildings, walls crumbling, grain elevator damage, cars damaged, arena and factories damaged,” she said.

Capt. Jeff Wormington of the Goderich fire department said the town’s square suffered considerable damage. Officials were not allowing anyone to go downtown and were trying to move

people out, he said.

“The fire department is concerned because there’s been a number of gas line breaks.”

Patrons inside the Coffee Culture store on the square stood far away from the windows when the tornado unleashed its fury, blowing away furniture, floor tiles and windows.

“It sounded like a freight train,” Jim Rutledge said. “It couldn’t have been more than 30 seconds.”

Gary Johnston and his family took shelter in the Bargain Store one block down. “I couldn’t close the door,” he said in disbelief. “Not with all my strength.”

Alex Mosher was driving downtown when the storm spun his car out of control and into a light pole.

“The car was totalled,” he said. He got away with only a few minor scrapes.

Buildings across town were

damaged, including the evaporator at the Sifto salt plant, the front of a TD Canada Trust branch on Hwy. 21 and nearby Victoria Street United Church.

The Benmiller Inn and Falls Reserve Conservation Area east of Goderich also were damaged. A roof was blown off a building at the inn and the inn was evacuated.

Joe Roosemalen and his partner Raquel Kennedy and their two children aged nine and five were inside their Goderich home when the power went out.

Roosemalen looked out the front window. “I saw all the stuff swirling in the sky. The tornado was right across the road.”

The family ran to the basement. The wind was so loud as they ran downstairs that their ears were popping, Kennedy said.

Remi Dube, who lives on Elgin St., was trying to close the door on his porch when the tornado

hit.

“I made it in to the living room and everything went black.”

The front porch was ripped off his house and a tree landed on his truck. His garage was severely damaged.

“Nobody got hurt, that’s the main thing. My neighbours are all right.”

Jill Gould of Uxbridge was at a motel when the tornado hit.

“The wind went one way and it came back the other way.”

Tyler Nicholson was napping on the couch at his home in Goderich when the tornado hit.

“I heard the wind and knew it was bad,” he said. He raced to get his partner and child to the basement. His partner, Lydzi Mason, said: “We were racing for the basement.”

with files from Free Press Reporter Mashoka Maimona and Gerard Creces, Goderich Signal-Star

## Savage storm cell identified minutes before it hit town

MASHOKA MAIMONA

The London Free Press

An Environment Canada storm damage team heads to Goderich Monday morning to assess the tornado damage from the Sunday devastation.

“We are in the midst of coordinating the action and organizing our storm damage team, but since night is approaching and we’re based in Toronto, we won’t be heading out until the morning. It will be too dark by the time the team gets there tonight,” said meteorologist Sarah Wong Sunday night.

The tornado that ripped through pretty Goderich was identified by Environment Canada minutes before it cut a swath through the town.

**3:48 p.m.:** Environment Canada issues a tornado warning for Goderich, Bluewater and southern Huron County after sighting severe storm cell over Lake Huron approaching the shore

**4 p.m.:** Suspected tornado touches down in Goderich, ravaging houses, factories and other buildings across

“It started to look really bad when we saw an intense storm over Lake Huron, which was fast-approaching the (Goderich) shore. We immediately put up a tornado warning for the area.”

Environment Canada issued a tornado warning for Goderich, Bluewater and southern Huron County at 3:48 p.m., bypassing a thunderstorm warning alto-

town. Environment Canada reports windspeeds of up to 250 km/h

**About 4:15 p.m.:** Emergency Management Ontario issues “red alert” for Goderich, Bluewater, southern Huron County, Stratford, Mitchell, southern Perth County, instructing everyone to take cover because of a violent storm.

gether due to the severity of the storm cell on the radar, according to Wong.

The tornado hit the coast and swept through Goderich at about 4 p.m.

“We can’t confirm it’s a tornado until our team assesses the damage,” Wong said.

“We have had reports of roofs being removed from buildings,

**About 4:30 p.m.:** Goderich municipal leaders declare state of emergency in the town.

**4:56 p.m.:** Environment Canada lifts Goderich tornado warning, residents emerge to discover widespread property damage, including in the town’s historic square.

walls crumbling, grain elevator damage, cars damaged, arena and factories damage.”

Thirteen to 14 tornadoes sweep through the southern Ontario region yearly. Tornado season runs from April to September, with peak months in June and July.

There was an especially active weather pattern reported Sun-

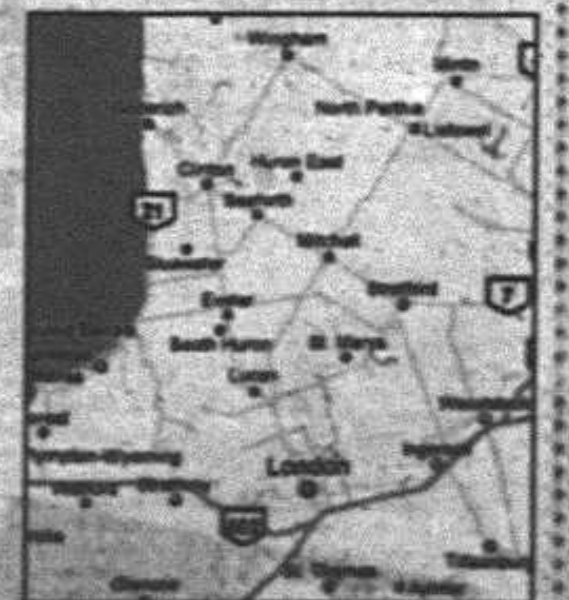
**5:04 p.m.:** Emergency Management cancels red alert for Goderich, Bluewater, southern Huron County, Stratford, Mitchell, southern Perth County; police and EMS on the street helping with emergency.

day, with several thunderstorms forming in southern Ontario, said Wong.

OPP shut down Hwy. 21 and evacuated the downtown area after a gas leak in the emergency control centre in the new town hall, Mayor Deb Shewfelt confirmed.

The team, which consists of three Environment Canada per-

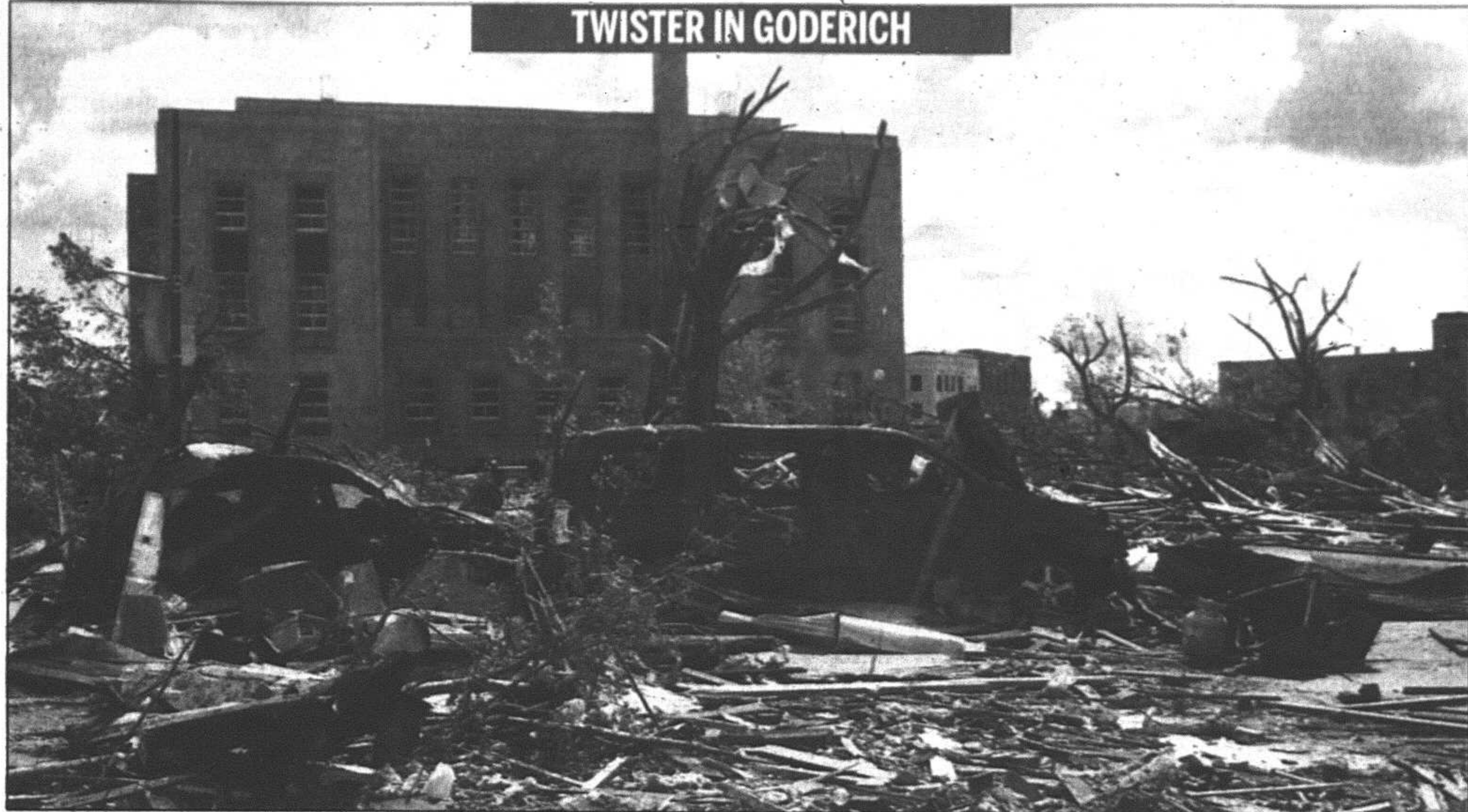
### Timeline: From weather warning to weather wallop



Map shows Goderich and area, plus researchers from the University of Western Ontario, will assess the damage and intensity of the severe Sunday storm. [mashoka.maimona@sunmedia.ca](http://mashoka.maimona@sunmedia.ca) [twitter.com/MatLFPress](http://twitter.com/MatLFPress)



## TWISTER IN GODERICH



CRAIG GLOVER The London Free Press

Tornado-battered vehicles sit amongst debris in the town square in Goderich on Monday. The category F3 tornado left a path of destruction when it hit the small town late Sunday afternoon.

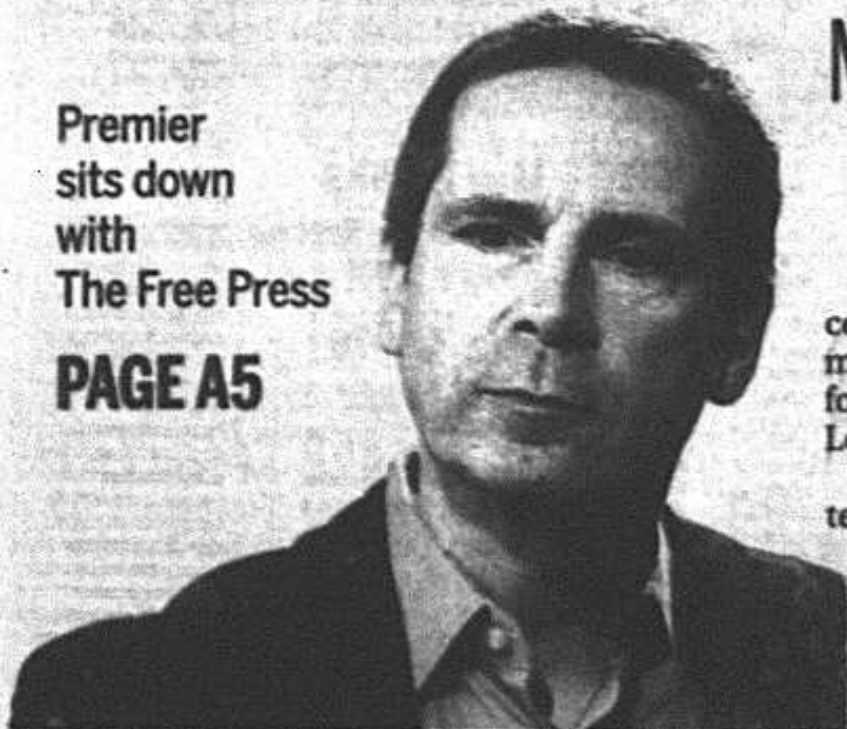
# 'We will recover'

- Mayor vows his town will rise from the disaster
- \$5 million in disaster assistance coming from province
- Tour of the devastation in historic town square

Full coverage, Pages A2-4; Video, photo galleries, updates at [lfp.com](http://lfp.com)

### ■ SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

## Sliver of light brightens area economic gloom



Premier sits down with The Free Press  
**PAGE A5**

### McGuinty up for more cash

PATRICK MALONEY  
The London Free Press

Premier Dalton McGuinty says he's considering — though won't commit to — an economic stimulus fund for Southwestern Ontario, including London.

The Liberal leader, seeking a third term as premier, said Monday that if re-elected he might dedicate extra money to this hard-hit region — a program similar to ones in place in northern and eastern Ontario.

"At first blush it sounds like a

sound idea," McGuinty said. "(It's) something that recognizes there are some special challenges here that require some additional support."

The idea, however, underscores the struggles of this region — where, in the recent past, the notion of extra government handouts would never have been considered necessary. But times change — Statistics Canada reported recently that London has the highest jobless rate among large Canadian cities.

see **STIMULUS** | Page A5

### Solar plant could employ 200

HANK DANISZEWSKI  
The London Free Press

London is on the short-list for a solar module manufacturing plant that is looking for a base in Ontario, *The Free Press* has learned.

The plant would be part of the provincial government's partnership with Korean industrial giant Samsung. It would employ 100 to 200 people.

London was a runner-up on two other plants connected to the Samsung deal. One constructing wind turbine towers ended up in Windsor and

a Siemens plant manufacturing wind turbine blades is setting up in a vacant auto parts plant in Tillsonburg.

Mayor Joe Fontana said he is confident London will come out on top this time, noting the city already has a base in solar energy.

"We have the talent, we've got the business people, we have the research capacity, we have the space and it's affordable. I'm confident we will be seen as the best city for this solar module plant."

see **SOLAR MODULE** | Page A7

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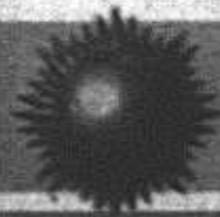
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## Remembering Jack

Canadians react with shock and sadness to word that NDP leader Jack Layton has died; plus Layton's final message of hope. **B1, A6**



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Page D7

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# twisteringoderich

## TALES FROM THE STORM

**Jim Hewitt** anxiously sat in an emergency shelter at the Knights of Columbus hall, unsure whether his livelihood was destroyed.

The owner of a downtown health food store, Hewitt had no idea whether his shop was among the more than 100 shops damaged by Sunday's tornado.

Authorities told Hewitt it may be a couple of days before the extent of structural damage is known and when he can return. Hewitt, who lives in nearby Auburn, was anxious to see his property and start repairs.

"Not knowing, that's the toughest thing," he said.

A sign in front of one house on the outskirts of Goderich read, "We are all okay here, thanks."

