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SCOTT MARTIN PHOTO

NET ACTION: The Orangeville Fire Department's goalie makes a save during an annual charity hockey game between the department and Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police on March 21 at the Alder Recreation Centre. The game was well-attended with fans cheering on both teams. Tickets were sold for \$10 each, and all proceeds are being donated to the Orangeville Food Bank and Dufferin Child & Family Services. Turn to Page 9 for more photos.

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Orangeville Transit route changes trim operating costs

Written By **JAMES MATTHEWS**

Orangeville Transit ridership has grown compared to 2019 levels.

When comparing ridership from 2025 to 2019, the last year of transit prior to the COVID-19 pandemic's social limitations, ridership is up by 83 per cent or 85,802.

From 2024 to 2025, overall ridership decreased by about 23.6 per cent or 58,486 riders.

Council received a transit update at its March 23 meeting.

Councillor Joe Andrews said the fare-free service continues to be used by the community.

Orangeville Transit's operating cost in 2024-25 was about \$825,000. The service cost about \$770,000 in 2025.

"So they're a little bit lower in the operating costs partly due to the route changes," said Tim Kocialek, the town's infrastructure services general manager.

The service was scaled back from a three-route bus service to a pair of routes.

The cost per rider in 2024 was about \$3.35, and that increased to about \$4 per rider the following year, Kocialek said.

These are uncertain economic times, Andrews said. And diesel users have been

hit particularly hard at the fuel pumps. But costs will rise across the board, he said.

Orangeville Transit's free-fare rides are a benefit to residents that many other municipalities don't have, Andrews said.

Matthew Smith, a local transit advocate, asked whether the ridership numbers are available, broken down by month in 2025. And he asked if the average ridership number is available "per trip." Are the buses at full capacity, half-filled, or something like 10 per cent?

"That might factor into future bus purchases," he said. "Maybe we don't need to spend \$1.3 million on new buses when we could get something smaller that's built off a Ford F550 frame for, say, \$400,000 and it can fit 24, 18 people."

Kocialek said he will investigate to see if the town has monthly ridership information.

He said the town tried to get 30-foot buses. Two were purchased for about \$400,000 each as Smith suggested, but the company went bankrupt.

"At the time, they were the only bidder on it," Kocialek said. "The town didn't lose any money on it. We hadn't given a deposit or anything."

Orangeville and Metrolinx attempted a joint procurement of 30-foot and 40-foot

buses, he said. There were no bidders for the 30-foot option.

Kocialek said there's limited production on 30-foot buses. The 40-foot vehicles are more "solid" and of heavier frames that can withstand more kilometres.

"I don't think we have the details (of) exactly how many people are on the bus at all times," he said. "I know at our peaks, it's standing room only on some of the buses."

He said the town will consider installing passenger counters on new buses.

Coun. Rick Stevens, chairperson of the Access Orangeville committee, said he's heard from many people that the walk from some bus stops to some shopping centres is long.

Kocialek said buses haven't gone to some locations, such as the Zehrs grocery store, for four or five years. Returning to the former routes will create access difficulties and lengthen riders' trips.

Riders who were polled said they wanted a reliable service. Delays of five or 10 minutes due to traffic in some of the shopping areas would be unacceptable, he said.

"We're trying to look at some of the options to make it better," Kocialek said. "But we won't be able to go into all of the facilities with the buses, unfortunately."

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Dufferin historian launches national initiative on science literacy, Canadian space legacy

Written By **JOSHUA DRAKES**
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A new nation-wide education initiative aimed at improving science literacy and celebrating Canada's role in space exploration is set to launch on April 1, bringing together local leadership and national institutional partners in a two-year program focused on students and classrooms across Canada.

Out of This World 25 (OOTW25) is being led by Canadian Historical Education Services (CanHist), founded by local historian and educator Neil Orford, in partnership with McMaster Children & Youth University, with further support coming from the federal Ministry of Canadian Identity and Culture.

The project is also marking the 25th anniversary of Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield's historic 2001 spacewalk, and connecting that milestone to Canada's future role in space exploration, including the upcoming Artemis II mission.

"It made sense to propose to the federal government that we do a commemoration of what I consider to be a really important defining moment in our space history," Orford said. "One might even argue it's a really important defining moment in our national history – and that is the 25th anniversary of the first Canadian spacewalk."

Orford continued by explaining that the initiative is rooted in the idea that Canada's contributions to space science and international collaboration are often underrecognized, despite decades of involvement in major global space projects such as the International Space Station.

"Space history is not a story that is either well told or understood in the country, except by very few organizations," he said. "Twenty five years ago, they were assembling the Canadarm, which was part of the incredible international collaboration, of which Canada is a part of... and has been a part of for over 50 years."

By looking back at key moments in space history, organizers are seeking to highlight Canada's influence while making those stories more accessible to younger generations.

At its core, OOTW25 focuses on strengthening science communication – as in how complex scientific ideas are shared, understood, and discussed by the public.

The program seeks to address growing concerns about misinformation and gaps in scientific understanding, particularly among youth navigating an increasingly digital, information-saturated world.

The project is set to roll out in two phases over the next two years.

The first year focuses on commemoration and better access, bringing together existing resources from organizations such as the Ca-

nadian Space Agency, the National Research Council, and the Canada Aviation and Space Museum. These resources will be brought into classrooms as school-ready materials, along with new tools that allow students to explore topics like space technology, astronomy, and Canadian innovation.

The second year will shift toward deeper engagement with science communication skills.

Students will be encouraged to take a more direct and active role in interpreting and presenting scientific information through a framework described as curatorial thinking. This approach emphasizes evaluating sources, organizing information, and communicating ideas clearly – skills seen as increasingly critical in the modern information landscape.

A key feature of the program is the use of geographic information systems (GIS) and digital story mapping, developed in partnership with Esri Canada.

These tools allow students to create interactive projects that combine storytelling with scientific data, helping to translate initially abstract concepts into more tangible learning experiences.

Through partners like the Canadian Space Agency, the Dominion Observatory and the Canada Aviation and Space Museum, classes will use existing learning modules and toolkits to explore everything from Hubble and Webb images to how the Canadarm works.

Orford said that the program is designed not only to teach science, but to change how it is taught. By giving students greater agency in their learning and encouraging hands-on, inquiry-based approaches, OOTW25 aims to foster curiosity and critical thinking rather than passive information absorption.

"It's really important to give students agency over how they express their science communication," Orford said. "We need to invite them into a safe space where they can express in a very cutting edge, innovative, technological way their understanding for themselves."

"When they do that, of course, there is ownership over it... and they also become their own editors. That's part of what is so important with curatorial thinking... we have to get them to exhibit their own learning and demonstrate their own learning in the richest, best ways that we can."

Another key component is the emphasis on what Orford calls STEAM education, which incorporates the arts alongside science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The initiative promotes a broader understanding of learning that includes creativity, storytelling, and historical context as essential tools for scientific literacy.

"Our best astronauts are also musicians," Orford said. "They're very well read. In many



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SPACE AND SCIENCE: From left, Rebecca Young, Dr. Kim Dej (vice provost, teaching and learning, McMaster), Dr. Sandeep Raha, Dr. Rebecca Collins-Nelsen, and Neil Orford hold up a McMaster Children and Youth University banner. Combining the educational expertise of McMaster University with the historical knowledge and storytelling of CanHist, Out of This World 2025 (OOTW25) is set to bring the very best of Canadian science directly into the classrooms of students across the country.

cases, they speak more than one language. They are very artistically inclined and our best scientists also are great advocates for the arts and arts education."

"The more that we see music disappearing from the school or history disappearing from the school, or art classes or drama disappearing from the schools, that does a disservice to the ability to think scientifically and communicate scientifically. So it's very important to have a better conversation about STEAM learning, as opposed to STEM learning," Orford added.

Through a mix of digital programming, classroom resources, and community-based learning opportunities, the initiative is expected to reach students nationwide. Planned offerings include interactive activities for schools, opportunities to engage with experts in space and research fields, and accessible online content for families and educators.

The program is also intended to serve as a model for national collaboration, bringing together academics, government agencies, and private partners to support education.

In addition to McMaster and CanHist, partners include the Canadian Space Agency, Esri Canada, and several scientific and other historical organizations.

With its dual focus on history and future exploration, OOTW25 arrives at a moment when Canada is once again set to play a visible role in space, particularly through astronaut Jeremy Hansen's participation in Artemis II.

"Artemis II should be the big story we talk about in 2026, and god willing, it will be successful," Orford said. "They will take their 10 days and go around the Dark Side of the Moon and see things that no human has ever seen before, and record things that have never been recorded before, and then return to Earth and be those modern-day explorers that we have always imagined astronauts should be."

"We have at our fingertips this incredible story that's going to take place, and that's the thing we should be talking about."

By linking past achievements with upcoming missions, the initiative aims to inspire a new generation of learners while reinforcing the importance of science in everyday life.

"We want our young people to aspire, we want them to dream," Orford said. "We want them to imagine. We want them to have curiosity, and more importantly, we need them to find joy in their learning."

Alongside the online learning portion of the education initiative, unique learning experiences will also be available locally.

McMaster, as well as surrounding schools and communities in the Hamilton area, will have Interactive learning experiences made available to them through this program.

Ultimately, the program's goal is to make science more engaging, understandable, and relevant - ensuring that students not only learn about discovery, but are equipped to take part in it.

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Planning study weighs Broadway corridor's destination potential

Written By JAMES MATTHEWS

Town of Orangeville staff are moving toward a clearer understanding of the redevelopment potential of two sections along the Broadway corridor.

The town launched a planning study undertaken by J.L. Richards and Associates Ltd. of the Broadway corridor areas to the east and west of the downtown in late 2024.

The east Broadway focus area consists of land near Highway 10, both sides of the Broadway-Townline intersection, and up to Third Street.

