

## Celebrating Maple Syrup Season

By Kym Wolfe

**M**arch is maple syrup season in our region! We're lucky to live in a climate zone where maple trees thrive and the sap can be tapped, making us the envy of maple syrup lovers around the world. You don't have to travel far to enjoy the sugar shack experience, complete with tour and tasting. While outings to the sugar bush are a staple for many school children, it's an annual tradition that adults also enjoy. It's a short season — late February to mid-April — so bundle up and get out and enjoy it while you can. Most of the local sugar bushes are listed on the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers website, along with area maple festivals ([www.ontariomaple.com/maple-festivals/southwestern-ontario.html](http://www.ontariomaple.com/maple-festivals/southwestern-ontario.html)).

Here in London, The Klmsmen will be hosting their educational tours and pancake pavilion again this year at Fanshawe Conservation Area. Or you can take a short drive out of the city in any direction: north to McCully's Hill Farm near St. Marys; northwest to Fort Rose Maple Company near Parkhill or Williamson Farms near Forest; west to the McLachlan Brothers Maple Syrup & Pancake House in Komoka; south to Crinklaw's Sugar Bush near Lambeth or Palmer's Maple Syrup near Port Stanley; or east to Jakeman's Maple Farm ([www.themaplestore.com](http://www.themaplestore.com)) near Woodstock.

Crinklaw's Sugar Bush ([www.crinklaw-maplesyrup.com](http://www.crinklaw-maplesyrup.com)) is hosting their nineteenth annual maple festival in March. The land near Lambeth has been farmed by Crinklows

A classics come at Crinklaw's Sugar Bush, near Lambeth

since 1832, and Carol Crinklaw says that maple sap has always been the first crop of the year. "In the early days, it was used for barter and trade, and people knew this was the place to get their syrup." On weekend festival days, visitors can ride in a horse-drawn wagon, see how the syrup-making process has changed through the years, experience the taste of syrup on snow, then head back to the barn for a feast of pancakes,



McCully's Hill Farm, near St. Marys, offers an authentic old-fashioned maple syrup experience, with taps and buckets still used to draw the sap.

cooked up by Lambeth are a youth groups who use the opportunity to raise funds for their club activities. While many visitors are local families who have made this their annual tradition, Crinklaw has noticed an increasing number of new Canadians in recent years. "It's so much fun to give them