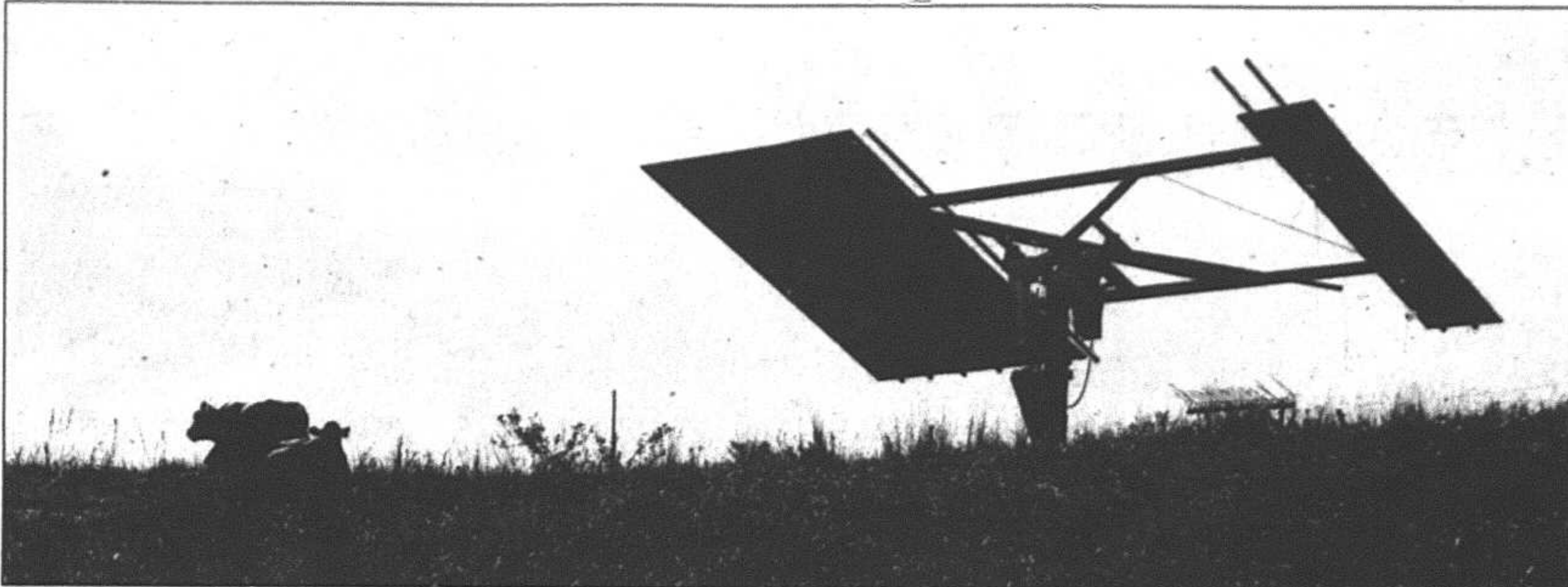
But the home on the property gave a different impression.

The garage caved in, crushing a car inside. The barn was torn from its foundation and flung across the yard.

Shingles were torn from the roof and the home's windows almost all shattered.

The front door was ajar, with only a chain lock keeping it from blowing open.

The tornado's winds — estimated to have reached up to 300 kilometres an hour — sent a tree branch piercing through the home's wall.



Photos by CRAIG GLOVER The London Free Press

Cows graze near a broken solar array near Goderich on Monday. A category F3 tornado left a path of destruction when it hit the small town late Sunday afternoon.

## Town square obliterated

DALE CARRUTHERS  
The London Free Press

GODERICH — An overturned van on the courthouse lawn, a collapsed gazebo, uprooted century-old trees — destruction everywhere.

The community that billed itself The Prettiest Town in Canada looked more like a war zone Monday.

The picturesque town square was unrecognizable after a tornado with winds estimated at 300 kilometres an hour ripped through the Lake Huron community on Sunday.

Police declared the downtown a "no-go" zone and banned pedestrians and vehicles from entering. But OPP granted reporters exclusive access to the devastated downtown area Monday afternoon.

Sidewalks normally filled with shoppers and workers were instead covered with broken glass, chunks of cement and broken tree limbs.

Shop windows were shattered and merchandise spilled out of the storefronts onto the debris-strewn ground.

The tornado, designated an F2- to F3-strength storm, ripped entire floors from buildings, sent tree limbs crashing through car windshields and split open vending machines like pop cans.

Police set up roadblocks at the eight streets leading into the square.

Concerned citizens, downtown business owners and curious onlookers gathered at the checkpoints, hoping to catch a glimpse of the destruction.

"Some of the buildings aren't safe — there's falling debris," said OPP Sgt. Dave Rektor, adding emergency workers were still searching the buildings for people.

With security systems disabled and doors and windows smashed, Rektor defended the decision to ban the public from the town square, saying looting was a concern.

"There are a lot of buildings that aren't secure and that's part of the police presence," he said.

Only a few buildings managed to escape the tornado's wrath. The historic Hotel Bedford was unscathed, while shops just 50 metres away were nearly toppled like dominoes.

More than 100 downtown businesses were damaged, estimated Judy Crawford, CEO of the Goderich Chamber of Commerce.

The devastated downtown could spell trouble for Goderich, a town that relies heavily on summer tourism.

"It's a tough time for something like this to happen," Crawford said. "We'll do whatever we can do to get those businesses back up and running as quickly as we can."

dale.carruthers@sunmedia.ca  
twitter.com/DaleatLFP



A wrecked pickup truck sits amidst storm debris in the town square on Monday.

## SOME OF THE AREA'S WORST AND MOST MEMORABLE TWISTERS



Special to QMI Agency

### June 2, 1998

A seconds-long tornado hit Norwich in southeast Oxford County, damaging 77 buildings in Norwich and 22 in Norwich Township. Three storm-related injuries reported, damage estimated at more than \$2 million.

### April 20, 1995

Two F3 tornadoes hit Grey, Wellington and Dufferin Counties, causing "significant" damage, injuring nine people.

### Aug. 28, 1990

Four tornadoes cut through an area between Komoka and Port Stanley. Ten homes in Frome, barracks near St. Thomas and Delaware and a Komoka church were destroyed.

### Sept. 2, 1984

A tornado hit Cleardale and White Oaks areas of South London and brought down townhouses and trees. Damage estimated at \$5 million.

### May 2, 1983

Tornado hits Reeces Corners and Walpole Island.

### Aug. 7, 1979

Two tornadoes ripped through Woodstock and area. Three people died and thousands left without shelter. Damage estimated at \$100 million. Queen's Park declared the region a disaster area.



File photo

Manitoba Street in Woodstock after the 1979 tornado.

### July 25, 1965

Besides levelling trees, houses and crops, an Erieau tornado dropped fish from the sky after they were sucked up in a waterspout from a pond by the Lake Erie village.

### May 4, 1964

A Michigan tornado sent debris flying across the border into the Strathroy area. Among the storm-swept items found were cancelled cheques, a court summons and phonebook cover, all from Michigan.

### May 21, 1953

A tornado killed one Sarnia resident and three others in Middlesex County and left 500 people temporarily homeless. Damage estimated at \$3 million. About 100 soldiers sent to prevent looting.



Tornado-battered vehicles line the streets of downtown Goderich on Monday.



Sheet metal hangs from a lamp post in the town square.

Continuing coverage, see [lpress.com](http://lpress.com)

Historic home tour still on, PAGE C3



## twisteringoderich

## TALES FROM THE STORM

**Sifto salt mine** worker **Nor-**mand Laberge, 61, was the only person killed by the storm.

The 31-year employee was in a tower supervising the loading of salt on to a ship when the tornado hit.

He was trying to get out of the tower when the storm struck, said Kelly Bar-

ton, a spokesperson for Compass Minerals, the Kansas-based company that owns Sifto Canada.

"He was part of our shipping department and was supervising the process," Barton said. "We are keeping in close contact with the family... This is a tough time."

There was no shortage of helping hands in Goderich.

A steady stream of volunteers arrived at the Knights of Columbus on Parsons Court to pitch in with the recovery effort.

Both males and females, young and old, signed up to do whatever they could to help their battered community.

Some made sandwiches to feed the hungry mouths at the emergency shelter, while others volunteered to clear debris around the town.

But everyone had a common goal: to restore Goderich to its former glory as Canada's prettiest town.

## 'You are not alone'



Emergency personnel walk through debris in the main square in Goderich on Monday while on a search of damaged buildings after a tornado ripped through the town Sunday.

CHIP MARTIN The London Free Press

## Premier pledges \$5 million in aid

CHIP MARTIN

The London Free Press

**GODERICH** — Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty pledged \$5 million in disaster funding for tornado-struck Goderich and vowed to help make the Lake Huron town beautiful again.

And the mayor of the devastated town vowed that the town of 8,000 will rise from the disaster.

"We will recover," promised Mayor Deb Shewfelt, who has struggled emotionally with the destruction. "We will recover."

"Words are not enough to describe the destruction. It is unbelievable."

Following a brief tour of the town 24 hours after Sunday's tornado ripped into the core, McGuinty, with Shewfelt and MPP Carol Mitchell at his side, said the entire province is behind

the town.

"I have never seen such devastation," McGuinty said, noting his 21 years in public life. "This is significant. It can be overwhelming... but we will find a way forward together."

One man was killed and 37 people injured, Police said no one remains missing.

McGuinty said earlier in the day the Ontario cabinet approved the emergency funding, which will allow the town to rebuild but also can be used to "top up" losses to homes and businesses that may not be fully covered by insurance.

"People of Goderich, you are not alone," he said, adding the sympathies and prayers of 13 million Ontarians are behind the community.

"It's one of my favourite communities in terms of how beautiful it is," he said. "We should set ourselves a vision of fully restoring that beauty."

McGuinty praised the leadership of Shewfelt and emergency responders and work crews who came from across the region.

"I am inspired," the premier told an army of reporters. "It is strange how a disaster brings the very best out in people."

As chainsaws hacked away at massive trees that were toppled in the core, local officials said water and sewer services are fine, but natural gas and electricity will take awhile to restore.

A few hundred residents unable to return to their homes until officials say they are structural safe were being fed and tended to at an emergency shelter in the Knights of Columbus hall in the south end of town.

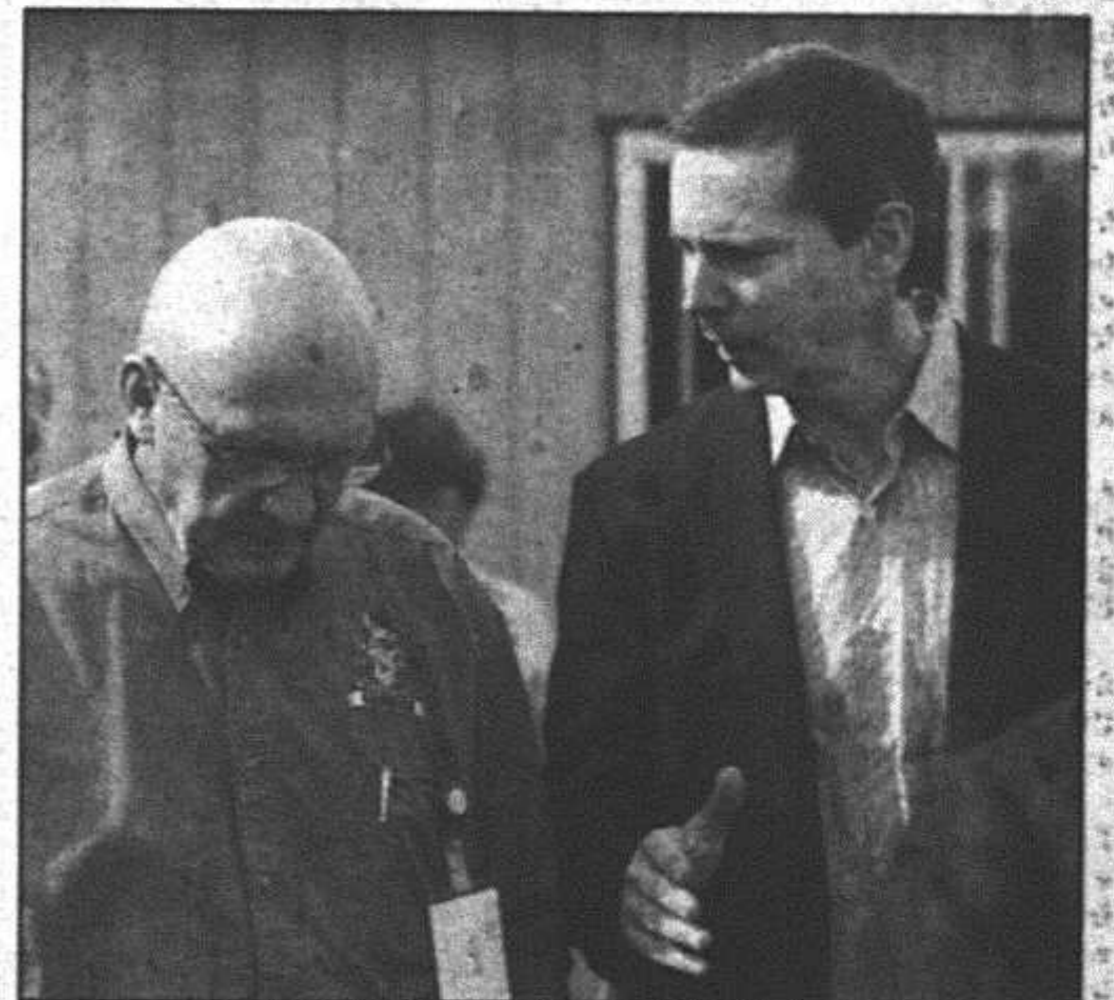
Shewfelt and town administra-

tor Larry McCabe said there is no shortage of offers of help and as many as 400 emergency workers can be accommodated. Shewfelt said volunteers, including a Muslim group and 100 home builders from Stratford, have stepped forward.

Aside from damaging the core, the tornado, which cut a 500-metre-wide swath, heavily damaged the Sifto Salt mine at the lakefront where the lone fatality occurred. Salt domes, conveyor belts and the plant's transformer lay in ruins, raising concerns about the supply of rock salt for Ontario municipalities.

In all, about 150 buildings were damaged, primarily in the square around the Huron County courthouse where every window was smashed.

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CRAIG GLOVER The London Free Press

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, right, talks with Goderich Mayor Deb Shewfelt in Goderich on Monday. The provincial government has pledged \$5 million to help the town.

## WARNING SIGNS

- Green or yellow clouds (these are associated with both intense thunderstorms and tornadoes).
- A rumbling sound like a freight train or a whistling sound like a jet.
- A funnel cloud at the rear base of a thunder cloud, often behind a curtain of heavy rain or hail.

## WHAT TO DO

- Take shelter immediately. If not possible, lie flat in a ditch or other low-lying area and shield your head with your arms.
- Do not take shelter in a vehicle or mobile home — they offer little protection and can be lifted by a tornado.
- Stay away from windows, doors and exterior walls. Go to basement, or if there is no basement, the safest spot is ground floor in the centre of the house in a hallway, small room, closet or bathroom.
- Avoid wide-span buildings such as barns, auditoriums, shopping centres and supermarkets with large roofs and areas near high walls or chimneys that could collapse.

## Warning raised by updated system

JOE BELANGER  
The London Free Press

An F3 tornado, Winds roaring at 280 kilometres an hour. And just 12 minutes for Goderich residents to find shelter.

The weather pattern that turned Ontario's prettiest town into a field of debris developed in a flash over Lake Huron with a pattern meteorologists quickly recognized as tornado trouble.

But if the same storm had hit 10 years ago, before Doppler radar was installed at the Exeter weather station, Goderich might not have received any warning at all, says an Environment Canada meteorologist.

"It's definitely a possibility," John Paul Cragg said. "You wouldn't have the same level of certainty we have today."