The west Broadway focus area extends from Broadway on both sides at the Clara Street-Centre Street intersection to just past the Blind Line turnoff.

The study is part of work to evaluate the redevelopment potential of the areas, assess infrastructure constraints, and create a future vision for development build-out and streetscapes in the corridor areas.

According to a report to council, the objective was to ensure the study areas evolve into vibrant and attractive corridors with distinct characteristics that complement the historic downtown.

"It would guide planning application decisions and any future road improvement projects within the study areas," according to the report. "Subsequent updates to the town's Official Plan, zoning bylaw, and design guidelines would be initiated where appropriate to implement the study recommendations."

Alison Bucking and Robert Voight of J.L. Richards and Associates Ltd. walked council through the most recent phase of the planning study during its March 23 meeting.

"We want to treat Broadway as a destination not a thoroughfare," she said.

Bucking said the East Broadway study area will be a vibrant corridor that invites people into town.

"Catching their excitement and encouraging them to explore with open spaces, greenery, shopping, and housing," she said. "While it used to be auto-centric, it is now a dynamic space for everyone."

The west parcel will increase its use as the town's gateway and, as such, incorporate streetscaping and wayfinding signage. Its unique character as a seamless transition to Orangeville's downtown will be en-



JOSHUA DRAKES PHOTO

hanced by a variety of land uses.

The west Broadway study area is a pedestrian-scaled corridor which leads people from the excitement of downtown to a place that feels like home, Bucking said.

"This home is for all ages and abilities, all preferences for transportation, and has places to explore, create, learn, grow, and rest," she said. "This home reflects the history of the past and protects for the future."

It will expand public art and communicate local priorities through design.

Councillor Debbie Sherwood suggested that the possible future expansion of the downtown's heritage district could be hampered by the proposed Broadway changes.

"One of the recommendations in the study area is to encourage the adaptive reuse of some of those existing heritage buildings on the north side of Broadway in the west Broadway study area," Bucking said.

Voight said the heritage buildings' character can be addressed in urban design guidelines.

"But we're not able to supersede what it regulated under the Heritage Act," he said. "We can't come up with new rules that create a protection that doesn't already exist."

Deputy Mayor Todd Taylor said he's taken calls from people who own property on the east and west Broadway corridors. They're concerned about what the future is going to look like, she said.

That concern has been shared by social media commenters, too. But it's more concerning to keep things the way they are along that corridor, he said.

"To leave it the way it is, is a disservice to the Town of Orangeville," Taylor said. "It is awful, the way it looks when you come in off of Highway 10. That is our post card to the visitors that are coming to our community."

Orangeville Citizen launches food drive in support of Springalicious Campaign

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

The Orangeville Food Bank's Springalicious Campaign is underway and to support its goal of collecting 55,000 lbs of food, the Orangeville Citizen is running its own food drive.

From April 1 to 30, the Orangeville Citizen will be collecting non-perishable food and cash donations at its office - 10 First St., Orangeville. A donation bin has been setup by the door where goods can be dropped off.

Residents are encouraged to make a donation during the Citizen's regular business hours 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday, or email sam@citizen.on.ca to make special arrangements.

"The Orangeville Citizen is inviting the

community to join us in donating to the Orangeville Food Bank during its Springalicious Campaign. The food bank continues to see an increase in demand and as a community, it's important that we do what we can to make sure no one goes without food," said Doug Rowe, general manager of the Orangeville Citizen. "If you are able, please drop off a donation at our office or donate directly to the Orangeville Food Bank."

The Orangeville Food Bank's most needed items for April are canned pasta, oatmeal, apple sauce (snack size), fruit cups, peanut butter, rice, as well as canned meat, fish, and vegetables.

Every donation, no matter the size, helps to keep people fed.

Orangeville's hidden water crisis: over \$1 million lost to system leaks each year

Written By JAMES MATTHEWS

A large portion of Orangeville's total municipal water production volume is lost.

Council heard during its March 23 meeting that the town repaired seven leaks in January 2024 and in September that year. That works out to metered water costs of \$568 per day and \$207,404 per year.

Last year, a dozen leaks were found and repaired between January and September. In terms of metered water costs, many leaks cost \$3,079 a day and \$1.1 million a year.

According to a report to council, the more leaks eliminated in the drinking water system, the less workload on treatment plants, lower hydro costs, less chemical usage, longer equipment life, and more water available for future development opportunities.

"The savings from the program may not be immediately seen but will become significant in the long-term health of the drinking water system," according to the report.

Unaccounted for water makes up a substantial proportion of the town's total water production volume. From 2015 to 2019, this accounted for 19 per cent to 27 per cent of total treated water production.

The Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks has a target of 10 per cent or less.

Unaccounted for water estimates include real and apparent water losses without unmetered but authorized usage for firefighting, construction, and frost protection.

Based on the decrease in efficiency for many of the town's water supply wells, some of which are 45 years old, the town has implemented various water conservation initiatives to assist in regaining lost capacities.

The town began an automated acoustic

leak detection pilot program in the drinking water system south of Broadway and east of Dawson Road in 2024. The town estimates that 10 per cent of the water treated in Orangeville is lost in the system from leakage.

In 2022, that equated to about 326 million litres.

The swimming pool at the Alder Street arena requires 666,000 litres to fill. Councillor Joe Andrews said that the pool could have been filled 489 times with the water that was lost in 2022.

The acoustic detection technology listens to the vibrations in the water column and transmits acoustic, temperature, and pressure data back to a dashboard. This technology can pinpoint leaks in service lines and watermains to within 10 feet.

The dashboard also helps staff identify water theft and significant pressure transients that may not be leaks. That's valuable insight into the town's water model software and can provide more accurate information in future developments and construction projects as Orangeville grows.

Andrews said water is a precious commodity. It's important to find any leaks and prevent water loss.

Council amend the 2026-2035 capital plan to increase money for acoustic leak detection equipment and software by \$313,252. That increase will be funded with \$19,735 from the Water Development Charges Reserve Fund and \$293,517 from the Water Capital Reserve.

Andrews said that acoustic detection gear is an absolute requirement for the municipality.

"As much as it's costing more to improve the system itself, it's going to improve our situation from a precious commodity that we sometimes take for granted," he said.

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Town looks at measures to improve traffic safety near schools

Written By JAMES MATTHEWS

Steps are being taken to improve pedestrian safety in the area surrounding Orangeville District Secondary School.

Council received recommendations at its March 23 meeting to improve neighbourhood safety by implementing drop-off and pick-up locations near the high school and the Tony Rose Memorial Sports Complex.

Consultation has been undertaken with neighbourhood residents, ODSS staff, and Tony Rose facilities staff to better understand the neighbourhood's concerns about vehicle traffic.

To reduce congestion at the front of the school and arena, municipal staff have suggested changing current parking and stopping restrictions to allow stopping on streets with sidewalk access and within a reasonable distance of the school and arena. That mitigates conflict between pedestrians and moving vehicles.

According to a report to council, a communications plan will be inked to get the message out through the school board portals and social media platforms for parents and students.

Monitoring will be carried out for the foreseeable future so that adjustments can be made as necessary. The effort is part of a broader plan to increase neighbourhood safety.

Noel Ramsey, a resident of the area, said he believes more people tend to ignore basic rules of the road.

"We all become pretty slack around the town, around our neighbourhood," he said.

People will roll through stop signs. Turn signals on vehicles remain dark, and motorists drive at what they think is a safe speed, he said.

We all understand why there's a safety zone around schools, he said. The municipality and school staff have invested heavily to ensure a high level of student pedestrian safety around schools.

"I think I counted at one point, there's over 30 signs that the town has put up in a two-block radius just (around) ODSS," Ramsey said. "That's a lot of money and effort that went into the planning of that."

Just as he's certain, much in the way of resources, time, and money went into the research and analysis of the ODSS and Neighbouring Area Safety Plan that was presented later in the council meeting.

"What bothers me is when I see all these events happening where people sort of ignore the rules of the road," he said.

He has photos of motorists parking in No Stopping zones near the school, he said.

Deputy Mayor Todd Taylor said there are similar issues in the vicinity of Spencer Avenue Public School on the town's west side. People are parking there, dropping off chil-



FILE PHOTO

dren, and blocking residential driveways. "What would you do if your driveway was being blocked on a daily basis?" Taylor said. "It would make you pretty upset."

Municipal bylaw enforcement staff were sent to the neighbourhoods. Taylor said they were "treated very poorly," and police officers had to get involved. The town eliminated parking spots in that area, and he said that caused an uprising.

Taylor said it would be best if people were respectful of each other and followed the rules.

"It would be a better place," he said. "Unfortunately, that's not what's going to happen. You know that. I know that. And the town will be there to enforce it to the best of their ability."

In the end, municipal resources will dictate what can be done, Taylor said.

Local food bank seeks 55,000 lbs of donations during annual Springalicious Campaign

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

This weekend, volunteers from the Orangeville Food Bank and Dufferin Food Share Grand Valley will be accepting donations at the local Zehrs, Sobey's, Metro, FreshCo and No Frills.

On Saturday, March 28, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the Springalicious Food Drive will be in full force, encouraging shoppers to purchase extra food or make a financial contribution to the local food bank.

The Springalicious Campaign looks to raise 55,000 lbs of food from March 1 to April 30.

The campaign comes at an important time, as food banks across the country see donations decline in the months following the holiday season.

"Springalicious is one of those beautiful moments when our whole community comes together," said Carrie-Anne DeCaprio, the Orangeville Food Bank's donor engagement and outreach manager.

"With the cost of food continuing to rise

and more people turning to the food bank for support monthly, every single donation matters. And honestly, we always have such a great time connecting with our community while they're out doing their grocery shopping."

In addition to donating at participating grocery stores this Saturday, the community is encouraged to organize their own mini food drives at their workplace, school or with a community group.

The Orangeville Food Bank's most needed items for April are canned pasta, oatmeal, apple sauce (snack size), fruit cups, peanut butter, rice, as well as canned meat, fish, and vegetables.

The Orangeville Food Bank is adding a little extra springtime fun to the campaign, with its Easter Scavenger Hunt. To keep up to date, details on the scavenger hunt will be posted to the food bank's Facebook page at facebook.com/OrangevilleFoodBank or Instagram at instagram.com/orangevillefoodbank.

"The Orangeville Food Bank extends



FILE PHOTO

heartfelt thanks to the volunteers, donors, and community partners who continue to show up with generosity and compassion

for their neighbours," said DeCaprio. To get involved or learn more, visit www.orangevillefoodbank.org.



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POLICE NEWS

One person dead after head-on collision in East Garafraxa

One individual has been pronounced deceased following a head-on collision in East Garafraxa.

On Thursday, March 19, 2026, at approximately 5:15 a.m., members of the Caledon Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) responded to reports of a collision involving two passenger vehicles on Caledon/East Garafraxa Townline.

The driver of one of the vehicles was pronounced deceased at the scene. The driver of the second vehicle was transported to hospital with non life threatening injuries.

The identity of the deceased has not yet been confirmed.

Caledon/East Garafraxa Town-Line remains closed between Shaws Creek Road and Winston Churchill Boulevard for the ongoing investigation with the assistance from the OPP Traffic Incident Management & Enforcement (TIME) Team.

Anyone with information or video footage of the incident is asked to contact OPP at 1-888-310-1122, or report anonymously through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or online at ontariocrimestoppers.ca.

Harassment investigation results in charges for two Mono residents

Harassment investigation results in charges for two Mono residents

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers have charged two residents of the Town of Mono with multiple offences following a call for service.

On March 24, 2026, at approximately 10:47 a.m., Dufferin OPP officers responded to the area of Blindline in the Town of Mono after a complaint was received regarding garbage being discarded across a private driveway. Upon arrival, officers were also informed that the same suspects had attended the residence the previous night, harassing family members.

During their investigation, officers recovered several items, including mail belonging to the suspects, and reviewed video footage showing their presence at the address.

As a result of the investigation, Meghan

Macdonald, 48, of Mono, has been charged with:

- Mischief - obstructs, interrupts or interferes with the lawful use, enjoyment or operation of property
- Criminal Harassment - threatening conduct

As a result of the investigation, Aaron Kaplapaca, 49, of Mono, has been charged with:

- Mischief - obstructs, interrupts or interferes with the lawful use, enjoyment or operation of property
- Criminal Harassment - threatening conduct

If you have information about suspected unlawful activity, please contact the OPP at 1-888-310-1122. In an emergency, call 9-1-1. Information can also be provided anonymously through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or online at crimestoppersdm.com

Missing teen: OPP requests public's help

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers are asking the public for assistance in locating a missing 17-year-old male.

The missing male is William Pimentel, described as white, with a small build, approximately 80 pounds, 5 foot 1 inches tall, brown hair, and brown eyes, wearing black jeans, a black hoodie, and a brown winter hat.

William was last seen on March 13, at approximately 10:45 a.m., at the Bramelea GO station in Brampton.

If you live or work in the area, please check surveillance video. Investigators are asking that anyone with information regarding the whereabouts of William to contact Police at 1-888-310-1122 (Reference #E260346776).



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MISSING YOUTH: Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers are seeking the community's help in locating 17-year-old William Pimentel, who was last seen on March 13, at approximately 10:45 a.m., at the Bramelea GO station in Brampton. Pimentel is described as white, with a small build, approximately 80 pounds, 5 foot 1 inches tall, brown hair, and brown eyes, wearing black jeans, a black hoodie, and a brown winter hat.



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**dufferin
FOOD
SHARE**
well nourished community

DONATION LOCATION



From APRIL 1 to 30

the Orangeville Citizen is collecting donations for the Orangeville Food Bank in support of their

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10 First Street, Orangeville

For any questions, email: sam@citizen.on.ca

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* Valid March 27-29, 2026 only. One coupon per customer. Max savings of \$2,500. In store only. Discount can only be applied to one transaction. Other conditions may apply.

New healing centre aims to build community among women practitioners

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A new healing centre is set to open in Orangeville on April 1, with a focus on collaboration, autonomy and personal transformation.

The River Healing Center, founded by co-owners Carley Johnson and Dawn Rebel, is designed as a collective space where women practitioners can come together to offer services, share resources, and reduce the pressures of running independent businesses.

The model allows practitioners to work in a shared space through a membership-style system, helping eliminate the overhead costs typically associated with solo operations. Many of the current members are graduates of Johnson's year-long healer mentorship program.

Johnson said that the goal is empowerment and mutual support.

"We want to bring women together," she said. "We want to bring women together to give them permission to be who they are. We want to bring healers together. Because having a healing business is really difficult by yourself."

Currently, the centre includes eight practitioners, with more in the onboarding process. Offerings range from yoga and Reiki to education, spellwork and, eventually, psychotherapy and other wellness-aligned services.

Programming will follow a dynamic, rotating schedule rather than a fixed calendar, with the intent of offering new and engaging experiences each month.

"Our schedule starts April 1, and what we're looking for is having the schedule look different every month," Johnson said.



JOSHUA DRAKES PHOTO

HEADLINE HERE: River Healing Center co-founders Dawn Rebel (left) and Carley Johnson (right) want to create an inclusive space for success and growth, both for practitioners and clients. For them, healing begins at the very basic level they feel many have forgotten to listen to - self-reflection. Through guided support, they seek to empower their team and their visitors, inspiring them to be true to themselves.

"We want it to be dynamic, and we want it to be creative. So when the public looks at our calendar, they find something that pulls at them."

"Our goal is to be able to offer a whole bunch of different offerings, so that it hits the hearts of everyone, and then everyone starts to remember who they are through the things that are offered here," said Johnson.

At the core of the centre is a specific philosophy of healing, one that emphasizes awareness and gradual change rather than quick fixes.

"Our main goal is transformation, but transformation in the way that feels right for you," she said. "The first step to healing is awareness. What is this belief? Why is this here? The only way to change those beliefs

is to change behaviour."

"Healing is like a rebuilding or a refining of skills that you have to fit more of who you are. Healing happens in layers; it's not overnight, and that's what we help with."

This approach encourages individuals to recognize patterns such as perfectionism or emotional numbing, and to experiment with small, manageable behavioural changes over time. Emotions are framed as experiences to be acknowledged rather than suppressed.

The approach will seek to challenge societal norms that encourage the suppression of feelings.

"We live in a society that wants us to bury our problems, not address them," Johnson said. "Especially not showing anybody. When you start to actually feel what's going on inside of you, then the healing can truly begin."

Johnson and Rebel hope the centre will have a broader impact on the community, supporting improved mental wellness in Orangeville and beyond.

"If we can create goodness here, we can help build that through the community," Johnson said. "Everybody who leaves this place feels that they're operating in a higher frequency, because then when they go into the community, operating from a higher frequency, it ripples outward. That's our goal."

As the River Healing Center prepares to open its doors, its founders are aiming to create more than just a shared workspace – they are working to establish a supportive environment where both practitioners and clients can grow, connect and explore healing in a way that feels personal and sustainable.

To learn more, go to The River Healing Center's website at <https://www.theriverhealingcenter.ca/>.

Applications open for Dufferin County's 2026 Bill Hill Scholarship Program

The County of Dufferin announced on March 25 that applications are now open for its 2026 Bill Hill Scholarship Program.

The annual Bill Hill Scholarship Program consists of seven one-time \$2,500 scholarships. It was introduced by former Warden Bill Hill in 2015 and is intended to recognize outstanding students from the county who will be pursuing post-secondary education and/or training.

Seven scholarship awards will be considered for students entering a university, college or trade/apprentice program.

To address the social and economic systemic inequities that continue to disadvantage and prevent Black, Indigenous, and LGBTQIA+ youth from accessing post-sec-

ondary education, three of the seven scholarships will be awarded to students who, in addition to meeting the eligibility criteria, identify in their application as belonging to one of three communities:

- Black or racialized
- Indigenous/First Nations (Status, Non-Status), Métis or Inuit
- LGBTQIA+

Application process and requirements

An online application is available for the 2026 scholarships.

The online application will allow applicants to save progress and come back later to finish. Answers will be saved for 15 days if browser history cache is not cleared.

Applicants who are unable to complete an online application can contact the Clerk's department at scholarship@dufferincounty.ca or 519-941-2816 ext. 2500.

In addition to the online application, all applicants are required to upload the following information while completing their application:

Maximum 500-word essay that answers the following questions:

- Explain why you think your chosen field is important in Dufferin County?
- How do you believe you could give back to your community using the skills learned?
- How will you apply the skills that you've learned and the knowledge that

you've acquired towards the enhancement and betterment of your community?

Letter of Reference from one of the following:

- Staff member at current school
- Current employer
- Coach
- Mentor

To be eligible, applicants also need proof of admission to post-secondary institution or training program.

Eligibility criteria

All applicants must meet the following criteria to be considered:

Continued on Page A7

Public notice

Proposed York Street Heritage Conservation District plan

The Town of Orangeville is developing a heritage conservation district for the York Street neighbourhood.

A heritage conservation district (HCD) is a specific area with distinct heritage character that is designated through a municipal bylaw under the Ontario Heritage Act. HCD designation manages change in the district, to conserve the areas' special heritage character.

A study was undertaken in 2025 to assess the heritage character of York Street and recommended that an HCD Plan be developed.