Doppler radar allows meteorologists to see two classic indicators of a possible tornado: the

hook echo that picks up the movement of moisture (rain and hail, or even debris) within a storm cell; and a circular pattern to the air movement, also caused by moisture.

Sunday, both signatures showed up on radar, Cragg said, adding the system worked as it should, although the farther from the shoreline and the radar station in Exeter, the less specific or reliable the detail becomes.

"Sometimes, when these storms come, it's a lot more obvious than other times," said Cragg.

The storm passed across Lake Huron, so we were able to rely only on (Doppler) radar and there would be no one on the ground to observe and report conditions, other than boaters.

Meteorologist John Paul Cragg

Huron, so we were able to rely only on (Doppler) radar and there would be no one on the ground to observe and report conditions, other than boaters."

Meteorologists from Environment Canada issued a severe weather alert shortly after 2 p.m., indicating the storm could deliver heavy rain, hail and damaging winds, including the possibility of a tornado.

Then, when a twister signed its predictive signature on Doppler radar, Environment Canada issued a tornado warning at 3:48 p.m. The tornado hit at 4 p.m. The tornado, categorized

Tuesday as F3 and packing winds strong enough to topple brick buildings, devastated the town's core.

Randy Mawson, a storm investigator for Environment Canada, confirmed the tornado was an F3 with a "significant" funnel 500 metres wide that cut a swath through the town along West St. to the town square, blowing off roofs, knocking down brick walls, tossing cars and pulling down large trees. It's the first F3 to hit the province since April 20, 1995, when two F3 tornadoes touched down in Grey, Wellington and Dufferin Counties and injured nine people.

The federal government spent \$35 million in the late 1990s and early 2000s to rebuild the radar network and installed Doppler radar systems, specifically to provide early storm warnings.

joe.belanger@sunmedia.ca

## POWER AND THE PAIN

- F0 (winds up to 115 km/h)**  
Will lift shingles off roofs and damage some trees.
- F1 (115 km/h — 180 km/h)**  
More substantive roof damage, blown out windows, mobile homes flipped over and trees knocked down, especially weak trees or those in loose soil.
- F2 (181 km/h — 250 km/h)**  
Roofs blown from houses, but especially large, cavernous buildings such as arenas and industrial buildings; barns will be flattened and sheds demolished. Trailer parks would be a mess of twisted metal and furniture.
- F3 (251 km/h — 330 km/h)**  
Has the power to blow off outside walls of buildings and lift and roll vehicles, small and large.
- F4 (331 km/h — 416 km/h)**  
Would demolish homes and other buildings, regardless of construction.
- F5 (417 km/h — 508 km/h)**  
Seldom seen, but will destroy or move almost everything in its path.

Source: Environment Canada



# twisteringoderich



CRAIG GLOVER The London Free Press

Wrecked cars lie amongst debris in downtown Goderich on Monday. At right, Randy Mawson, a storm investigator for Environment Canada, looks at a brick that smashed through the inside of a windshield near the main square.

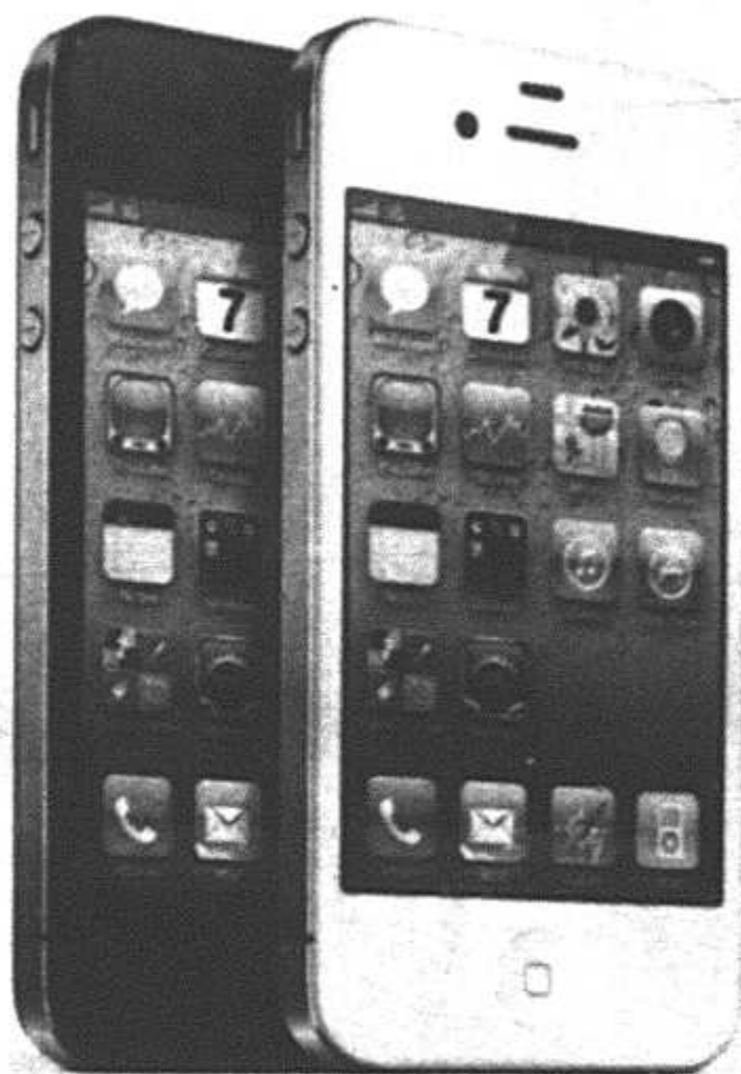


CHIP MARTIN The London Free Press

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## Storm drama too real for actors

CHIP MARTIN  
Free Press Reporter

GODERICH — As actors in Goderich Little Theatre, Elaine Fisher and Jim Hewitt are no strangers to drama.

Monday, they were centre stage in a real-life drama as they awaited word from authorities about the fate of their downtown properties.

"I'm incredibly lucky," said Fisher, who several years ago survived the Walkerton water tragedy that claimed seven lives and made hundreds ill.

"Somebody must be smiling on me," she said.

When the tornado struck she was in Exeter, returning from a Cape Cod vacation with her daughter Kara Gosleigh. She has no idea the fate of her second-floor apartment that faces Courthouse Square a few doors from the Bedford Hotel. She also has two cats that were inside the apartment.

Hewitt owns a health-food store a few metres away, on Hamilton Street and was likewise concerned about the fate of the building which includes apartments.



Jim Hewitt is anxious to see damage.

"I heard from one of the tenants about 6 p.m. as she was leaving," he said. He is optimistic the building survived largely intact.

Both Fisher and Hewitt have been told by authorities it may be a couple of days before the extent of structural damage may be known and when they might return.

They were among the crowd of more than 100 residents who gathered at the emergency help centre at the Knights of Columbus hall in the south part of town.

Hewitt lives in nearby Auburn and the handyman was anxious to see the extent of damage to his property and start repairs.

"I'm frustrated because I have the skills but I am not designated as emergency personnel," he said.

He and Fisher had to be content viewing aerial photos of the area around The Square taken by Free Press photographer Craig Glover and seeking clues to the extent of damage they will find when they return downtown.

In the meantime, the amateur thespians who have appeared in many song and dance productions are sitting on the sidelines of a drama in which they never thought would come to town.

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CRAIG GLOVER The London Free Press  
Elaine Fisher looks at photographs of storm damage at an emergency shelter at the Knights of Columbus hall in Goderich on Monday.





# The London Free Press

## 5 TOPS AND 5 FLOPS

# MOVIES



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Do you know anyone affected by the Goderich tornado?

**YES** 47%

**NO** 53%

Total votes cast: 641

**Today's question:**  
Will Labatt Park win Canada's Favourite Ballpark contest?

**YES**

**NO**

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### TWISTER IN GODERICH

# 'This scene was horror'



CRAIG GLOVER The London Free Press

Battered twister survivor Lorenzo Macchiavello sits in his shattered trailer at Maitland Falls Valley Campground near Goderich Tuesday as he recounts his brush with death.

## Chilean quake survivor, family clung to tree as killer tornado passed over

**DEBORA VAN BRENK**  
The London Free Press

The terrified campers clung to a tree in a ravine as the vortex, just metres above their heads, flung trailers off their footings and ripped trees from their roots.

Then their sanctuary tree was also yanked from the ground, leaving Londoner Lorenzo Macchiavello and his daughter, Andrea, pinned beneath it.

"I've been through three earthquakes in Chile and now I've been in a tornado," a bruised and still-shaken Macchiavello said Tuesday. Not even the quake measuring 9.5 on the Richter scale could match Sunday's terror, he said. "This was different — this scene was horror."

The family had been staying at a private camping area overlooking the Maitland River. Most other campers had left late Sun-

day afternoon when Lorenzo, Jr., spied a funnel cloud bearing down on them.

He shouted at everyone to find shelter.

"We had time only to jump in the ravine and grab my grandson," the senior Macchiavello recalled, his voice cracking.

"We were all hugging the tree very strong."

see **HORROR** | Page A4

### MORE TWISTER COVERAGE | Pages A3, 4

■ Town seeks disaster designation, big bucks for rebuilding effort

■ Volunteer helpers converge on town

■ Activists move to save town's heritage buildings

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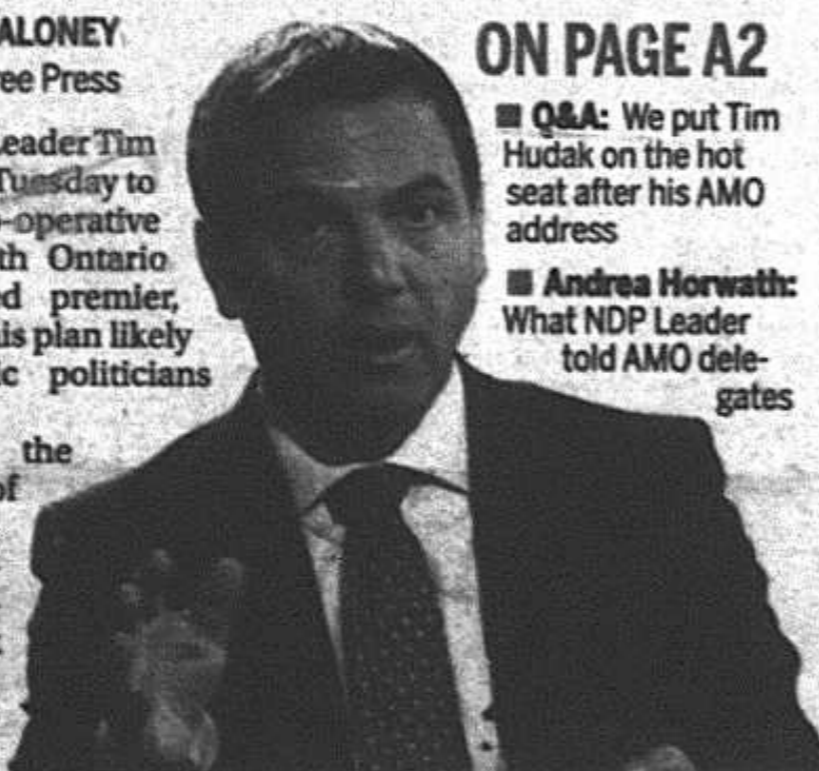
■ **AMO:** Top Tory Tim Hudak vows co-operation with cities, but won't guarantee \$1.5B cost relief

## PCs not down with uploading

**PATRICK MALONEY**  
The London Free Press

Ontario Tory Leader Tim Hudak pledged Tuesday to strike a more co-operative relationship with Ontario cities if elected premier, even as part of his plan likely left some civic politicians nervous.

Addressing the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference in London, Hudak promised changes to gas-tax distribution.



### ON PAGE A2

■ **Q&A:** We put Tim Hudak on the hot seat after his AMO address

■ **Andrea Horwath:** What NDP Leader told AMO delegates

Ontario's arbitration system and health-care bureaucracy — but one other potential change garnered much attention.

Hudak wouldn't rule out scrapping the province's plan to take on \$1.5 billion in costs now paid by municipalities, an "uploading" about two-thirds done but too costly to guarantee completion, the Progressive Conservative Leader said.

"I'm not going to make promises I can't keep and we have a huge financial mess to clean up," Hudak said in a post-speech interview. "I just don't want to make promises we can't keep."

see **HUDAK** | Page A2

## Virginia tremor shakes, rattles, rolls to London

**JONATHAN SHER**  
The London Free Press

It knocked over books, rattled windows and left some in the London region unsettled, an earthquake whose tremors travelled 500 km from central Virginia, prompting emergency evacuations in Washington and New York along the way.

The earthquake struck at 1:51 p.m., measuring 5.9 on the Richter scale, before the shaking spread long and far near the Eastern Seaboard.

"Just felt a tremor in my 2nd floor office in NW London. Blinds shook, chair tipped, books fell," wrote Carol Cooper.

Charlene McNabb was at work at the Oxford Elgin Children and Youth Centre when she felt the quake.

"We felt the one last year and just kind of felt dizzy. This year, we felt it. We were rocking in our chairs and our floor lamps were rocking. It felt much stronger than the last one," she said.

see **QUAKE** | Page A6

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	Bridge	C6	Canada/World	B1-3	Editorials	A7	Sudoku	C7
	Business	D8	Comics/Crossword	C7	Horoscope	C7	TV Listings	C6

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# Determined to recover

As devastated town cleans up, municipal officials seek disaster designation and more funding

**DALE CARRUTHERS**  
 The London Free Press

**GODERICH** — As Goderich's citizens started picking up the pieces, town politicians scrambled to secure funds to rebuild the tornado-torn community. Council held an emergency meeting Tuesday afternoon to pass resolutions aimed at getting the provincial government to declare Goderich a disaster area.

The move would allow the town to tap into much-needed disaster relief funding. Though Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty has pledged \$5 million to the tornado-ravaged community, it will take much more to rebuild the town, said Goderich Mayor Deb Shewfelt. "Five million dollars is really the carrot to create the fund," Shewfelt said. "It's going to take a lot of money to cover those inci-

dents that are not covered (by insurance)." A seven-member committee — made up of individuals from the Goderich community — will be created to decide who gets money and who doesn't. "They'll be mandated to administer the fund," said town administrator Larry McCabe. "They'll have some tough decisions." The town also is seeking cash from Ottawa and private donors.

"The sky's the limit with what will be mandated... it will certainly be much more than \$5 million," McCabe said. On the street, citizens did their part. The sound of chainsaws and wood-chippers filled the air, while an army of people with brooms and rakes hit the streets. Up on roofs, workers replaced shingles stripped away by Sunday's 300 km/h winds. Police concluded the search

and rescue mission, declaring all persons accounted for. The death toll remained at one, with 37 injured. The core remained off limits, with police roadblocks set up to keep pedestrians and motorists out. A 17-year-old male was arrested for entering the banned area Tuesday. Six building inspectors, along with structural engineers, are working to secure the area, said

Shewfelt, who declared the tornado the biggest challenge he's faced in 25-year political career. For Shewfelt, giving business owners access to the town square is a priority. "We need to show some vitality in the community," he said. "I think you still have to show people that you're alive and ready to do business."

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## Business anxious to start repairs

**ADELA TALBOT**  
 The London Free Press

Renee Gignac's dental office is just a tarp away from survival. While the F3 twister destroyed many homes, businesses and landmarks, Gignac said her dental office, situated within the declared "no-go zone," is salvageable, needing only plywood to board up the windows and a tarp to cover the roof.

But Gignac, co-owner of the office, said she can't get to her business because it's in a zone deemed unsafe and off-limits. Having called her insurance company and arranged the services of a structural engineer and restoration officials, Gignac can't approach her business to salvage what's left of it before it rains. "Half the town is gone and the other half could survive. Without a roof, and a (with) rain-storm coming, a roof claim with the insurance company is a tarp away from becoming a claim for the (whole) business," she said.

The equipment and salaries in the office are worth millions of dollars, said Gignac, and the sooner they can get back on their feet, the less money will be lost. Gignac said the engineer assured her the building is in structural sound and adjacent buildings aren't at risk of collapsing. The engineer got in before the no-go zone was declared.

"These are people who are qualified to be on site. No lawsuit would come of this," Gignac said. Though town officials have been understanding, Gignac said, her engineer and restoration company are camping out in the Wal-Mart parking lot, waiting for the restrictions to be lifted. The restrictions are in place to ensure public safety, said Larry McCabe, clerk and chief administrative officer for Goderich. "The town has to meet Ministry of Labour health and safety requirements. We would love to be able to go in there and (designate) what's safe, but we have to take the restrictions off in a local pattern."

McCabe added town officials are putting up fences around structures that aren't safe and coding the ones with less damage, to minimize the inconvenience. It will take a few days for all buildings to be looked at, he said. He expects some restrictions to be lifted Wednesday.

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CRAIG GLOVER The London Free Press

Goderich's Mary Frayne shows what's left of her 185-year-old home Tuesday. The historic home was severely damaged by Sunday afternoon's F3 tornado.

## Volunteers dig in to help the digging out



CRAIG GLOVER The London Free Press

Neighbours, friends and volunteers work to move a downed tree from Peter Wick's backyard in Goderich Tuesday. Town residents and people from outside have come together to clean up after Sunday's tornado.

**DALE CARRUTHERS**  
 The London Free Press

When Sean Rogers saw the television images of toppled homes and overturned vehicles in Goderich, he wanted to do something.

The Cambridge resident decided to help the people in the small Lake Huron community — and teach his kids a valuable lesson at the same time.

Rogers and his two sons, Mark, 5, and Matthew, 8, drove to the tornado-ravaged town Tuesday to join the thousands of volunteers cleaning up Goderich.

"I used to be a volunteer firefighter so it's in my nature to help," Rogers said.

Although Matthew initially complained about having to give up one of his last days of summer, he quickly changed his attitude after his dad showed him YouTube clips of the tornado's devastation.

The trio was busy removing rubble and tree limbs Tuesday afternoon on historic St. Patrick St., one of the worst-hit areas in town. They worked alongside people

whose houses were destroyed by the tornado.

"They just lost their homes and that's the worst thing," said Matthew, who had never heard of Goderich.

The Rogers family was part of an army of out-of-town volunteers, many travelling hundreds of kilometres, to lend a hand.

Locals showed their appreciation by treating the volunteers to Goderich-style hospitality, passing out sandwiches and bottled water to hungry and thirsty workers.

Paul Carroll, who grew up in Goderich but now lives outside the town, grabbed a chainsaw and rushed to his childhood home Monday.

"You can't stand by and watch," said Carroll, who teared up talking about the destruction.

Peter Wick, owner of a St. Patrick St. home damaged by the tornado, couldn't believe how many people were pitching in to clean up his yard.

"The bad can bring out the good, I guess," he said.

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## Heritage advocates move to save damaged historic buildings

**JOE BELANGER**  
 The London Free Press

Heritage enthusiasts across the province are holding their breath and mobilizing to get expert help and money to save historical buildings damaged in the town Queen Victoria once described as "the prettiest town in Canada."

The Architectural Conservancy of Canada plans to launch a fundraising campaign and an appeal to built heritage experts including engineers for help, fearing Goderich property owners may be uninterested or unable to afford repairs and seize the opportunity to raze historic buildings damaged by Sunday's F3 tornado.

### How you can help

Anyone wanting to help or donate to the effort to save Goderich's historical buildings is asked to contact the Architectural Conservancy of Canada at 416-367-8075, toll-free at 1-877-264-8937, by e-mail at manager@arconserv.ca, or visit the website at www.arconserv.ca.

"There is a tendency for some property owners to call in engineers, say a building's not sound and the next thing is they're knocking down a building that is often salvageable," said Lloyd Atler, past-president of the conservancy.

"My biggest concern is the buildings being knocked down,

so we want to immediately raise some money and bring in help, including experts who can help provide evaluation of buildings in terms of their reparability and structural integrity."

Rolo Myers, manager of the conservancy, said demolishing heritage properties simply to expedite the clean-up and rebuilding of the town would be short-sighted since "one of the things that brings people to Goderich is the built heritage, especially that square."

The Courthouse Square — a designated heritage district that includes every building facing the once-treed but now denuded octagonal square — was the hardest hit area of town, which has 39

designated properties, including some of the oldest homes and businesses in the province.

Remarkably, one of the province's few Victorian-era hotels still operating, the Hotel Bedford with its landmark metal-clad cupola, sustained relatively little damage, according to observations by media and architect John Rutledge, who has worked on many restorations of heritage properties and with the conservancy.

"I'm just shocked," said Rutledge of the devastation, which included his own West St. office where the third floor was destroyed, just above his second floor office.

Rutledge was out of town at the

time of the tornado but did a tour Tuesday of areas he could access since the Square is closed.

"It's a real mess. It looks like one of our oldest houses is gone, its roof ripped right off," said Rutledge, who was unsure of the address.

He said it appears the historic Polley's Livery Stable, now called the Livery Theatre, (which was built in stages starting in the 1840s and completed in 1878) at 35 South St. near the Bedford, also appears undamaged.

The Square is closed to the public for safety and security reasons as the damage is assessed and cleared and buildings evaluated for structural integrity.

Diane Porter, owner of what

is known as the Robert Gibbons Home at 85 Picton St. E., was one of the few heritage property owners who could be reached by telephone.

Porter said two trees on her property were blown down by the 280-km/h winds, but no damage was done to the stunning, two-storey, Georgian-style cut-stone brick home built in 1845.

"The walls are three feet thick, so we're fine," said Porter. "We were very, very fortunate on our street, but not far away the damage was quite bad."

Several heritage enthusiasts in town could not be reached by telephone for comment.

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# twisteringoderich

■ **TORNADO:** 'Horrendous' sound pelted their vehicles after calm

## Family drove into storm

MASHOKA MAIMONA  
The London Free Press

A London family was heading to the Falls Reserve Conservation Area for a swim on Sunday when they were caught in the area's most dangerous tornado in decades.

"It was the calm before the storm on our way up. My son noted that it was odd none of the leaves were moving," said Cathy Parsons.

The next thing the Parsons knew, their two cars were being pelted by what felt like rocks and a "horrendous" noise barged them.

The funnel cloud that razed the town of Goderich was a mere 90 metres behind their battered cars.

"We used our GPS to navigate our way out, but every road we turned into was blocked by fallen trees," remembered Parsons.

The family of six followed their GPS into the heart of the destruction: Goderich.

As they drove through the devastated town, with trees, rubble and cruisers littering the once-picturesque streets, Parsons' husband, Garry, suggested they stop by the local hospital to lend a helping hand.

His wife is a nursing-practice consultant at St. Joseph's and he is a respiratory therapist.

"I thought 'This is trauma, this is an emergency, let's drive by to see if they need help.' They couldn't get staff into the hospital because the roads were inaccessible," said Garry Parsons.

The last thing he remembers driving out of the ravaged town was the strong smell of natural gas.

"It's remarkable that the funnel cloud touched down so close to us and we managed to get out unhurt."

### ■ **tornadobriefs**

#### RESCUE EFFORT OVER

The search-and-rescue operation in Goderich is over following Sunday's tornado. While the OPP search-and-rescue team and the Canadian Task Force team — Ontario's response to disaster, co-ordinated by the provincial fire marshal's office — have left the town, the cleanup of the disaster zone continues.

#### NO-GO ZONE BREACHED

A 17-year-old male faces charges after police say he was found with drugs in his possession in the "no-go" zone in downtown Goderich Monday. Police said officers watched a male wearing a backpack on Picton St. They questioned him and found drugs in his possession. He was arrested and faces charges of pos-

sessing a controlled substance and failing to comply with a court order.

#### CORE STILL CLOSED

Huron OPP are reminding the public to stay away from the Goderich core where, for safety reasons, public access is not permitted.

— Mashoka Maimona

■ **HORROR**



CRAIG GLOVER The London Free Press

Paul Lenhardt, front, of London, checks out a burned-out car and trailer with Gary Fordyce of St. Thomas at Maitland Falls Valley Campground near Goderich Tuesday. The trailer and car burst into flames when a propane tank exploded after Sunday afternoon's F3 tornado hit the trailer park.

## 'You need to thank the Lord to be alive'

FROM PAGE A1

His daughter, Andrea, her husband, Shawn LaRocque and their two children, Selena and Ryan, grabbed each other and the tree with Lorenzo Sr. and Lorenzo Jr.

Two friends from Toronto, Marcelo and Olivia Silva, did the same.

They heard the tornado from there, about three metres down the ravine, before they saw it. It was, Macchiavello said, like a train bearing down on them.

Then they saw the funnel, from its underside.

Saw the debris flying through the air, felt the rush of wind that pulled young Ryan's legs away from the tree and made them grab each other even tighter.

"You could see all the trees going, going, going — until ours went, too," Macchiavello said.

The tree fell on his right leg and on Andrea.

Family members frantically pried open a storage shed to get a chainsaw and cut them loose.

Andrea's husband was hit by debris as he sheltered his family, suffering broken ribs and a collapsed lung. He was taken to hospital in Clinton.

The two trailers were destroyed, one catching fire after it flipped into the fire pit, the other flattened by a tree. Moments earlier, Andrea had been preparing supper with her children in that camper.

Another trailer was tossed into the ravine, landing on its roof, wheels to the sky, on a grassy area beside the river.

Several other vehicles in the campground were destroyed.

Only later did the family discover a tornado had levelled

parts of Goderich and claimed the life of one man.

On Monday and Tuesday, friends and family helped clean up the camp.

Halina Kaminski, who owns property at that site and returned Monday to survey the scene, said the damage was incredible and about half the camping area was destroyed.

Just across the river, at Falls Reserve Conservation Area, there was virtually no damage.

Macchiavello said the whole thing lasted all of two minutes.

But the emotional trauma remains. The grandchildren are having trouble sleeping.

Macchiavello said he's had enough close calls to last a lifetime and he's grateful his family survived. "You need to thank the Lord to be alive. The material part is not important."

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# comment

## Who will get the keys to Stornoway?

It would be a mistake to think that the next occupant of Stornoway, the official Ottawa residence of the Leader of the Official Opposition, must be just like its most recent tenant, Jack Layton.

In fact, I suspect the country's New Democrats know that not only is there no carbon copy of Layton out there, it would be a mistake to look for one.



David Akin

But as the country and its political class begin to think about the kind of person that ought to lead the New Democrats, one thing is clear: The country will be better off with an NDP leader who, like Layton, has what I'd call a good ear for Quebec. For whether you're a Conservative, Liberal, Green or adhere to any other party which believes in a united Canada, Layton's most significant accomplishment on May 2 was the vanquishing of the Bloc Québécois.

But how to make sure the separatists don't come back? One good way is to find an NDP leader who can do what Layton had only started to do, namely, unite a caucus of Quebecers who might favour the decentralized and province-focused approach with New Democrats from the West and elsewhere who like a more centralized, Ottawa-focused government.

Can that be done? Layton, ever the optimist, thought it could. Can anyone else? We don't yet know. And while NDP MPs and their staff are officially shying away from all talk of Layton's succession until his state funeral Saturday, it is no disrespect to Layton for the rest of us to do so. Indeed, Layton initiated the leadership race in that extraordinary "Letter to Canadians" he penned before his death.

So let me get the speculation rolling by suggesting that it will be impossible for New Democrats to elect a leader who does not speak French. And, given the large number of rookie MPs, some experience in Parliament would be a definite plus. So on that alone, here's my short and likely incomplete list of MPs who may merit a look by New Democrats, a list I present solely for entertainment purposes and provided with the caveat that I have no inside knowledge if any of them will run or even want to run.

■ Peggy Nash, the NDP finance critic, Toronto MP, and former NDP president. The race must have some women and, though I suspect Nash would not win, I think she'd be a good candidate.

■ Popular Ottawa MP Paul Dewar led the NDP on the Libya file, speaks enough French and could find supporters in caucus.

■ Some BC New Democrats wanted Peter Julian to run for the leadership last year in that province but he decided to stay in Ottawa. He's a principled fighter, first elected in 2004.

■ Windsor's Joe Comartin finished fourth to Layton in the 2003 leadership race. He's older, wiser, but does he want the job?

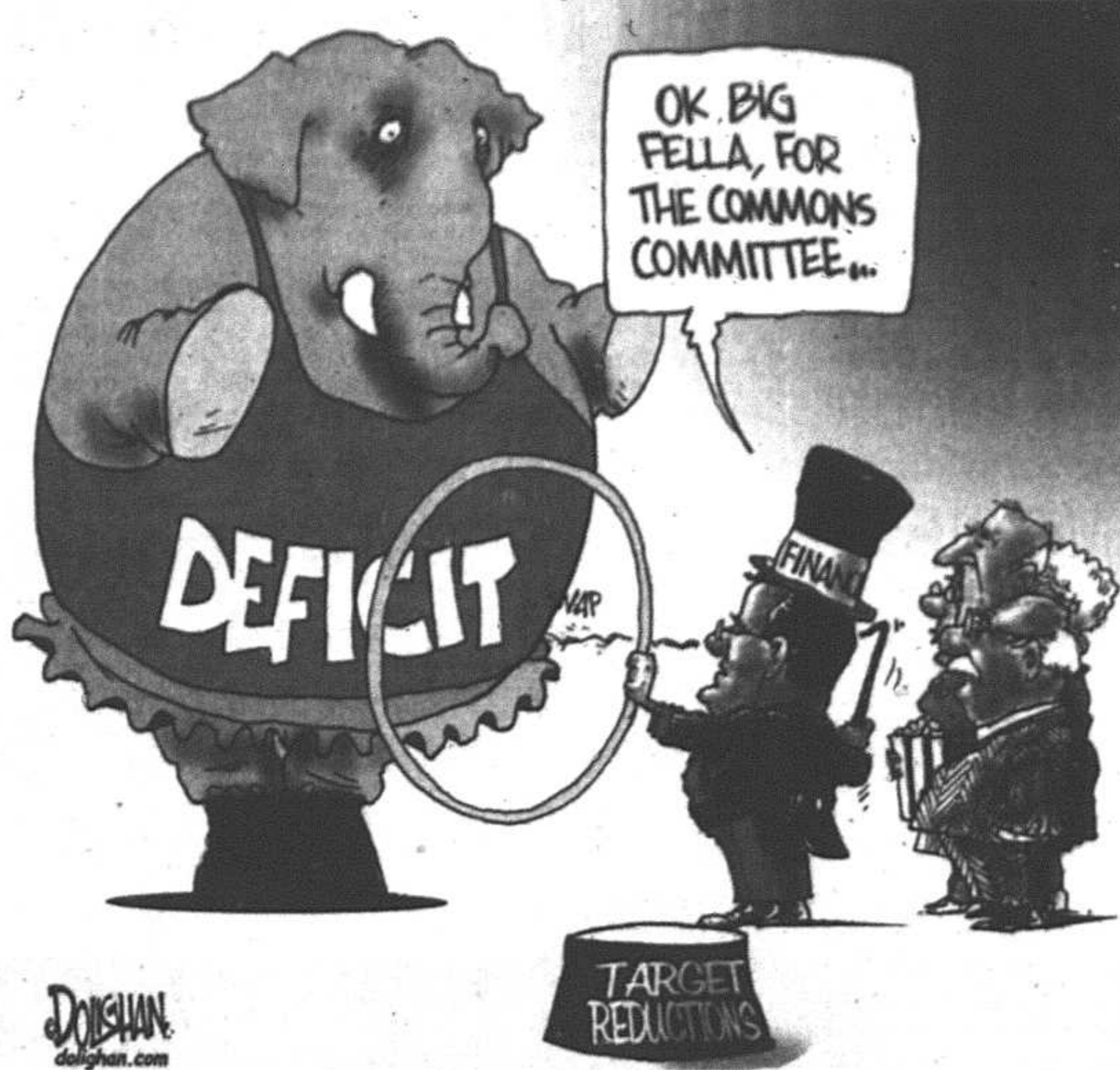
■ Fiery Montrealer Thomas Mulcair is the deputy leader and, until May 2, was all the NDP had in Quebec. A former Quebec Liberal cabinet minister, Mulcair is expected to jump in.