What's being proposed

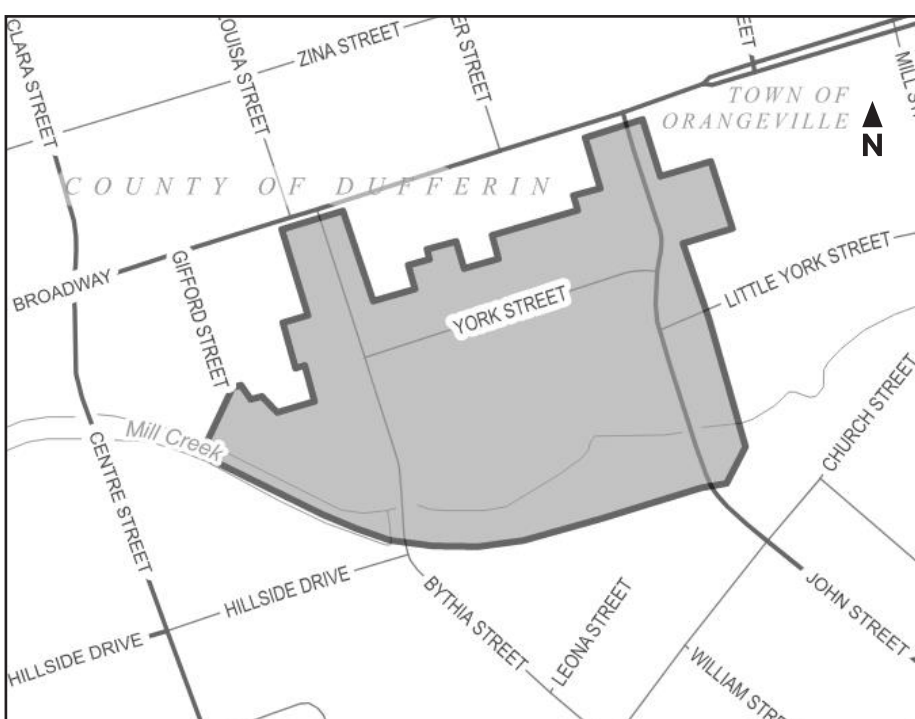
A draft HCD Plan has been prepared, which gives guidance for maintaining the special heritage character of York Street and manage future changes in this area.

Key information presented in the draft York Street HCD Plan includes:

- objectives for maintaining heritage character
- policies and guidelines for managing future changes
- implementation details, including a list of activities that would not require a heritage permit

The completed Study and draft HCD Plan are available online at orangeville.ca/HeritageDesignations

Location of subject lands: York Street HCD study area



Learn more and share feedback



This notice provides information related to two upcoming public meetings in April 2026:

Open House drop-in session

Date: April 9, 2026

Time: 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Location: Atrium, Town Hall, 87 Broadway

Staff from the Town and Stantec will be available to answer questions and provide information.

Statutory Public Meeting

This is a Statutory Public Meeting of council required under Section 41.1 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The meeting gives the public the opportunity to make verbal representations or written submissions to Council regarding the HCD Plan.

Date: April 27, 2026

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall, 87 Broadway

Watch online: orangeville.ca/WatchLive

How to participate

- learn how to participate or speak at a council meeting at orangeville.ca/SpeakUp
- to attend via Zoom visit the meeting agenda at orangeville.ca/Meetings

Meeting agenda to be posted by April 22, 2026.

This will be the last opportunity for the public to provide input before the HCD Plan is finalized.

Submit written comments

Written comments may be submitted prior to the meetings to the contacts below. Please address comments to the mayor and members of council and/or relevant staff. All submissions become part of the public record and will be considered when revising the HCD Plan before its finalization.

A person who does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions prior to the adoption of a proposed heritage conservation district plan may be later denied an opportunity to appeal the passing of a bylaw adopting the plan.

For more information

For more information about this matter please contact the Project Team:

Town of Orangeville

Brandon Ward

519-941-0440 Ext. 2249

bward@orangeville.ca

Stantec Consulting Ltd.

Lashia Jones

226-268-5392

lashia.jones@stantec.com

Dufferin County's 2026 Bill Hill Scholarship Program accepting applications

Continued from Page A6

Enrollment in any programs of studies offered through private or public college or university anywhere in the world, if it is an OSAP approved school or Skilled Trade or Training program in accredited Canadian Colleges and Universities

- Be a resident of Dufferin County
- Be graduating high school the current

year or the previous year of applying for the Bill Hill Scholarship Program

- Demonstrated community involvement and/or participation in extracurricular activities

The deadline for applications is May 31. More information on the Program and the application form can be found at www.dufferincounty.ca

Applications will be reviewed by the pro-

gram's selection committee using a scoring matrix and applicants will be notified shortly after.

Scholarship funds are transferred directly to the successful applicant's post-secondary institution.

Successful program applicants will be invited to attend a reception in July to be presented with their Bill Hill Scholarship award.



Dufferin OPP and MTO deem six vehicles as unsafe and placed out of service

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers, in partnership with the Ministry of Transportation (MTO), recently conducted a targeted traffic enforcement initiative focused on commercial motor vehicle compliance and road safety.

During the initiative, officers conducted a

total of 30 inspections, including both Level 1 and Level 2 commercial vehicle inspections. As a result, six vehicles were found to be unsafe and were placed out of service due to significant mechanical or safety-related deficiencies.

Officers also issued 14 Provincial Offence

Notices for various violations identified throughout the enforcement period.

In addition, six Approved Screening Device (ASD) tests were administered to drivers, all of which resulted in zero blood alcohol concentration readings.

The OPP remains committed to ensuring

the safety of Ontario's roadways through proactive enforcement and continued collaboration with its policing partners. This joint initiative with the Ministry of Transportation contributed to increased compliance and enhanced road safety for all road users.

Streams Community Hub hosts crochet workshop for Tumbler Ridge victims

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A Shelburne-based initiative is bringing the community together through creativity and compassion to support those affected by a recent school shooting in British Columbia.

'Crochet for a Cause,' set for April 2 at Streams Community Hub, invites knitters and crocheters to contribute handmade squares that will be assembled into comfort blankets for students and staff at Tumbler Ridge Secondary School.

The gathering will run from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. and is free to attend, though participants must register in advance.

Attendees are asked to bring their own yarn – specifically four-ply acrylic, smoke-free – as well as their tools, and create 12-by-12-inch squares in any design, from classic granny squares to personalized patterns.

The effort was launched by organizer Mary Marguerite Gee, who lives about an hour from Tumbler Ridge Secondary

School. Earlier this year, a shooting at the secondary school resulted in the death of eight people, including six children. The shooting left the community shaken, prompting an outpouring of support from across the country.

Gee turned to social media to rally fellow crafters, quickly gaining traction and inspiring the upcoming in-person workshop in Shelburne. Squares created during the event will be collected, assembled into blankets by Gee and her team, and shipped to the school.

Shipping costs are being covered by Town Tees, one of the local partners supporting the initiative.

For participants, the event is about connection and community support. By creating together in a shared space, participants can contribute to a larger act of kindness, offering warmth and comfort to a community navigating the aftermath of tragedy.

Registration is available online through a posted form, available here on the Streams Hub Facebook page: facebook.com/streamshub



NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Application to Amend County of Dufferin Official Plan
April 15, 2026 at 6:00 pm
Mel Lloyd Centre, Entrance F, New Horizon's Room
167 Centre Street, Shelburne

County File No: COPA2-25

Location: 476420 3rd Line, Melancthon (Chipwoods Park)

TAKE NOTICE that the County of Dufferin will hold a Public Meeting pursuant to subsection 22 of the *Planning Act* to hear public comments on a privately initiated County official plan amendment prior to the County making any decisions at a future meeting.

THE PUBLIC MEETING will be held in-person on Wednesday, April 15, 2026 at 6:00 pm in the New Horizon's Room at the Mel Lloyd Centre, Entrance F, 167 Centre Street, Shelburne. The agenda for the meeting will be posted on the County's website on the Friday prior to the meeting. As this meeting is for the purpose of receiving feedback from the public on the proposed official plan amendment, no decisions will be made by Council at the meeting.

Any person or public body may participate in this process by attending the meeting to speak in-person or by providing written comments on the proposed official plan amendment. Those who attend in-person to speak will have 3 minutes for comments during the meeting.

Written comments received prior to the meeting will be circulated to Council as part of the agenda package for the meeting. Written comments will also continue to be accepted by staff until a decision has been made by Council. Written comments can be sent to the attention of the County Clerk by email or by regular mail to the address listed at the end of this notice.

All information submitted to the County is subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information Act and Protection of Privacy Act. Personal information collected at the public meeting will be used to support Council in their decision making. Names and comments will form part of the public record.

Please note that this meeting will not be recorded or livestreamed.

THE PURPOSE AND EFFECT OF THE OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT is to redesignate the subject lands from *Countryside Area* (Schedule B) and *Prime Agricultural* (Schedule C) to *Community Settlement Area*. The redesignation is to permit the establishment of a permanent, year-round, affordable leasehold community consisting of 222 residential units, recreational areas, and a defined commercial area.



FOR MORE INFORMATION about this matter, including information about appeals rights, visit the County's website. A copy of the proposed official plan amendment is also available online. <https://www.dufferincounty.ca/planning-development/application-process-fees/>

OPP encourage drivers to watch for farm equipment

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers supported National Agricultural Week, which ran from March 15 to 21.

This week highlighted the vital role agriculture plays in local communities and serves as an important reminder that safety on rural roadways and farms is a shared responsibility.

"With spring approaching, motorists can expect to see an increase in farm equipment travelling on local roads. These vehicles are often large, slow-moving, and may make wide turns or sudden

stops. Drivers are reminded to remain patient, reduce speed, and only pass when it is safe and legal to do so," reads a statement from Dufferin OPP.

"Farm safety is equally important. Farmers and agricultural workers are encouraged to remain vigilant when operating machinery, ensure proper maintenance of equipment, and take regular breaks to avoid fatigue.

Wearing appropriate protective gear and keeping children away from active work areas can significantly reduce the risk of injury."

Spring Into Style!