■ Rookie Nova Scotia MP Robert Chisholm once led his home province's party and has made a point of speaking French from time to time in the House.

■ The only non-MP on my list would be Brian Topp, the current president of the party, a close Layton adviser, architect of that Liberal-NDP coalition, and a perfectly bilingual Montrealer. Remains to be seen if Topp can do retail politics like Mulcair, et al.

■ Finally, her second language is Mandarin not French, but I wonder if Olivia Chow, Layton's partner and fellow MP, might think about throwing her hat in the ring. She's feisty and fearless, and while she may not race to win, she and her supporters may hope she races to keep Layton's legacy alive.

david.akin@sunmedia.ca



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### pointofview

## Goderich tornado serves as important wake-up call

Goderich, like hundreds of other similar towns and cities across Ontario, never gave much thought to tornadoes.

After all, that severe weather is reserved for Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and the other dozen or so states that make up the American bad-storm bull's-eye known as tornado alley.

In addition, there was always an understanding that Goderich would never really bear the brunt of a bad storm coming off Lake Huron because of the topography of the town. The bluffs just past the beach would always force tornadoes to lift off the ground and they would lose their muster.

We can call that belief a myth now as we know the tornado decided to come right up Harbour St. to the centre of town.

That same false sense of security exists for most Ontarians. Environment Canada issued tornado warnings for Stratford Sunday afternoon, and many models showed the twister that hit Goderich was expected to lift off the ground at the shoreline, then re-energize and reorganize about 40 or 50 kilometres inland, right around Mitchell and Stratford.

Despite the warnings and very real possibility of a twister in Stratford, few if anyone in the city headed for cover or gave the idea of going to the basement a second thought.

The reality is Ontario can get as many as 15 to 20 tornadoes a summer. Most are in the F0 to F1 category and damage is limited, but certainly not all.

It has been reported many times the F3 tornado that hit Goderich this week is the first F3 in Ontario since 1995, but that's not true. An F2 set down in Perth County in May 2004 and by the time the cell was over Ellice Township and had torn apart a farmhouse west of Gadshill, it had ramped up to an F3, said Environment Canada at the time.

And, of course, we remember the deadly tornado cluster that tracked across south-western Ontario and touched down in Clinton, Milverton, Arthur, Grand Valley and finally Barrie where it killed eight people and injured another 155 the last day of May 1985. And many people in Woodstock still shudder when storm clouds form thanks to the massive tornado that hit there in 1979.

The fact is, as much as our hearts go out to the people of Goderich — there but for the grace of God or weather patterns go we — the next time we see that red screen on the Weather Network or hear that weather bulletin we should know that, yes, it can happen here. And in fact, often does.

And we should react accordingly.

— John Kastner

## Addiction to spending needs to stop

Never underestimate the ability of the Liberals to reinvent themselves in advance of an election.

Take the announcement by Premier Dalton McGuinty and his foot-in-mouth finance minister, Dwight Duncan, that the provincial deficit, now at \$14 billion, is \$5.7 billion lower than projected.

That's like a couple of crack addicts seeking praise because they're using less of the drug than they promised a couple of years ago.



Christina Blizzard

They're still addicted — just not using quite as much.

Lest we forget, since McGuinty came to power in 2003, the Liberals have doubled the provincial debt. The total debt in 2003 was \$148 billion. By 2012, it will hit \$283 billion, \$303 billion by 2013.

This province's other 23 premiers over 136 years, "only" racked up \$148 billion in debt. McGuinty single-handedly doubled that.

He'll tell you it was all about stimulus spending and building infrastructure.

In fact, we managed to negotiate our way through two world wars and a great depression on \$148 billion worth of debt.

We built universities, colleges, hospitals the entire GO Transit system, the hydro generating plant at Niagara Falls and all of our nuclear plants.

All for the same amount of debt McGuinty saddled us with in just eight short years.

Like any addict, McGuinty and Duncan can't promise to stay away from the stuff. Next year, the deficit will be another \$18 billion.

And no, this isn't about one-time stimulus spending. Their projected program spending for 2011 is 77% higher than it was in 2003.

We're living beyond our means.

At a time when other governments are seeking to rein in spending, they're adding new and costly programs. Take the \$1 billion they're spending on all-day kindergarten.

Oh, sure, in the perfect nanny state such as the one the Liberals envision, we should take babies away from their parents at birth, have state-funded nannies potty train them and teach them to walk and talk.

But we can't afford it.

Nor can we afford all-day kindergarten. It's glorified "free" daycare delivered in the most costly way possible — with teachers and early childhood educators.

And we're starving our health system to do it. The premier actually bragged the Liberals have kept the increase in health spending to 3.7%. McGuinty said \$2.4 billion of that reduction in the deficit was as a result of reduced government spending.

"So we have found a way to ratchet our expenses down in a way that does not compromise the programs that families have got to be able to count on," he said.

Services aren't compromised? Ask anyone who has used the health system recently just how bad our system has become. Heck, you only had to read the recent series by former *Toronto Sun* editor John Downing about how he couldn't find a hospital bed here after becoming desperately ill in the U.S.

His isn't an isolated case. He just happened to have the wherewithal to write about it.

Remember in their first budget when the Liberals introduced their so-called "health levy"? Except it hasn't gone to health at all.

It was supposed to pay for more health care, but now the Liberals are bragging they've put the brakes on health spending at a time when more elderly people are in need of care.

Instead, they're spending the money on things like a costly educational frill.

We have runaway, out-of-control spending in this province. Time to hit that addiction on the head.

christina.blizzard@sunmedia.ca

### Letters to the editor

#### Layton's death saddens

I was heartbroken to learn of Jack Layton's death. He had fought so hard to create a better Canada for us.

I am so glad he was able to become leader of the Opposition in May this year, a goal for which he had worked long and hard. Unfortunately, cancer was the winner in this race.

He dedicated his life and soul to Canada and Canadians.

My heart goes out to his wife Olivia and his family. We will all miss him.

Jim Rogers  
London

#### Raw deal for Glanworth

Since Westminster was annexed by London, Glanworth just keeps getting dumped on.

The city landfill on Manning Dr. made it necessary for Glanworth to bring in water lines, as the wells were no longer recommended for human use. The residents of Glanworth had to pay for this.

Then there is the library. The library board wants to close it, without

any input from the community that uses it. How are the people who don't drive supposed to get to a library? There is no bus service in Glanworth. If the board needs to save money, close a branch in an area that has bus service.

Another concern is bike lanes that were promised. Wellington Rd. has been torn up and resurfaced last year and this year — yes, the same section — but no bike lanes.

Andre Vanhoucke  
London

#### Calling on Sun Media to oppose gas companies

Regarding the letter *Gas prices a mystery* (Aug. 22).

The price of oil in February was indeed lower than \$103 a barrel, in fact on Feb. 16 it was only \$94.99 and gas was selling at \$1.14 a litre.

Today, oil is about \$83 a barrel but we are being ripped off at \$1.27 a litre. With the Canadian dollar at about the same value as it was in February against the U.S. dollar, we are just be-

ing gouged.

Prices in the U.S. have started to drop and in Britain they have a national newspaper (the *Sun*) that has taken up the cause of the people against the oil industry — and now prices there have also started to drop.

We need the media, that is, Sun Media, to take a stand against these greedy oil companies. Only then will we see reasonable pricing.

Jim White  
London

#### Questions about gas

Can anyone explain to me why on April 12, 2010, the New York Mercantile Exchange listed a barrel of crude oil selling for \$94.87 US a barrel (\$86.16 Cdn) and the pump price for gas in London was around 99.1 cents a litre?

As of Aug. 19, 2011, the New York Mercantile Exchange listed a barrel of crude oil at \$82.26 US (\$83.51 Cdn) and our pump price in London was \$1.27 a litre.

The HST was introduced in July 2010, at which time a barrel of crude

was selling for an average of \$76 US (\$78.63 Cdn). That equates to a 9% drop in the price of a barrel of oil between April 2010 and July 2010. This drop in price should more than cover the 7% additional cost per litre added to gas by the introduction of the HST, yet the price per litre of gas in July 2010 shot up to \$1.03.

Neither currency fluctuations nor tax increases can account for this difference. It is difficult to determine the role refinery closings play in the high cost of gas. However, I can find only a single refinery closure listed since 2005 — and that was in Montreal. Draw your own conclusions.

Allan Finley  
London

#### Plenty of replacements if police leave London

Regarding the article *Police aren't garbage men: Association* (Aug. 22).

It always makes me chuckle when the police or firefighters say they are worried if there is too great a difference in wages, people will migrate to

other jurisdictions. It makes it sound as though there won't be any replacements to fill those positions. Quite a comical proposition, wouldn't you say?

Denis McCully  
London

#### Tornado facts wrong

The article *Some of the area's worst and most memorable twisters* contains a factual error in the part about the May 23, 1953, tornado that hit Sarnia and other locations. There were no deaths in Sarnia.

For verification, please refer to <http://www.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/obj/irc/doc/pubs/tr/tr111/tr111.pdf>

Wm. L. Knight  
Sarnia



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**TORNADO WARNING:** Three days after Goderich's pounding, black skies, high winds and unconfirmed reports of funnel cloud touchdowns keep residents on edge

# Twister fear grips area

JONATHAN SHER  
The London Free Press

A spate of tornado warnings and sightings left the London region on edge Wednesday night mere days after a killer twister ravaged historic Goderich.

On what turned out to be a wild night, four tornadoes reportedly touched down, none packing the

punch of the deadly storm that ravaged the Huron County town on Sunday.

Just the threat of a repeat stoked anxiety levels for much of the evening, leaving at least one resident in Goderich cowering in his basement as thunderstorms lashed the area and skies turned midnight black hours early.

Witnesses said they saw four

tornadoes touch ground — near Wyoming, Kettle Point, Parkhill and Lucknow. Those reports will be investigated Thursday by Environment Canada.

There were no confirmed reports of damage or injuries in the London region.

The high winds and dark skies left residents wary, even scared, in Goderich, where a category

F3 tornado tore up that town's historic Courthouse Square Sunday, injuring many and killing one.

"It was pretty tense," Goderich Mayor Deb Shewfelt said.

A tornado warning for an area including Goderich was issued at about 6:30 p.m.

see **WARNING** | Page A3

### ON PAGE A3

- 485 workers idled indefinitely at Sifto Salt
- Chip Martin weighs emotional toll of twister
- Ontarians rally to help and how you can, too

### JACK LAYTON 1950 - 2011

A last chance to say goodbye before Saturday's state funeral | Page B1



ANDRE FORGET QMI Agency

Olivia Chow, widow of former NDP Leader Jack Layton, pauses before his casket as he lies in state in the foyer of the House of Commons on Parliament Hill in Ottawa Wednesday.

**OLG SLOTS:** Changes by the province will cost racetracks and municipalities millions

# New rules make slots revenue drop safe bet

CHIP MARTIN  
The London Free Press

Ontario municipalities and raceways — London and Western Fair among them — stand to lose millions in slot-machine revenue next year because of a change in the province's accounting system.

The move to international accounting standards mandated by the Ontario government will

generate less revenue for the province's 16 raceways and municipalities.

Under a 12-year-old agreement between municipalities and the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Commission, host municipalities receive 5% of gross revenue from slot machines.

In London last year, that

amounted to \$3.8 million and in Sarnia, \$1.5 million.

Under a separate deal with raceways, more millions go to them — for Western Fair, \$10.3 million in its last fiscal year.

But beginning Jan. 1, a new accounting system will be imposed that will reduce the calculation of gross

revenue, from "general accounting principles" to International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

"We want to find a way to make that 5% whole again," Sarnia Mayor Mike Bradley said Wednesday.

The new system deducts customer vouchers from calculation of net winnings for the first time.

For London, it means a cut of about \$105,000 a year; for Sar-

nia, \$46,000; and for Western Fair Raceway and its horse racing partners, \$250,000 to \$270,000 each.

Widespread concern about reduced slots revenue, which has been declining because of competition from online gaming, for instance, prompted a first meeting between the OLG and municipalities Wednesday since the revenue-splitting deal was struck 12 years ago.

see **SLOTS** | Page A10

**INSIDE** Ask Amy C10 Classifieds B5-7 Deaths/Births/Personals B4, 5 Lottery Check A2  
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# The long road back

Days after Goderich and area was hit by a devastating tornado, its impact deepens as Sifto workers face indefinite loss of their livelihoods, and our columnist weighs in on the emotional toll of the destruction

## THE IDLED WORKERS

At the town's largest employer, Sifto, 485 people are suddenly — and indefinitely — out of work

DALE CARRUTHERS  
The London Free Press

GODERICH — Dave Brown would normally be working more than 500 metres below Lake Huron in the Sifto Salt mine on a weekday afternoon.

Instead, the father of two was helping neighbours remove fallen tree limbs and other debris from their yards Wednesday.

Brown is one of about 485 Sifto workers out of a job indefinitely after Sunday's tornado badly damaged the company salt mine and nearby evaporator plant in Goderich.

With no idea when they'll return to work or where the next paycheque will come from, some Sifto employees are getting nervous.

"If you don't have a regular paycheque, it's always concerning," said Brown, who has worked in the mine five years.

The Goderich mine is the world's largest underground rock-salt mine — and the town's largest employer.

Sifto workers face a double whammy: They can't file for employment insurance because they aren't able to get the necessary documents from their battered workplaces. Even if they had the documents, government offices aren't open in Goderich.

A few kilometres away at the Sifto Salt evaporating plant, a steady stream of employees drove up to the plant Wednesday to survey the damage.

Brian Prouse, vice-president of the plant's union, CEP Local 37-0, is getting calls from his fellow union members, but he doesn't have any answers for them.

"We just don't know anything yet," Prouse said.

A few workers at the top of the seniority list were called in to help with the cleanup, but the rest of the plant's 75 employees remain in limbo, unsure when they'll return to work.

"I can't send anybody in unless the place is safe," Prouse said.

It's unknown when the mine and evaporator will reopen, said Kelly Barton, a spokesperson for Compass Minerals, the Kansas-based company that owns Sifto Canada.

"Right now we're still trying to figure out how soon we can bring people back," said Barton. "The goal is as soon as possible, but not at the expense of bringing people into an unsafe environment."

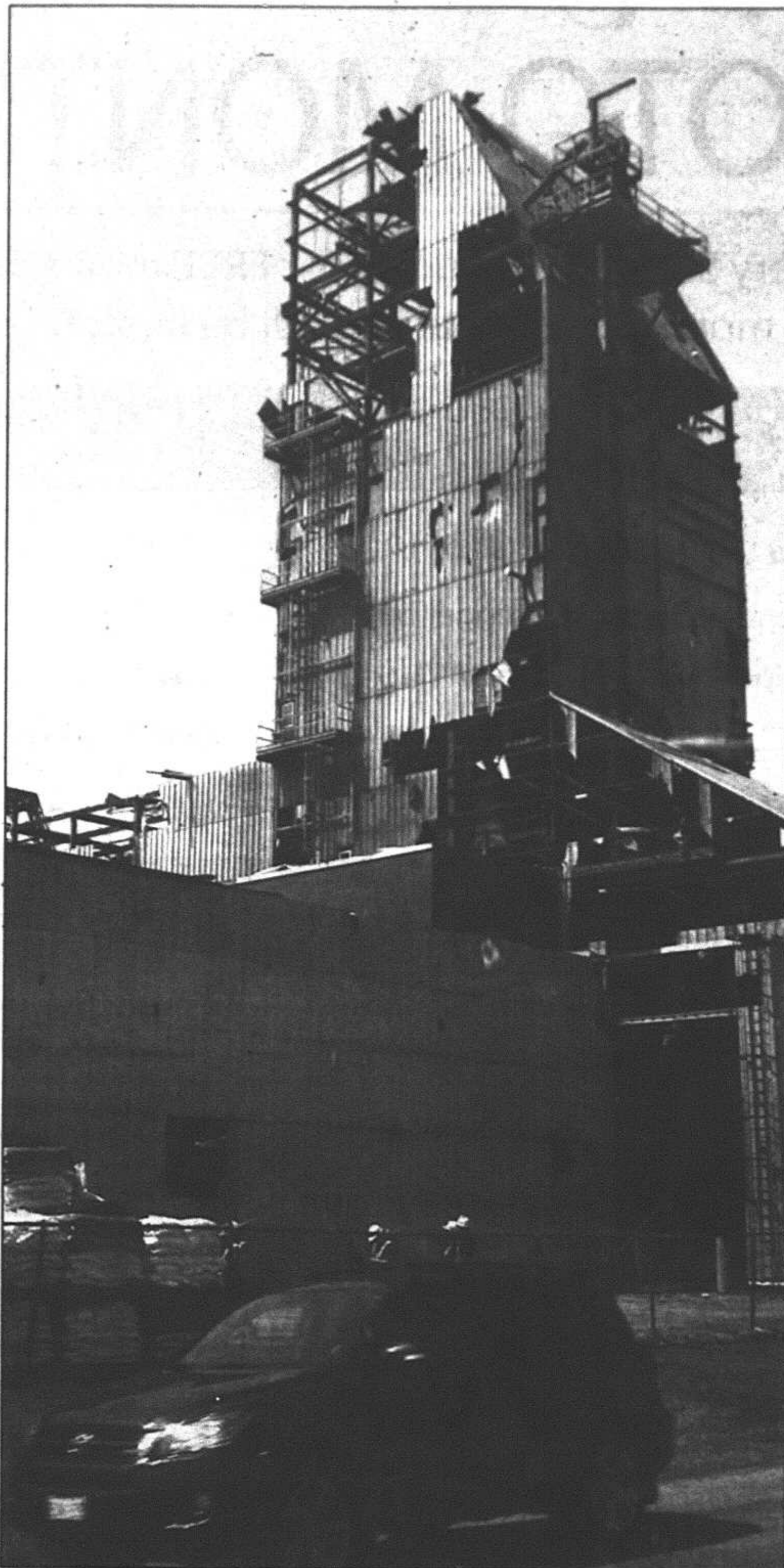
The company is setting up a hotline to update employees, Barton added.

The salt mine was the first structure in Goderich hit by Sunday's F3-strength tornado.

Sifto worker Normand Laberge, 61, was killed in the storm. The 31-year employee was in a tower supervising the loading of salt on to a ship when the tornado hit.

Goderich Mayor Deb Shewfelt is concerned about when the town's largest employer will recall its workers.

"It's a big hit," he said.  
dale.carruthers@sunmedia.ca



Seventy-five workers are out of work at Sifto Salt's evaporator plant, which shows the scars of Sunday's tornado. Another 410 were idle at the badly damaged Sifto Salt mine — the town's largest employer — where one person died when the plant became the first structure in Goderich hit by the twister.

## THE RECOVERY

Ontarians rally behind battered community

The London Free Press

Help continues to flow to tornado-torn Goderich as Ontarians show their concern for the pretty town's people and its buildings.

Melinda Martin, answering phones at the United Way Perth-Huron office, said calls offering donations of money and labour have been steady. "It's been busy and that's great."

The agency has set up ways to help by phone, text and online (see below for details) and is one co-ordinator of some of the aid that's being sought and offered.

What's not needed now, town officials say, are donations of water or food.

Joining a small volunteer and paid crew of people helping clean up trees and rubble are those helping with donations and shelter.

The province has pledged \$5 million for rebuilding efforts.

Several groups, companies and non-profits have also offered money: TD Canada Trust, Scotia-Bank, CIBC and RBC banks have each donated \$20,000 for emergency relief.

Home Depot and Lowes provided trailer-loads of home-repair supplies.

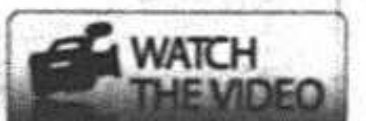
Samaritan's Purse, the Christian international relief organization best known for its Christmas shoebox program, has sent disaster relief units to Goderich.

### How you can help

- Call the United Way at 1-877-818-8867 or go to [unitedwayperth-huron.ca](http://unitedwayperth-huron.ca) and follow the links
- Text UCARE to 45768 on cell-phone to donate \$5
- Dial 211 (where that service exists) or 1-866-743-7818 to give.
- Call 1-800-SAL-ARMY (1-800-725-2769) to help through the Salvation Army
- Go to [redcross.ca](http://redcross.ca) to donate through the Canadian Red Cross
- Go online to [arconserve.ca](http://arconserve.ca) to donate specifically to repair damaged heritage buildings.



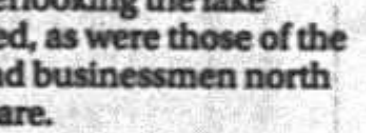
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ONLINE UPDATES

## WARNING

Front stretched as far as Illinois

FROM PAGE A1

One terrified Goderich resident said he fled to his basement about 7 p.m., fearing another twister.

There were additional reports of funnel clouds and areas of rotation near Ilderton and Granon moving toward St. Marys, Thorndale and Woodstock.

Golf ball-sized hail fell and high wind swept through the region, part of a large storm front that stretched as far as Illinois.

The storm came three days after a deadly twister hit Goderich.

With lots of volunteers working outside to clean up Goderich, the town set up an emergency shelter in the basement of the Maitland Recreation Centre to accommodate the workers in case of another tornado.

"It was not used, but it was ready," Shewfelt said.

Sunday's twister struck minutes after an official warning and

Wednesday, Environment Canada was much quicker to issue alerts, posting a tornado watch at 11 a.m. and upgrading that to a warning just after 6:30 p.m.

Environment Canada's Geoff Coulson said the Goderich recent history played a role in the early notification, but it was clear as early as Tuesday night that weather would be unstable enough that it could cause problems.

Environment Canada brought in extra staff to monitor developments, Coulson said.

He said the aim of early notification is not to scare residents but to prepare them with "a tap on the shoulder" to make sure they were near safe shelter.

[Jonathan.sher@sunmedia.ca](mailto:Jonathan.sher@sunmedia.ca)  
Twitter: JSHERatLFP  
with files from reporters Dale Carruthers and Deborah Van Breck

## THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT

Returning to feel an old friend's pain

My heart is heavy this week.

I feel like an old friend has been beaten up and left badly bruised.

The friend is Goderich, a town I know so well and where I cut my journalistic teeth for *The Free Press* in the mid-'70s as Huron bureau chief.

My friend was horribly abused by the F3 tornado that roared in from Lake Huron Sunday with so little warning, smashed into the Sifto Salt Mine and barrelled up West St. to blast Courthouse Square and thrash its way east.

It's truly a miracle only one person was killed in the town of 8,000 that touts itself as "Canada's Prettiest Town."

I was relieved to see neither of the places where I lived in Goderich was damaged.

With Randy Mawson, an Environment Canada storm investigator, I witnessed the damage up close a bit less than 24 hours after the tornado hit. Mawson has investigated many tornados, but none stronger.

He heard me gasp, time after

time, as we surveyed the scene.

Picking our way around the central square, I felt as though we were in a war zone. The destruction was widespread.

Windows were blown out of the courthouse building which also houses Huron County administration. The vertical blinds in the top-floor courtroom where I covered so many trials were moving in the gentle breeze. A window frame from up there was lying on the ground amid the destroyed trees and the collapsed bandstand/gazebo.

Around the square, many buildings had been hammered. The Esquire, the Chinese restaurant where I had enjoyed so many meals, was badly damaged as were the living quarters above where its owners lived. Vehicles and a chip wagon were upended. Others peeked out from under



Volunteers, some coming from hundreds of kilometres away, continue the cleanup in Goderich Wednesday.

ubble. A chair perched precariously in the remains of a tree.

It was like a bad dream. Winds reaching 280 km/h had smashed windows and turned bricks, wood and other debris into deadly projectiles. It's amazing only 37 people were hurt.

Defying reason, the metal-clad cupola atop the venerable Bedford Hotel escaped unscathed. And the Victorian hotel itself seemed luckier than its neighbours.

Also in apparently decent shape was the stout stone Goderich Town Hall on West St. It was one of the few structures

along that street to be spared.

A few doors away, the building my dentist used to occupy had its entire third floor exposed to the elements.

I continued as a patient of Dr. Karl Campbell long after I moved to London, partly because I liked him and partly because it gave me an excuse to return after I gave up sailing there. But he retired about a decade ago, so I found a replacement closer to home.

It was Campbell I heard from Monday evening by e-mail from Florida where he was vaca-

tioning. He said he had just seen my tornado story on [lfp.com](http://lfp.com) and said he was glad to see I was back in town, albeit briefly.

"It is very sad to see the photographs," Campbell wrote. "I do not know if my old office was damaged or not. Your old dentist on West St."

I had to let him know the old building was heavily damaged and might not survive. He was lucky. His home on Airport Rd. escaped damage.

I was struck by how just a few blocks from the path of destruction everything seemed

relatively normal. The fine homes overlooking the lake were spared, as were those of the lawyers and businessmen north of the Square.

And I felt terrible for Deb Shewfelt, the town mayor I have known for more than 30 years and who was deeply hurt at what had happened to his beloved Goderich.

But Deb was resolute at a news conference that drew media from across the province and Premier Dalton McGuinty with a promise of \$5 million in emergency help.

"We will recover," Shewfelt vowed, repeating, "we will recover."

In recent years, Goderich lost its road grader-making company, once its largest employer. And it took a beating in a 1995 tornado. Yet it has endured.

Its beauty has received a setback, for sure. Buildings in Goderich will be fixed, rebuilt and replaced as necessary. Trees will take a bit longer to reassert themselves.

There is no doubt the town will rebound. Adversity brings communities together and there has been no shortage of people willing to pitch in and help Goderich get back on its feet.

I know Goderich. I know the people. I know Shewfelt. Goderich will recover. That helps lift my heavy heart.

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# Defiant Gadhafi eludes dragnet

The enemy is delusional, slippery strongman insists as rebels step up manhunt seeking quick end to civil war. Page B1



FILIPPO MONTEFORTE Agence France Presse

PROUDLY PRINTED IN LONDON, ONTARIO



Friday, August 26, 2011

# The London Free Press

WOMAN INJURED: 19-year-old patio patron hit as argument between two men ends in gunplay

## Second shooting rocks core

ADELA TALBOT  
AND JONATHAN SHER  
The London Free Press

She settled down for a drink in a Richmond Row bar unaware of mayhem brewing in the alley below.

Maybe the 19-year-old took notice of the argument just beyond the smoking patio, or maybe not, but whatever her awareness, she was jolted into its outcome by the piercing of a bullet.

Her name, for now, remains secret; police wouldn't disclose it Thursday, only saying her injuries weren't life-threatening.

Also murky is what precisely happened about 1:30 a.m. Thursday. Police later combed the alley north of Jack's for clues.

Regardless of how it happened, the shooting was the fourth in the city in recent months and the second downtown in a week, leaving some residents and business owners rattled about the safety of the core.

There were conflicting accounts at the scene of what sort of weapon was fired and whether the projectiles were bullets or bb-pellets, but police believe they have an answer.

"Our belief at this time is this a handgun that is unlikely to be a pellet gun," Deputy Police Chief Ian Peer wrote to *The Free Press*.

Police say there was an argument between two or more men when one of them, standing outside Jack's, fired multiple shots.

see SHOOTING | Page A6

There's more coverage at  
**lfp.com**



MORE: Stay on top of this story at **lfp.com**



MORRIS LAMONT The London Free Press  
Police forensic investigators probe an alley beside a patio where a 19-year-old woman was shot at Richmond and Kent streets early Thursday morning.



WICKED WEATHER: Jittery Southern Ontario cleans up after Wednesday's severe storms

## 'Awful swirling in the skies'

MASHOKA MAIMONA  
The London Free Press

Tom Kroesbergen had to cut a cottage trip short and return home to his farm early Thursday morning after a sinking call from an employee.

His farm, south of Ailsa Craig, looked like a tornado had crisscrossed through his corn fields before lifting his entire storage barn, snapping it and scattering debris across power lines and a neighbour's field.

"The crops took a lot of hail damage," said a shaken Kroesbergen, walking through a swath cut into his corn field.

His property took \$500,000 in structural damage alone.

ON PAGE A3



■ Calls for new tourism vision as Goderich rebuilds  
■ Owners get first look at damaged businesses  
■ Injury a reminder of hazards of recovery effort

There were dozens of significant storm cells across Southern Ontario Wednesday — as far west as Windsor, through London, and to Lake Ontario, said Geoff Coulson of Environment Canada.

In the wake of the deadly tornado that hammered Goderich on Sunday, residents like Kroesbergen, in neighbouring Middlesex County, are reeling from severe weather that sliced through power lines and flattened fields Wednesday night.

Environment Canada is following up on damage reports, but has yet to confirm whether tornadoes raced through northwestern Middlesex County.

see STORM | Page A3

LANGUAGE: Dictionary adds 'cougar,' 'bromance,' 148 more  
If you love new words, you're in for a 'tweet'

MOLLY O'TOOLE  
Reuters

WASHINGTON — Crowdsourcing tweeters bonding in bromance and tracking cougars won an official place in the English lexicon Thursday when Merriam-Webster announced it's adding 150 words to its 2011 Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.



"obtaining information from a large group of people who contribute online," joins pop culture-informed words like "bromance" — a "close, nonsexual friendship between men" and a new definition of "cougar" — a "middle-aged woman seeking a romantic relationship with a younger man."

see WORDS | Page A7

The kind of cougar Courtney Cox plays on TV's *Cougar Town* has Merriam-Webster's OK.

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twisteringoderich

# Starting to look ahead

As Goderich continues to clean up after Sunday's killer tornado, there are calls for a new vision for tourism, a reminder of the dangers of recovery work and a warning of dark days ahead as the storm's impact sinks in

## THE OPPORTUNITY

### Groundswell of support could reshape tourism

JOE BELANGER  
The London Free Press

The devastation and destruction wreaked on Goderich by last Sunday's tornado could be an "opportunity" to not only rebuild but "to craft a new vision" for the town's tourism sector, says a tourism expert.