CLOTHING SWAP & SHARE

Saturday, April 25, 2026
10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Sunday, April 26, 2026
12:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Grand Valley Public Library
4 Amaranth St. E, Grand Valley

Bring your unwanted spring and summer clothing/accessories to the event and look for something new to wear for free! Don't have anything to bring? Stop by anyway! All are welcome.

Clothing Drop-Off Options at Grand Valley Public Library:
Wednesday, April 22nd (5pm - 8pm)
Thursday, April 23rd (5pm - 8pm)
Friday, April 24th (10am - 6pm)
Saturday, April 25th (9am - 10am)

All clothing must be clean and in good condition.
Event guidelines: dufferincounty.ca/waste

This is a FREE event. Light refreshments will be served. Plus, get a chance to win prizes!



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facebook.com/DufferinDJs

Cell: 289-404-4579
instagram.com/dufferindjs

Family dog Dumbledore located as police continue home invasion investigation

Written By RILEY MURPHY
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Some good news following a March 17 home invasion in Caledon – the family dog, Dumbledore, has been found safe after fleeing the scene.

The OPP's Caledon Detachment continues its investigation into a home invasion that took place in the early hours of March 17.

Police were called to reports of a robbery at a residents near Mount Hope Road and Old Church Road at 1.50 a.m.

Four suspects were observed fleeing the area in a dark-coloured SUV, according to the OPP.

Following the launch of the investigation, Police reported Dumbledore could not be located.

"The investigation into the robbery remains ongoing by Caledon Community Street Crime Unit (CSCU) with assistance from the Caledon Major Crime Unit (MCU)

and Forensic Identification Services (FIS). There is no threat to public safety at this time," say Police.

Investigators are asking anyone with information or surveillance footage from the area to contact the Caledon CSCU via email at 13417@opp.ca or via phone at (905) 584-2241.

You can also provide information anonymously by contacting Peel Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or online at www.peelcrimestoppers.ca.

When you contact Crime Stoppers you stay anonymous, and you never have to testify.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SAFE AND SOUND: Dumbledore, the dog of a family that was recently victimized by a home invasion, fled his home during the incident on March 17. On March 19, Caledon OPP released a statement saying Dumbledore had been found safe. The investigation into the home invasion is ongoing.



Caledon OPP to host Crime Awareness presentation for seniors at Humber River Centre

Written By RILEY MURPHY
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

With fraud schemes on the rise, members of the Caledon OPP will hold a drop-in presentation for seniors in the community on March 28 regarding crime awareness and information on how to avoid falling victim to fraud schemes.

Jesse Nobleman with Caledon OPP says that, with March 2026 being National Fraud Prevention Month, they thought it would be a great idea to educate local residents on how to stay safe.

"Seniors are most often victimized by instances of fraud, so we felt as though targeting our presentation toward their age demographic would yield the most beneficial results," says Nobleman.

At the presentation, they will cover some of the most common frauds they see affecting the senior population. Some of these include emergency schemes, phish-

ing, and service fraud, and they will discuss how they work, what to look out for, and how to report them.

Emergency schemes, he explains, involve fraudsters posing as a loved one and using time-sensitive, emotional tactics to get money from their victims.

Phishing includes fraudsters sending a text message or email to their victim posing as a legitimate entity, such as a company claiming a bill is owed, then providing a link to click on and pay what is "owed."

When it comes to service frauds, fraudsters will call, email, or go door-to-door to sell a product or offer a service at a discounted rate.

A contract is sometimes provided, where in the fine print, it will indicate more is owed than verbally discussed, or they'll purchase a product that won't ever show up.

Nobleman says regardless of whether you have been victimized by a fraud

scheme or caught the fraud before any loss, they encourage reporting the incident.

Steps include gathering any information you can, such as the phone number that called, the nature of the fraud, and any names or contact details they provided.

Also recommended is blocking the phone number or email address.

If the incident occurred online, you can report it through the website's built-in reporting feature. Then, report the incident to your local police service, followed by the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre.

They also suggest that if you gave away any personal details or information about your financial institution, you should call your bank to report the incident and consider notifying credit bureaus to monitor for suspicious activity.

Nobleman says they'll be covering fraud statistics, common types of fraud, how to report fraud, and prevention tips.

Some of these tips include doing research to verify a claim, slowing down and not succumbing to an urgent emotional plea, and saying no to something that doesn't make sense or sounds unreasonable.

"Most importantly, keeping your personal information private!" he says.

The presentation will be held at the Humber River Centre on Saturday, March 28 at 10 a.m.

It is a drop-in event with approximately 40 seats available.

Nobleman says that if a caregiver or family member wishes to attend on behalf of their loved one, they're welcome to attend, however there is a limited seating capacity.

"For those who cannot attend but are a leader of a community group or representative of a retirement community, they are welcome to reach out to the Caledon OPP for arranging to hear this presentation at their group/location," says Nobleman.

Town of Orangeville

Upcoming meetings

April 2026

Committee of Adjustment	Wednesday, April 1 at 6 p.m. Council chambers, 87 Broadway
Sustainable Orangeville	Thursday, April 2 at 6 p.m. Council chambers, 87 Broadway
Official Plan Steering Committee	Tuesday, April 7 at 12 p.m. Council chambers, 87 Broadway
Access Orangeville	Thursday, April 9 at 10 a.m. Council chambers, 87 Broadway
Council (regular)	Monday, April 13 at 7 p.m. Council chambers, 87 Broadway Live stream: orangeville.ca/WatchLive
Economic Development and Culture Committee	Tuesday, April 14 at 8 a.m. Lakeview boardroom (upper level), 200 Lakeview Crt. Call in: 1-289-801-5774 ID: 578 507 859#
Heritage Orangeville	Thursday, April 16 at 6 p.m. Council chambers, 87 Broadway
Community Improvement Plan	Tuesday, April 21 at 12 p.m. Council chambers, 87 Broadway
Orangeville OPP Detachment Board	Tuesday, April 21 at 4:30 p.m. Council chambers, 87 Broadway
Orangeville Public Library Board	Wednesday, April 22 at 5 p.m. Mill Street Library, 1 Mill St. Call in: 1-289-801-5774 ID: 687 774 475#
Council (public meeting)	Monday, April 27 at 7 p.m. Council chambers, 87 Broadway Live stream: orangeville.ca/WatchLive

Unable to attend a meeting in person? Connect virtually by following the instructions on the council agenda, or request to join committee meetings virtually (subject to availability) by contacting committees@orangeville.ca or 519-941-0440 ext. 7321 during regular business hours and at least one hour before the meeting.

Meeting dates/times are subject to change.

For agendas and participation details, visit orangeville.ca/meetings.



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SCOTT MARTIN PHOTOS

FRIENDLY BATTLE: Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police officers competed against members of the Orangeville Fire Department in an annual Charity Hockey Game on March 21. The stands at the Alder Recreation Centre were packed as fans of both teams cheered them on. Tickets were sold for \$10 each, and all proceeds are being donated to the Orangeville Food Bank and Dufferin Child & Family Services.



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Arts & Entertainment

LOCAL COMMUNITY EVENTS



Colour and light fills Headwaters Arts Galley for 'Colour Gone Wild'

Written By RILEY MURPHY
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The opening reception for Headwaters Arts' third themed member art show of the year was held this weekend, and brought artists and community members together to embrace colour and light as Spring soon approaches.

The show, "Colour Gone Wild", features more than 40 artworks in a variety of media and subjects, including acrylic, watercolour, and oil paintings; photography; mixed media; stained glass; paper collage; and textiles.

Each artist was invited to take their own inspiration from the Henri Matisse quote, "Colour helps to express light, not the physical phenomenon, but the only light that really exists, that in the artist's brain."

And some artists took inspiration from their own lives.

Caledon resident Wayne Hudson has been part of the Headwaters Gallery for a few years. A landscaper by trade, the winter has given him some much-needed time to work in his studio, he laughs.

His piece submitted to the gallery fea-

tures ripples of light reflecting numerous colours off the water, and nearby turtles sunning on a branch.

Hudson has a degree in visual arts and mostly practices acrylic on canvas.

When he heard the title of the show, he thought his piece, "Quiet Waters - Painted Turtles," was well-suited.

"This one was, for me, really an exploration of the colour and the reflections on the water.

I'm fascinated by the water and what I can do with it," says Hudson.

He explains that, for him, nature and the outdoors are all about taking inspiration and adding to it.

"I'll use drawings or I'll use photographs as a jumping off point, but a lot of times it's in my head and I'll take off from there," he adds, noting the variety of colours he added to the reflection in his piece.

Taking inspiration from his landscaping work, Hudson says it influences much of what he does in his art.

"When I'm working on a garden, that's kind of my summer canvas, using flowers and perennials in a way that's artistic. Then that translates over a little bit into my painting as well," he says.

At the open reception for the show, Hudson said it was a great space, with a great collection of people.

"We all come at it from quite different things. But this show, the theme unites a whole bunch of different people from different spaces. It's really good to be part of this show and see it hanging here," said Hudson.

Terra Cotta artist Jorge Nascimento gave "light" a whole new meaning in his painting, using an LED wand at the reception to



RILEY MURPHY PHOTO

ON DISPLAY: Caledon artist Wayne Hudson stands with his painting, "Quiet Waters - Painted Turtles," currently on display at the Headwaters Arts Gallery.

showcase each intricate detail of his piece. His work, titled "Mars Eruptions," was a mixed-media piece made almost entirely of epoxy resin and pigment.

When illuminated, onlookers could see each bit of pigment woven into every aspect of the design.

Nascimento has been experimenting with epoxy resin for over 20 years.

He explained with epoxy resin taking over 45 minutes to cure, he worked on the piece in layers, creating the seen lava and eruptions, some of which were made by injecting alcohol into the resin before it cures to create certain patterns.

"It's so tough when you're an artist, when you do something completely different," said Nascimento.

During COVID, he switched to pursuing his art full-time.

To be there that day, he said he was at a loss for words.

"I love it," said Nascimento. "I have to

thank the gallery for putting on this show. It's all volunteers, which is extremely nice." "Having the exposure is really important," he added.

No matter the type of media or material, it seems each artist took their own approach to the theme of Headwaters Arts' third themed members' art show of the year, with many more works sure to come down the road.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MIXED MEDIA: Artist Stephanie Schrim has her painting, "Colourful Conversation" on display at the Headwaters Arts Gallery.



RILEY MURPHY PHOTO

ON DISPLAY: Terra Cotta artist Jorge Nascimento stands with his painting "Mars Eruptions."

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Puzzle No. 263410 • Solution on page: CLASSIFIEDS SECTION

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10								
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CLUES ACROSS

1. "Bird of Paradise" constellation
5. Red Sox WS winner Bronson
11. Whirl
12. The State Dept. has a notable one
16. Energy, style and enthusiasm
17. Part of the mind
18. Mountainous country
19. Type of beverage
24. Atomic #109
25. Opposite of falsities
26. Female sheep
27. Rocky peak
28. Sensitive information sharing environment
29. Ethnic group of Thailand
30. Patron saint of Rome Philip
31. Psychedelics
33. Japanese pine
34. Have an impact on
38. Violent disorder
39. A French river
40. Early Mesoamerican civilization
43. Messenger ribonucleic acid
44. Musician Clapton
45. Ancient Greek sophist
49. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
50. Valley
51. A way to unwind
53. Atomic #93
54. Recommending
56. Indigo bush
58. Larry and Curly's pal
59. Off-Broadway theater award
60. Fencers
63. Small Eurasian deer (pl.)
64. Relating to songbirds
65. A way to assign

CLUES DOWN

1. Some are "secret"
2. Intestinal openings
3. Distant planet
4. Assembly possessing high legislative powers
5. Genus of typical owls
6. One with distinctively colored hair
7. Red cross
8. An alternative
9. Abominable snowmen
10. About ear
13. The opening letters
14. Feeling of regret
15. Atomic #39
20. Luteinizing hormone
21. Atomic #55
22. Carries a debt
23. Albanian monetary unit
27. Semitic abjad letter
29. Yes
30. Negative
31. Earn a perfect score
32. Connecticut
33. Partner to cheese
34. Snack nuts
35. Quadruped's body part
36. Locate
37. Pitching statistic
38. "___, myself and I"
40. Utah city northwest of Provo
41. Football players in the trenches
42. One who runs the show
44. Wood
45. Performing artists
46. Slang for a cut
47. More breathable
48. Most crafty
50. Provokes into action
51. University of Dayton
52. Sodium
54. Large fish of the mackerel family
55. Not one
57. ___ and behold
61. Sports highlight show
62. "The Great Lakes State"

No one has more self-confidence than the person who does a crossword puzzle with a pen.

How they say that in...

English: Bud
Spanish: Capullo
Italian: Bocciolo
French: Bourgeon
German: Knospe

These areas, which are present in the spring but tend to dry up in summer, are great breeding habitats for amphibians.

Answer: Vernal pools

VERNAL
appropriate to spring

Springtime brings colour to gardens. Hellebores, crocus, daffodils, tulips, dandelions, violets, lilies, and many flowers start to bloom in spring.

1992
Dr. Roberta Bondar becomes the first Canadian woman in space on January 22.

Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Baby chick

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Local musician Paul Ormandy masters percussion and champions the steel pan

Written By **CONSTANCE SCRAFIELD**

To study music for the purpose of understanding how and why, around the world, music matters, is intrinsic to humanity and how it reflects on the human condition.

This Master of Arts (MA) is part of Paul Ormandy's musical education and his life in music, including his work with percussion instruments. So, the Citizen recently took the opportunity to interview this remarkable Orangeville-based musician.

He recalled, "Right out of school, I played for the Canadian Opera Company (COC)."

When *Come From Away* was in Toronto, Ormandy, playing the Bodhrán filled in "for the regular guy" as needed for most of the show's run, as he did for a number of musicals at Mirvish. These included *The Lion King*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *Miss Saigon*, to name a few.

"I honed my skills on the Bodhrán," he said. "I had to learn to play it well for Toronto."

Throughout his career in music, Ormandy has held several leadership roles. For the last few years, he has been and is an "Itinerant Music Instructor: Steel Pan."

The Steel Pan is a musical instrument originating in Trinidad and Tobago, where it is also the national musical instrument.

For clarity, the Steel Pan is a chromatically

pitched musical instrument made from 200 litre industrial drums. They are marvellous for how easily one learns to play on them.

Ormandy began his professional life as a musician at 15. He was too young to drive, but the band members were fine to give him a lift, he related.

Years later, following his attendance to York University, Toronto also for his Bachelors in Percussion Performance (Honours) before his MA and then, taking a Postgraduate Diploma: at the Interlochen Arts Academy, in the US, Ormandy worked as an instructor for Long and McQuade and as a U of T Course Director of Afro-Cuban Music Ensemble; he was an Instructor of Percussion at the Royal Conservatory of Music, all the while working as a professional musician with bands and in the theatre.

The Caribbean charm of the Steel Pan and percussion has taken him to travel to Europe and Japan, where he has been four times.

He was the Steel Pan soloist at two separate World Expos: Expo 2000 in Hanover, Germany, and one before, Expo 1998 in Lisbon, Portugal.

He performed at the *Marimbop Musica* World Music Ensemble as the Steel Pan soloist for their Southern Japan Tour.

So many memories and interesting times.

In due course, he and his partner were living in Toronto, and he began to instruct per-

cussion in schools: "I was often away in the evening working as an Itinerant Instructor of Steel Drums, travelling between schools for the TDSB. In 2013, my partner and I sold our condo in Alberta and purchased a home in Orangeville."

They had heard that Orangeville was a nice town where houses were reasonably priced at that time. Ormandy said, "We just drove up to Orangeville and bought a house."

His experiences taught him that in performance, "there is no middle ground. I learned that I had better have the skills to survive as a performer. You have to be a bit savvy and situate yourself."

Living in Orangeville with his partner and their nine-year-old daughter suits Ormandy and his family well. Even the almost daily trip to Toronto for his life as an itinerant music instructor in Steel Pan does not pose a real burden.

He began to praise the Steel Pan as a musical instrument for its beautiful simplicity and ease to learn.

"It's extremely easy to start," he assures future students. "I could teach a tune in ten minutes. My father always said I should be a teacher, He must have been right," he said, "because here I am doing it."

An idea was floated to create a Steel Pan



MICHAEL SAMOTOWKA PHOTO

Community Band in a community like Orangeville, where young people are looking for things to do. The early needs are an investment to purchase a number of Steel Pans and finding a space to store them between performances.

Ormandy was booked to do a four-show tour with Chroí, which included last Saturday's at Westminster Church, just before Covid and cancellation. Chris Dawes had asked Ormandy to play with them then. Five years later, here they finally were, and in a text the next day, Ormandy let the Citizen know that the concert "went very well and the Orangeville audience was exceptional, enthusiastic and appreciative!"

Beyond the Bumps: Canoe North co-founder's harrowing drive along NWT ice roads

Written By **CONSTANCE SCRAFIELD**

Starting at Wrigley, the Mackenzie Valley Winter Ice Road connects to Norman Wells, the final stop on Mackenzie Valley Winter Ice Highway 25, which spans 690 kilometres.

Two weeks ago, there were many reasons to contact Al Pace, co-founder with his partner Lin Ward of Canoe North Adventures. Pace had flown back from his trip to their northern headquarters, in Norman Wells, Northwest Territories, only the day before his interview with the Citizen. Flown back, yes, but the journey to the north was the one we had come to hear.

Their son, Taylor, now the operations manager at CN, moved to Calgary with his wife, Verena. He has been setting up another office for the business, and now, departing from nearby Wrigley, the journey to Norman Wells has been reduced by a number of days. Before then, the trip from their Hockey location was much longer.

From Calgary, it is still quite the tale. Wrigley marks the beginning of the approximate 320-kilometre journey to Norman Wells. This is the 13-hour non-stop trip north.

"I've been making this trip for ten years," Pace said. "We like to get started early in the season; when the road is basically fro-

zen. They flood the roads to build up the ice. They use huge rollers to pack the snow when it is minus 40 degrees."

Pace explained that the ice at those temperatures is so dry that it squeaks under the tires.

"It can get a bit tricky," he cautioned, "getting lots of sunshine can slick up the ice."

He described the river crossings, explaining there are three areas where the road crosses three rivers, "We drive out onto the MacKenzie River. It doesn't freeze flat but is bumpy. Machines cut the bumps but the river can pitch and roll. They flood the river on top of the river ice. In some places, it is five feet thick."

Pace described the drive on the flooded river, "We travel very slowly on that ice - you can strike a depression in the ice there. To avoid them makes us travel 15 kilometres an hour."

Pace and his drive companion, Sam Grant, were driving a regular pickup truck with a 14-foot trailer. The trailer was carrying 7,000 to 8,000 frozen pieces of meat, a great deal of other food, a refrigerator, and other items like toilet paper and paper towels. They top the trailer up with light stuff.

"Weird stuff - I was even throwing in bits of lumber," he mentioned.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BRAVING THE COLD: Al Pace of Canoe North Adventures recently embarked on a 13-hour drive through Northwest Territories, along ice roads, to haul equipment to a Canoe North Adventures destination.

"When we get to Norman Wells our lodge is buried in snow. Some days are so short, we seem to always come in the night," he added. "We fly back."

Many variations can make for an interesting experience: "It is a very narrow road and it can happen that we need to pull off the

road but ever so carefully if another vehicle is coming in the other direction. We both squeeze over an inch at a time."

"During that trip you might see one other vehicle." Generally, the trucks carry radios.