David Peacock, executive director of the Regional Tourist Organization, which stretches from Waterloo to the Lake Huron shoreline, said Thursday Goderich "could become Canada's Williamsburg," referring to Williamsburg, Va., which is at the centre of what's known as the Historic Triangle of Virginia (along with

Jamestown and Yorktown, one of the world's most popular tourist destinations).

"Goderich is really a unique place and there's been a great deal of work done to preserve the built and natural heritage," said Peacock. "If we can create a groundswell of groups, individuals, business and government and get them all working together and putting their resources into it, we can do this. The ideal situation would be to align all these interests. Yes, it's a horrible thing that's happened, but we can't overlook the opportunity."

Goderich's heritage is a major contributor to the region's economy and tourism, estimated at hundreds of millions of dollars

annually, although exact figures aren't available, Peacock said.

Tom Jasper, former BIA chief and well-known businessperson in Goderich, said there's a huge concern about the city's built heritage.

"I think the general feeling here is that heritage sells, but there is no doubt finances will be an issue," said Jasper, appointed to a disaster relief committee that will dole out government and other relief money.

"We're going to need huge amounts of money. What if an insurance company will only cover \$500,000 for a property but the restoration is going to cost \$800,000? Where is the \$300,000 going to come from?"

Jasper said "phones are ringing off the hook at city hall" with offers of help and donations.

But Jasper said it isn't just about heritage, it's about the jobs that depend on heritage, especially those employed by businesses around historic Courthouse Square, which bore the brunt of the F3 tornado's destruction.

Jasper said the other fear is that insurers, property and business owners will want to settle quickly, leading to unnecessary demolitions that might be expedient and less costly. He'd like to see an effort made to slow decisions until experts can evaluate the damage to historic buildings.

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## THE RISKS

### Volunteer's bid to help lands him in hospital

MASHOKA MAIMONA  
The London Free Press

When Doug Webster called his fishing buddy Art McIntyre with news of a town uprooted from its core by a deadly twister, McIntyre's shock was fleeting — and his reaction was determined.

"Doug, we're heading to Goderich. Tomorrow morning," McIntyre said.

And head to Goderich he did. But the good Samaritan would soon be back in London — in a hospital bed after being flung from a tree.

McIntyre, a machinist at Briardco Fixture & Gauge Inc. in Windsor, left at 6 a.m. after an F3 tornado levelled Goderich's core, crippling the community.

"He (McIntyre) wanted to help out the community doing whatever he could. And what Art likes doing is clearing trees," Webster said.

"All of his neighbours go to him whenever a bad storm takes out their tree. And he's always there with his chainsaws.

McIntyre has been chopping away and removing trees as a hobby ever since the Londoner can remember.

McIntyre messaged his boss he wouldn't be in for the next couple of days and took off.

**It was as if he was catapulted. He flew through the air about 20 to 25 feet before landing — hard.**

Doug Webster recalls how pal Art McIntyre was injured

His wife, Donna McIntyre, could only shake her head at her husband's characteristic obstinance and he shrugged off her last words that Monday morning: "Just be safe."

McIntyre, 49, met up with his longtime friend Webster, of London, at a mutual friend's upended trailer near the Falls Reserve Conservation Area on the Maitland River.

"I thought it would be a couple hours of clearing up and we'd be on our way," said Webster.

The sight that met them was the heart of a jungle "war zone."

McIntyre automatically pulled out his chainsaw and started chipping away at the fallen trees.

Webster watched, as if in slow motion, as McIntyre stood on the upper limbs of a horizontal tree, sawing at the thicket of branches and leaves, when the entire tree — its roots still anchored to the earth — snapped back to a vertical position.

"It was as if he was catapulted. He flew through the air about 20 to 25 feet before landing — hard," said Webster.

Webster followed the paramedics as they took McIntyre to the Alexandra Marine and General Hospital in Goderich.

He was flown to London's Victoria Hospital. His pelvis was dislocated. His tailbone and right wrist were fractured.

"At first I thought he had injured himself because of his own mistake," said McIntyre's youngest daughter, Samantha Merkestyn, 22, outside her father's critical care bed in London.

"It was like a big rush of fear when I found out what happened."

Donna McIntyre listened to Webster's voice mail several times before his words sunk in.

The doctors said McIntyre's recovery will take at least six months, Webster said.

"Art would like to be anywhere but on his back right now, but at least he's not paralysed. Or worse," said McIntyre's tired, but relieved wife, waiting for her husband to go into surgery.

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## THE DELAYED REACTION

### Stunned residents are being allowed back into their businesses

MacEwan Egner steps gingerly into his law office for the first time since Sunday's devastating tornado, slowly looking around.

"There are no cracks in the ceilings," declares his wife, Carol, who's already checking out another room. "And that's just wonderful!"

Indeed, here in the darkened interior of this old building on Montreal St., just beside the town's central square, there's little evidence of damage — mainly just shards of glass and brick scattered on the main floor below a broken window that looks, for all the world, as if some mischievous kid hurled a softball through it.

But take a step out the front door, and the scene is wholly different: There, not more than a stone's throw away, are the remains of the Coffee Culture shop.

The word "remains" is no exaggeration. To use a phrase I hear again and again on this Thursday afternoon, the building looks "like a bomb hit it."

This short visit by the Egeners — authorities have permitted them to enter the law office for a maximum of two hours, between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. — is their first chance to take stock of things.



Ian Gillespie  
IN GODERICH

#### OPINION

And, for Carol, it's the first time she's visited the building where she experienced Sunday's F3 tornado.

"It was awful," she recalls. "You heard the hail and the rain and the wind, and then the noise. We had a storm like that in 1995, so the noise is quite recognizable. It's the same noise — like a train going through your head."

Carol was upstairs when the storm hit the building. "By the time I got down these stairs, the windows were breaking," she says. "And when I opened the door — that's what I saw across the street."

Can she recall what she thought when she first laid eyes on the demolished coffee shop?

"You know something, I don't remember," she says. "I remember starting to sweep up the glass a little bit, and then thinking 'Well, this is silly.'"

Four days after the tornado, Goderich seems to be holding its collective breath. Although



Photos by IAN GILLESPIE The London Free Press

Lawyer MacEwan Egner entered his downtown Goderich office, above, for the first time Thursday since Sunday's tornado. It escaped serious damage, but the Coffee Culture eatery, below left, was not so lucky.

work crews are everywhere — repairing hydro lines and hauling tree trunks and branches to a makeshift dump near the Sifto Salt evaporator plant — there's still a tangible sense of disbelief in evidence.

"I think people are rushing around, still on adrenaline," says Gord Garland, whose Essex St. home and antique shop was relatively untouched by the winds. "But I think there's going to be a great depression when the extent of the damage sinks in."

Garland, who once worked on a Royal Commission team examining the future of

Toronto's waterfront, says he's deeply concerned the loss of so many old-growth trees will compromise the town's ability to absorb ground water, and lead to serious shoreline erosion.

"With the loss of the treescape," he says, "it's almost like the town has been made naked."

Local authorities have planned a "public meeting and community-support forum" on Saturday at 10:30 a.m. in the Goderich Memorial Arena. A notice being circulated by hand downtown says Union Gas service representatives are working

to restore gas service, hydro is being slowly restored and "it is expected that 90-95% of the town will have power by the end of this week." The notice adds garbage and recycling collection will resume Aug. 31.

Spoiled food may be taken to dumpsters at the public works building at 361 Cambridge St., while help and support (including food and information) is available at the Knights of Columbus Centre at 411 Parsons Court.

Ian Gillespie is  
The Free Press city columnist  
ian.gillespie@sunmedia.ca



## STORM

### 'It was definitely a tornado. Nothing else can do that,' resident says

FROM PAGE A1

"It was definitely a tornado. Nothing else can do that," said Chris Archambault, pointing to the torn roof on his house near Ailsa Craig, the roots of a 15-metre-high tree, the trunk nowhere to be found, and his untouched, spotless car.

Jack Murray, 68, who works at Shady Pines Campgrounds just on the outskirts of Nairn, north of London, said, "There was an awful swirling in the skies, then a sound like an old freight train. It lasted all of about 20 seconds."

"One second all the trees are upright, the next second they've fallen to the ground."

"I've never been so scared in my life," said Marilyn McLeod, a London resident who frequents the park. "For a couple minutes there, I was definitely thinking: It's Goderich."

Kelly Jones, who works at a

diner in Nairn, snapped photos of a funnel cloud around 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

"The sky was a bright purple, absolutely beautiful. There were three funnel clouds coming from three different directions."

There were no reports of injuries in the London region.

While the Goderich twister hit the coast directly on the heels of an official warning on Sunday, Environment Canada was much quicker to issue alerts Wednesday, posting a tornado watch at 11 a.m. and upgrading that to a warning just after 6:30 p.m.

The tornado watch was issued for Goderich around 2 p.m. on Sunday, changing to a more sinister warning at closer to 4 p.m.

"We've been using the last few days to educate the public on the differences between watches and warnings. A watch is a heads-up, and a segue into a warning is a



CRAIG GLOVER The London Free Press

Tom Kroesberger stands in front of what remains of the storm-shattered barn at his farm near Nairn on Thursday. Funnel clouds were seen in the area Wednesday but Environment Canada has yet to confirm whether a tornado is responsible for damage to buildings and downed trees across the area.

tap on the shoulder — the lead time can be short," Coulson said.

Environment Canada sent out a damage survey team between Cambridge and Burlington, an area with significant tree damage on Wednesday, but hasn't yet dispatched a team to Middlesex County.

"We're still in the process of determining where the damage occurred," said Coulson, adding that a team would be sent to the London area to assess the storm aftermath and determine — officially — whether tornadoes ripped through the farms.

Volunteer weather watchers with severe weather photos, anything from funnel clouds to strong winds, can e-mail Environment Canada at storm.ontario@ec.gc.ca.

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# twisteringoderich



Save for the town's historic courthouse, Goderich's beautiful core was devastated by Sunday's F3 tornado.

Goderich Signal Star

## Goderich courts, lawyers look for temporary home

JANE SIMS  
The London Free Press

Not even a massive tornado can stop the wheels of justice in Huron County.

The iconic Goderich courthouse in the centre of the square was damaged in last week's storm that demolished much of the town's core.

The windows were blown out, but it appears the grey cement structure — built in 1959 just before the infamous Steven Truscott murder trial — should survive.

Huron County Crown attorney Robert Morris said both the Ministry of Labour and the Environment Ministry were checking the building for structural and possible asbestos issues.

Word has come back that the structure is sound, but it won't be until Christmas that the building is open for business both for the court and Huron County.

In the meantime, Ontario Attorney-General Chris Bentley said Ontario Court matters were moved to the Walkerton courts this week where Huron County staff held bail hearings and other proceedings.

"We're actively working with the justice participants to try to find a location for the Superior Court of Justice matters," Bentley said.

"If we can get the Ontario Court matters there, too, that would be great."

Morris said they need space for justice offices and three courtrooms.

Other sources said the hope is to get cases going in the county in two weeks.

Two of the town's law firms also are in need of space. One of them, The Ross firm, renovated a century building on the square and moved in April.

One of the firm's lawyers, Scott Cowan, said the firm's old East St. office was destroyed. The new location would have been fine but rains Tuesday and Wednesday damaged the walls and restored floors before they were allowed back to the building.

"We have an uncertain future in that space," he said. Both Morris and Cowan lamented the loss of what can't be replaced — the century-old trees that made the courthouse and surrounding park so beautiful and serene.

And Morris said he could see from the street the smashed windows of his office.

It's a space he won't get a chance to use again. Morris is retiring at the end of October after serving as Huron County Crown since 1985.

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## Friends rally to town's aid

JOE BELANGER  
The London Free Press

Several organizations and individuals are setting up fundraising drives to help Goderich rebuild.

The relief effort continues to focus on the needs of displaced residents and securing and assessing buildings damaged by the F3 tornado that hammered the town of 8,000 last Sunday.

Major heritage organizations, including the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, are accepting donations to help.

As well, the conservancy is trying to put together a team of experts to assess the damage and identify heritage buildings that can be saved.

Local heritage enthusiast Paul Carroll said he and others are working to raise money and help with the rebuild of not just heritage properties but those in low-income areas where the devastation was just as bad.

At least 30 and possibly more than 50 homes along Regent, Oxford, Maitland and Cambridge streets were destroyed or severely damaged.

"We want it clearly understood the homes and people in those areas are just as important to our cultural and heritage fabric as those in the established, elegant Victorian homes that were damaged," Carroll said.

He's aware of at least one homeowner who had no insurance. "These people have to be looked after, too."

Former Seaforth resident Mary McCall and her husband John MacBain, who live in Geneva, Switzerland, have pledged a donation from the McCall MacBain Foundation.

The couple is donating \$100,000 to an approved organization to be followed by \$200,000 that will be matched by cash donations.

The goal is to create a fund of at least \$500,000 that will be used

to restore heritage buildings and the natural environment in Goderich.

"Both my husband John and I want to provide some assistance in this time of great need in Goderich... I am particularly fond of Goderich, and I treasure its wonderful Western Ontario heritage," McCall said in a statement.

Carroll, Mark Hussey and Randolph Lobb also are working to shore up the town's cultural heritage.

Lobb said plans are underway to make a documentary about the tornado damage and the rebuilding effort, which they hope will be a catalyst to raise money.

As well, Hussey is trying to organize music events, such as benefit concerts, to raise money for the relief effort and rebuild.

Goderich's sister city in the United States, Bay City, Mich., has launched a fundraising effort, the Salvation Army said. The army is providing about 1,500 meals a day in the relief effort.

### How you can help

■ Call the United Way at 1-877-818-8867 or go to [unitedwayperth-huron.ca](http://unitedwayperth-huron.ca) and follow the links

■ Text UCARE to 45768 on cell-phone to donate \$5

■ Dial 211 (where that service exists) or 1-866-743-7818 to give.

■ Call 1-800-725-2769 to help through the Salvation Army

■ Go to [redcross.cato](http://redcross.cato) donate through the Canadian Red Cross

■ Go online to [arconserv.cato](http://arconserv.cato) donate specifically to repair damaged heritage buildings.

"The Salvation Army is committed to providing any support we can during these very difficult circumstances," said Perron Goodyear, divisional director of emergency and disaster services for the Ontario Great Lakes Division.

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### BLUESFEST CANCELLED

Organizers of the Taste of Huron and West Coast Bluesfest say events scheduled for Labour Day weekend are cancelled.

West Coast Bluesfest tickets, including the Locavore Brunch N' Blues on Sept. 4, can't be refunded but the tickets will be honoured at future events, said Jenna Ujije, tourism marketer for Huron County. Organizers of Taste of Huron and Bluesfest are organizing Tornado Aid 2011, Ujije said. The event will raise money for the Goderich tornado relief fund set up by the United Way of Perth-Huron. Anyone interested in helping or making a contribution is asked to contact Ujije by e-mail at [goderichtornoadid@gmail.com](mailto:goderichtornoadid@gmail.com) or call 519-440-2673.

### NO GAWKERS, PLEASE!

Huron OPP reopened Hwy. 8 through Goderich at 11 p.m. Thursday. The road had been closed since Sunday. Police are asking motorists not to slow down or stop to look at tornado damage. Some local streets remain closed and drivers travelling on closed roads will be charged, police said.

### CHARGES WAIVED ON ATMS

TD Canada Trust will have an information tent at the Sun Coast Mall to answer questions about mortgage payments, loans and other banking concerns. The bank is also offering a free shuttle to the Seaforth branch weekdays 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. TD customers using ATMs in Goderich of other banks will have charges waived.

## Relief committee has to say 'no'

DALE CARRUTHERS  
The London Free Press

Seven members of the Goderich community will have the difficult task of deciding who qualifies for relief funding and who gets nothing.

Appointed by town council, the seven-member disaster relief committee will reimburse homeowners and business owners who had property damaged by the F3 tornado that swept through the Lake Huron community.

"They're going to be facing some tough decisions," said town treasurer Judy Kay. "They're going to have to be able to say 'no'."

Members of the committee, who will be inaugurated Tuesday, were selected based on expertise, experience and community

### Disaster relief committee

- Tom Jasper
- Jane Dawson
- Peter Shephard
- Doran Love
- Duncan Jewell
- Mary Beth Alexander
- (One more person to be added)

involvement.

"You want a mix of people that have a strong business sense, that understand funding, that have some fundraising capability," Kay said.

The committee members include Tom Jasper, Jane Dawson, Peter Shephard, Doran Love, Duncan Jewell and Mary Beth

Alexander. One person is still to be appointed.

The \$5 million pledged by Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty will act as seed money for the relief fund, but more money is needed, officials say.

Council passed resolutions last week aimed at getting the province to declare Goderich a disaster area, which would allow the town to tap into much-needed disaster relief funding.

Mayor Deb Shewfelt said the committee has a big responsibility. "We want to make sure we service the people who really took the loss," he said.

Tom Jasper, a retired dentist and former chair of the Goderich BIA, didn't hesitate when asked to agree to the time-consuming, voluntary gig.

"I don't think that there's a soul

in Goderich that when asked to do something doesn't say 'yes,'" Jasper said.

The committee is also responsible for fundraising.

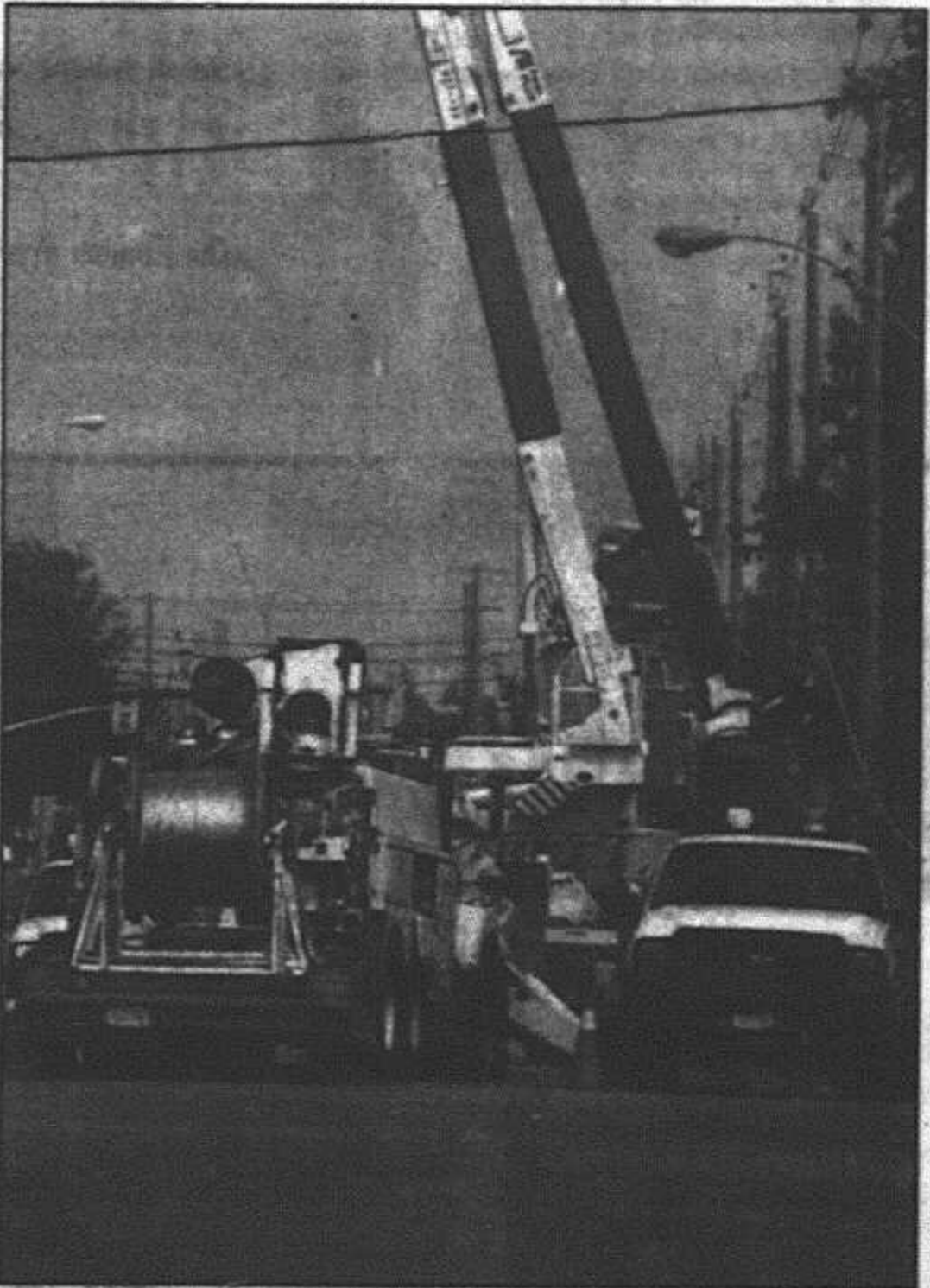
"I'm a very compassionate person by nature... I'll be lobbying to get as much money out to everybody as feasible," Jasper said.

In a town of about 8,000, where everyone knows everyone, there's always the possibility of personal relationships influencing decisions. To safeguard against this, committee members won't know the names of applicants.

"We'll only know them by number," Jaspers said.

All meetings of the committee will be open to the public.

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Goderich Signal Star

Hydro crews continue to work on restoring power in Goderich on Friday.

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## localnews

■ **GODERICH:** Tornado caused extensive damage to surface buildings

# Sifto plans mine repairs

DAVE SYKES  
QMI Agency

GODERICH — Compass Minerals of Kansas City is "absolutely re-committed" to the reconstruction and continued operation of the Sifto Salt Mine, extensively damaged in the Aug. 21 tornado, the company says.

"We are rebuilding and we know how important Sifto is to the town," said Rowland Howe, former mine manager and Compass Minerals' country executive for Canada and director of corporate engineering. "We've got people going underground doing inspections and the mine was not harmed. Surface damage is huge but we are surprised by what we have left."

“Surface damage is huge but we are surprised by what we have left.”

Rowland Howe  
Compass Minerals

Hydro poles are down and being replaced in the area and a transformer station lost in the storm is being reconstructed.

"Absolutely we are committed to reconstruction. Compass Minerals is totally dedicated to get the mine going again," he said. "Salt will be moving sooner than later. We have to restore power and boat loading capacity."

As of Monday morning, some employees were at the mine "to assess damage and clean up" said Compass spokesperson Kelly Barton.

"We had about 49 employees at the mine site and another 27 will be at the evaporator plant," she said. "There is electricity to the evaporator plant and there are generators at the mine to bring power to the shaft and pumping system."

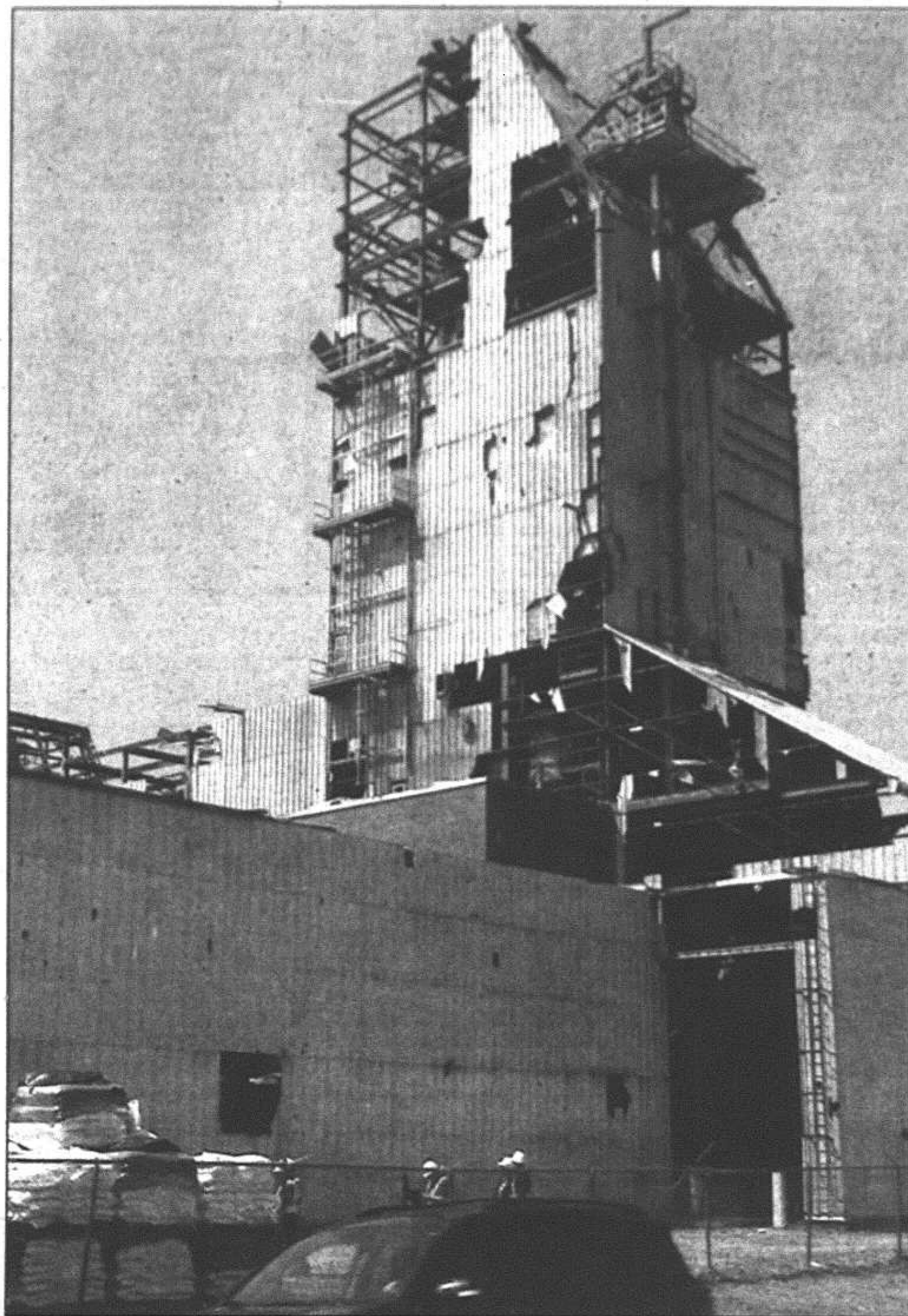
"The goal is to bring people back as soon as possible but not at the expense of bringing them into an unsafe environment."

About 485 people work at the Sifto Mine and evaporator plant.

The salt mine was the first structure in Goderich hit by the F3 tornado.

Mine worker Norman Laberge, 61, of the Lucknow area, was killed in the storm. The 31-year employee was in a loading boom when the storm hit the waterfront.

"Let us not forget about Norman and the absolute tragic



The Aug. 21 tornado caused extensive damage to the surface buildings of the Sifto salt mine.

event in which he lost his life. The storm came on so fast that there was little time to react," Howe said. "He was in the loading boom over the boat on Sunday and other employees were in the area but in more secure positions. He's a symbol of what's happened in Goderich."

The company has set up two phone lines for employees to call for information. The numbers are 1-877-766-1823 for the mine and 1-877-893-0897 for the evaporator plant.

Information is also available on the company websites: [goderich-mine.ca](http://goderich-mine.ca) and [goderichplant.ca](http://goderichplant.ca)

Compass Minerals has made donations to the Salvation Army and established an employee relief fund with matching funds to help employees and their families.

Goderich Signal-Star

Free press file photo

■ **TECHNOLOGY:** Facility expects to be up and running by 2013

# BioAmber plant coming to Sarnia

TYLER KULA  
QMI Agency

SARNIA — A multi-million-dollar bioindustrial company is setting up shop in Sarnia.

Montreal-based BioAmber Inc. is building an \$80-million first-of-its-kind biosuccinic acid plant on part of the existing Lanxess site by 2013.

The plant will produce bio-based succinic acid, derived from corn and used to match or improve existing petrochemical products. They're then used for plastics, fragrance and cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, polymers and non-corrosive de-icers.

Initial capacity at the Sarnia plant is pegged at 17,000 tonnes a year, with plans to double that by 2014, industry and government officials said Monday at the University of Western Ontario Research Park in Sarnia.

Through its subsidiary Blue-water Chemicals, BioAmber will create, at minimum, 40 full-time jobs at the Sarnia plant, along with 150 construction jobs.

The company also plans to produce 1,4-Butanediol (BDO) on site.

"We're delighted because we are here to create more jobs," said Sandra Pupatello, Ontario Minister of Economic Development and Trade, announcing a \$15 million loan to BioAmber on Monday.

It follows a \$7.5 million federal government investment announced in July.

"This is a real collection of a whole bunch of hands in this pot to turn it and make it work," Pupatello said. "And this is a perfect story."

Sarnia was among more than 100 North American sites considered for the plant, said Mike Hartmann, BioAmber's corporate affairs vice-president, noting the company already has a 3,000 tonne-capacity plant in France.

Sarnia was the top choice, he said, because of an abundance of corn; nearby facilities that make glucose; easy access to shipping channels; strong government support; nearby colleges and universities; a skilled work force; and existing infrastructure.

"Unfortunately, Sarnia has had some issues with plants closing, but for us it's a great opportunity because it literally saves us millions of dollars in building boil-

ers, waste water treatment, (and) having electricity," Hartmann said.

BioAmber's process is cheaper than conventional petroleum-based routes, he said. It's renewable, sustainable and helps sequester CO<sub>2</sub>.

The deal is a step towards developing a bio and alternative fuel cluster in Sarnia-Lambton, said Sarnia Mayor Mike Bradley, noting the Bioindustrial Innovation Centre, the Sustainable Chemical Alliance, the Sarnia-Lambton Economic Partnership, the city, county and the private sector were all involved.

"We have several other companies we're dealing with around the same site," he said, noting Sarnia is developing a "buzz" in the renewable chemical field as a national leader.

“You are leaders in all of this, you are leading in the clean tech industries, you are leading in green energy jobs.”

Sandra Pupatello, Ontario Minister of Economic Development and Trade

Many Ontario jurisdictions have claimed titles as green energy hubs, Pupatello said, but Sarnia was there first.

"You are leaders in all of this, you are leading in the clean tech industries, you are leading in green energy jobs," she said.

It also means a brand new market for Lambton County cash crop farmers, said Ontario Federation of Agriculture representative Don McGugan.

"At the end of the day I grow a crop that is looking for a home," he said. "These guys are providing me a brand new one."

Lambton County produces about 100,000 acres of corn each year, he said.

The BioAmber project includes a deal with local labour unions to ensure it will be built without a strike, said Bradley.

Permitting work began in June and groundbreaking is expected in October. The completion target is late 2012.

Sarnia Observer

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