Continued on Page A15

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A Sweet Celebration: CVC hosts annual Maple Syrup in the Park Festival

Written By RILEY MURPHY
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Running from March 19 – 22, and March 28 – 29, is Credit Valley Conservation's (CVC) annual Maple Syrup in the Park Festival.

This sweet event invites the community to partake and experience the longstanding tradition of maple syrup production.

At the festival, held at Terra Cotta Conservation Area, families can enjoy live demonstrations, activities, wagon rides, and get an up-close view of their sugar bush.

For those with a sweet tooth, there is also the opportunity to try real maple syrup on site, complete with a pancake breakfast.

The opportunities for learning at the festival are endless. CVC holds sessions to learn about possible ways Indigenous Peoples may have made syrup and sugar from maple sap, as well as the chance to watch historical demonstrations of how settlers made maple syrup.

Attendees can also see a traditional sweat lodge (Madoodiswan), learn how Indigenous Peoples honour Mother Earth's sacred connection to healing, and listen to traditional helpers (Oshkaabewis) as a fire keeper shares stories and songs that reflect responsibilities to the land.

That's not all: provided was the chance to hike the Sap Bucket Trail to the sugarbush to watch sap being collected from sugar maple trees, and to visit the sugar shack to learn how maple syrup is made using modern techniques.

One of the available education stations was the evaporation station at the sugar shack.

The evaporation process for maple syrup involves boiling raw maple sap to remove water, concentrating it to a much higher sugar percentage.

CVC was on-site to showcase the true work that goes into each maple syrup bottle.

CVC Crew Member at Terra Cotta Riley MacArthur was working the Maple Syrup

Festival for the first time this year, but is no stranger to the festival itself.

"I remember going to it as a kid, even here at Terra Cotta. It's really cool to circle back and come and do it and be on the other side of the fence and get to educate," says MacArthur. "That is my favourite part about our Maple Syrup Festival, is the education part of it, seeing all the young kids come up and raise their hands, asking questions."

The station itself, she laughed, was a little daunting, taking on keeping consistent temperatures and the boiling process, but worth it when they drain it off and get to try their hard work.

"It's such a candid Canadian kid experience to go see maple syrup at the Sugarbush," she says.

Sandy Camplin, CVC's conservation parks senior coordinator, says they've been running the festival at Terra Cotta Conservation Area for more than 10 years.

She says not only is it a popular event in

the community, but they also get to bring a lot of new people to the conservation area and showcase what they have to offer.

"For maple syrup itself, it's a Canadian tradition that everyone should at least take part in or get an opportunity to take part in," adds Camplin.

The festival also gives them the chance to discuss conservation efforts.

"We try to incorporate some of those nature pieces and conservation pieces, talking about climate change and the differences that we might see in the future from maple syrup," explains Camplin.

As well as incorporating something for everyone, she says, giving kids an opportunity to try tools and bringing out traditional art that they may not see anywhere else, on top of games and other attractions for young ones not quite ready to take on the educational aspects.

Continued on Page A14

Royal Canadian Legion offers free 2026 membership to bring new faces and supporters

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Royal Canadian Legion is marking its 100-year anniversary in 2026 with an ambitious recruitment drive that offers free memberships for the year, aiming to bring new people into the organization and reintroduce it to the wider community.

Legion representatives from Branch 220 in Shelburne have been setting up displays at events such as the Orangeville Gun & Militaria Show on March 22, where they collected donations and signed up new members using a QR code system that allows visitors to join on the spot. The branch plans to appear at several more events throughout the year to maintain momentum.

Chris Skalozub, Deputy Zone Commander with the Legion, said that the push for new members comes at a time when the Legion's traditional base is shrinking. Many older veterans are passing away, and fewer younger members are stepping in to carry the organization forward.

"Veterans are passing, and we're getting to the end of our Korean veterans now, which was from '51 to '53, that conflict," he said. "Then we got the Cold War guys like myself... that's all we got left, really."

Veterans of more recent conflicts, such as Afghanistan, often face different challenges and are sometimes less inclined to participate in branch life, even as their need for support remains high.

"There's the Afghanistan war veterans now, but they don't like coming out," Skalozub said. "They're a different breed, those boys and girls. So trying to get them to come out, it's been pretty tough. They've been through a much different war from the veterans before

them. It changes you in so many ways."

This demographic shift has placed pressure on the Legion to reach out to the community more actively and explain its role to the next generation.

While the Shelburne Legion's membership based has declined over the years, there are currently 300 members. Of those members, there are a dwindling number of veterans, with just 20 remaining.

Despite these challenges, the Legion continues to operate as a critical support system for both veterans and the broader community. It assists veterans and their spouses through Department of Veterans Affairs programs, the poppy fund, and educational bursaries for post-secondary students.

Skalozub said that initiatives such as "Leave the Streets Behind" focus on helping homeless veterans, connecting them with branches that can coordinate assistance once their service status is confirmed.

"If you're traveling and you see someone laying on a bench, and it just doesn't look right, all you have to do is ask them, are you a veteran," he said. "You find out this guy, this individual, is a veteran, and you give us a call, the nearest branch, and we'll make sure they get help. We'll find their service history, and see if we can't get a pension moving for them among other things."

Beyond direct veteran support, the Legion donates to food banks and shelters, and sustains youth programs like local air cadet squadrons, often stepping in where government funding falls short.

It also sponsors school-based remembrance posters, poetry, and story contests, as well as public speaking competitions that can carry winners all the way to national recognition in Ottawa.



FILE PHOTO

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE: The Shelburne Legion Branch 220 is looking to sign up new members, as the Royal Canadian Legion is celebrating its 100-year anniversary by offering free membership through 2026.

The organization also remains deeply involved in remembrance activities, from street banners honouring the fallen to ongoing efforts to keep the history and sacrifices of past conflicts visible amid rapid social change.

To keep that support, however, the Legion needs support now more than ever.

"There's no one else that's going to be there," Skalozub said. "We're reaching out to keep our society going, to make sure that someone is there. We're here for the community and we're here for events, and that's what we want to keep doing."

Branch 220 will be operating more booths at the upcoming Gun and Militaria shows at the Orangeville Fairgrounds. Those dates are

May 10, July 26, Sept. 27 and Dec. 6.

Skalozub said that the Legion represents far more than stereotypes suggest.

"The Legion is not a place where people get drunk, old people get together and have their yap sessions. That just... that doesn't exist anymore. We look after each other. Every branch looks after each other... because we have to, and because it's the right thing to do. That's who the Legion is."

For 100 years, the Royal Canadian Legion has supported veterans, their families and the wider community across Canada. Now they're asking for some community support to carry the Legion forward into the next generation.

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'This is not just an isolated incident': Mother says son faces anti-Black racism

Written By RILEY MURPHY
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Sandra Anderson has had her children in the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board for all their lives. Now, she says her Grade 9 son experienced a hate-motivated incident and is faced with a lack of a safe education space.

Anderson says her son, who attends Robert F. Hall Catholic Secondary School, came back from school one day in February appearing stressed and dysregulated.

Anderson's son is autistic, and struggled to find the words to explain what had happened.

Through conversation, Anderson learned her son had been called a hate-motivated word during one of his classes that day.

She initially called the school before the weekend and, over the weekend, had multiple conversations with her son, explaining the gravity of the situation.

"We've actually had to have several conversations with [him] to get him to understand that this is not acceptable, this has nothing to do with you, this is just a person's level of ignorance," says Anderson.

After the weekend, the school called Anderson and she learned that her son had been taken into the school's office to provide his account of the situation.

"This was problematic because for him, that's overwhelming for him to get pulled into an office," explains Anderson.

Through Anderson, her son, and his sister, they were able to recount the situation to the school.

Anderson says she was reassured that the student involved in the incident would not be in class that afternoon, that they would conduct an investigation, and that they would call her back before the end of the day.

When she picked her son up from the bus stop that day, she learned the student involved in the incident was still in his class that same day.

Her son then told her he didn't want to go to that class anymore.

It was heartbreaking for Anderson, she explains, as he loves this class and worked hard to get it on to his schedule.

Anderson also claims she was not contacted again by the school that day.

"My understanding is, a promise was made that the student would not be in the classroom. When I picked my child up, he was again, still very dysregulated, and the kid was in the classroom," says Anderson.

When she called the school again to explain the situation, she was told no promises had been made regarding a second reach out.

The school said, according to Anderson, that although they cannot discuss the details because they involve another student's privacy, they told Anderson they spoke to all 27 students in the classroom and that no one saw or heard anything.

"Based on your policy, that kind of aggression toward a student is an automatic suspension, so you did not believe my son, and you believed the other student," she says.

"The moment when you decided to put that student back in that classroom, without any kind of consequences, they didn't miss

a minute of class, they didn't miss a day of school, you gave them the license to now become an aggressor towards my son, an aggressor to any other Black student in your school. That's what you've done."

Since February 27, she says she has not heard back from the school, and her son has missed six days of school for fear of being in the same room as the alleged other student.

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board said in a statement to the Citizen that they take matters involving discriminatory language, racism, and student safety very seriously.

"Upon being made aware of the concern, the principal of Robert F. Hall Catholic Secondary School conducted a thorough investigation. This included interviewing 27 students and speaking directly with parents and staff to ensure all perspectives were heard and fully understood," reads the statement.

"To support the well-being of the student involved, as with all our students, a number of structures are in place, to ensure that the student would feel safe, supported, and included within their learning environment. Such structures are developed collaboratively, reviewed regularly, and adjusted as necessary to meet student needs. More broadly, the DPCDSB has clear procedures and policies that guide how schools respond to allegations of discrimination or unsafe behaviour. These include prompt review of concerns, engagement with families, and the use of appropriate supports and progressive discipline measures where required."

Since the incident, Anderson has involved numerous organizations and filed multiple

reports.

"And I'm not going to stop," she says.

She says that this is not just a single issue but a broader systemic pattern within the school board.

"This is not just an isolated incident where you chose not to take any kind of action, or took the wrong action," says Anderson, adding that she's seen this happen numerous times to other students in the school board.

Anderson draws attention to the 2023 to 2027 Strategic Plan to Dismantle Anti-Black Racism launched by the DPCDSB.

"They're not doing it, they're not following it, they're in violation of their own policies. It's just a glorified document," she says.

From her children's time within the school board, she says she has not seen anything in relation to the strategic plan.

"While this particular incident might have struck a chord in terms of bringing this to light, it's because it's the frequency in which these incidents are occurring and the way that the school has chosen not to address it at all," says Anderson.

Anderson says it's time the school board begins to follow their own policy.

"Why are they not being held accountable to follow it? You can't just create it and put it on a bookshelf and leave it there when you're having students that are being negatively impacted by this."

"I teach all my children their values. They know who they are. They know that they are a valuable member of society, and don't let anyone tell you otherwise. You are valued, you are important, and you can't let people, by using these words, try to tear you down."

A Sweet Celebration: Credit Valley Conservation hosts annual Maple Syrup in the Park Festival

Continued from Page A12

In the past few years, she explains, they have made an effort to involve and include Indigenous partners in the festival.

As part of their ongoing efforts to develop the Credit Valley trail, they have a partnership with Indigenous communities.

"With that we have an Indigenous roundtable, a group that we go to, to work with and make some decisions with. That's become a really big part of Credit Valley, and then, in parks, however we can, so now that we've built that relationship, how else can we grow that relationship?" says Camplin.

As Indigenous groups are growing an education component for the community, CVC hopes to provide them with the platform to do so, she says, including events like their maple syrup in the Park Festival, where people are interested and asking

questions.

On March 22, Grandmother Kim Wheatley joined the celebration to hold ancestral storytelling sessions for the community, where participants could explore traditional Anishinaabe teachings through stories shared during this seasonal cycle of maple syrup harvesting.

"Maple syrup comes from my people, but not many people associate it with us," says Wheatley. "For my Anishinaabe ancestors, this was the time when we came together. When we not only shared the practice and the how-tos, but the different ways in which this would be applied, and to honor the spirit of the gift, because those trees that this beautiful sweet water comes from is a living being, and one that is so important."

It is a holistic engagement in which they make offerings, sing songs, offer medi-

cines, and give thanks with their words, emotions, and spirits, she says.

Maple syrup is used in numerous ways, she says, including as medicine, a sweetener, or an indulgent treat.

Coming to the festival that day and share stories and teachings was everything to her, she says.

"The invitation to embrace restorative practices to really support the healing of a targeted group of people in this country who experienced cultural genocide, it's everything for me," says Wheatley. "I'm still here. I'm still alive. I'm still able to transmit and share the wisdom and knowledge of our ancestors, whole and complete."

"I'm able to connect to my own personal sense of healing and contribution by validating what I carry and how to do that in a good way with kindness and love and respect, and to feel the receptivity of the

audience," she adds.

Wheatley says the people who come to these kinds of gatherings and festivals not only want to learn, but also open themselves to learning in a multiplicity of ways.

"Storytelling and song is one of the most powerful, universal languages on earth," she says, "And that's what I did this past weekend. I sang, I told stories that we tell in a seasonally appropriate time, and invited a little Q&A. But, really [I] felt present and honoured to be the voice that was heard."

Wheatley hopes to challenge "historic amnesia," and wants all Canadians to embrace the "under-tapped resource of our living presentness now."

What better way, she says, than by telling stories and singing.

The festival will continue on March 28 and 29, with a full schedule of activities posted on CVC's website.

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Project Lifesaver helps to rapidly locate missing elderly woman in Melancthon

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

Dufferin the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers successfully located a missing elderly woman in Melancthon, just one hour after deploying Project Lifesaver.

Officers received a call for service on March 24 at roughly 3:15 p.m., reporting that an elderly woman hadn't returned home after going for a walk.

The elderly woman was registered for Project Lifesaver, which provides participants with a bracelet that emits a unique radio frequency signal OPP officers can track to rapidly locate a missing individual.

Upon arrival at the scene, Dufferin OPP officers quickly deployed Project Lifesaver tracking equipment and located the individual safe.

The missing woman was found approxi-

mately two kilometres from her residence, within one hour of being reported missing.

"This incident highlights the effectiveness of Project Lifesaver and its critical role in safeguarding vulnerable members of our community," reads a March 25 statement from Dufferin OPP.

"The technology significantly reduces search time, which is vital in minimizing risk for individuals with cognitive vulnerabilities."

The statement added, "Project Lifesaver continues to be a valuable resource in Dufferin County, offering peace of mind to families and enhancing community safety."

Project Lifesaver is run through Caledon Meals on Wheels, which is generously supported by the Orangeville Lions Club, helping ensure accessibility for residents in need.

For more information or inquire about eligibility, email: andrew.fines@opp.ca

Beyond the Bumps: Canoe North co-founder's harrowing drive along NWT ice roads

Continued from Page A11

About the dark: trucks like to go at night so they can see every bump in their headlights, every dip. In the daytime, everything is white: "the snow, the ice, the air." Sometimes, it's very hard to see all the bumps. The road is much easier at night.

One thing really natters on the winter ice road - never ever shut the truck down - if you have to get out for a pee, you crack a window open in case the locks click on.

At all times, the danger of freezing temperatures, down to -45°C, is considered, as your eyelashes can freeze, as can your fingers or the unprotected skin of your face.

Admittedly, there are trucking companies that could take Pace's gear, but the truth is that doing the journey, knowing the details will be all considered, having the confidence in their own care to deliver

all that they will need for their customers, some 150 souls a year, really delivers a good sleep at night.

"This gives us a heck of a head start in the spring," Pace offered, "We know that all of our goods are stored and ready for our season. It is such a good thing to open the trailer and everything is ready."

Sometimes they move other stuff up during the summer, but they have to fly them up, as it is not possible to drive up there in June. It is only possible in January, February, and March; absolutely, not in June.

Pace went on to talk a bit about life in the North, saying that they have two small pickup trucks in Norman Wells. Last summer, he took them to a local garage for an oil change, and he gasped a bit when he heard the price: \$650 for two light trucks. It costs \$250 to fill two gas tanks.

Trying to cut freight costs raises the question of whether the job will be done to your own standards of care.

As a business that takes people on tours like Canoe North offers, they try to look at things from the client's point of view, so the whole matter of food deserves real attention, including the wine. Caterers in Calgary prep some food for the many meals, including charcuterie-quality meats.

They need to know who's coming with allergies or special food needs; it is getting trickier, Pace admitted, but Verena does the work as the designated food manager.

"She does meticulous work," he boasted about her.

"She brings a meticulous attitude toward the food - a very creative one. This is why we love it when our customers book early."

All the details of unusual travel: "We

drive continuously for 13 hours," Pace outlined. "Once you get to your destination, you have to take care of your machinery. And, this is important, the Prime Minister is announcing building an all season road going north. Carney is announcing major projects in the North."

Back on the road, there is a steep incline, but there is total grip on the dry ice - it is really good to have a drive mate.

What it means for people to make the trip to the North in the summer months, flying up - not via the ice highway - they are joining the guided canoe trips that truly are transformational. Travellers really experience the otherworldliness of the North and our place in it.

"This changes them," Pace was clear, "What they really learn to do is enjoy inspired conversions. There are no devices, no screens."



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Junior C hockey starts division playoffs across the province

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

Junior C hockey fans are turning out in droves as the 2026 division playoffs are underway and teams battle it out to see which hockey clubs will be moving on to the provincial Schmalz Cup championship playoffs this season.

There are eight Junior C divisions across the province.

In the North Carruthers Division, the Alliston Hornets and Stayner Siskins are tied after the first two games.

The Hornets won Game 1 of the series with a huge 6-1 win. The Siskins blasted onto the ice in Game 2 and won 4-2 to even the series.

In the Pollock Division, the Fergus Whalers and the Hanover Barons are tied after two games.

Fergus won the opener 6-0. The Barons fought back in Game 2 and won 3-2 to even the series.

The Uxbridge Bruins and the Clarington Eagles are tied in their Orr Division championship series.

Uxbridge won Game 1, 6-1. Clarington responded with a 4-3 win in Game 2 of the series.

After the weekend, the Frankford Huskies are leading 1-0 over the Lakefield Chiefs in the Tod Division final.

The Huskies won Game 1, 4-2 on Saturday, March 21.

In Niagara, the Dundas Blues moved to a 1-0 lead over the Niagara RiverHawks in their Bloomfield Division final.

Dundas won the first game 5-2.

The Doherty Division has the Tavistock Braves leading the Woodstock Navy Vents 2-0 in their series.

The Braves won Game 1 with a score of 5-1, then followed up with another 5-1 win in the second game of the series.

In the Yeck Division, the series is tied after



BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

ALL TIED UP: Eight Junior C hockey divisions are in the final championship series across the province as teams battle it out to see who will be going to the provincial Schmalz Cup championship. The Alliston Hornets take on the Stayner Siskins at the New Tecumseth Recreation Centre in Alliston on Friday, March 20, during Game 2 of their best-of-seven series. Stayner won this game 4-2 to tie the series 1-1.

the first two games between the North Middlesex Stars and the Mt. Brydges Bulldogs.

Mt. Brydges won Game 1, 4-3. North Middlesex took Game 2 by a score of 3-0.

In the southwest area of the province, the Essex 73s are leading the Lakeshore Canadiens 2-0 in their final series.

In Game 1, the Canadiens won the shut-

out, 1-0.

Essa responded in Game 2 with a 4-1 win.

All division championships will wrap up by April 2.

Orangeville Blitz done for the season after semi-final loss to Six Nations Ironmen

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

The Orangeville Blitz are done for the season after taking a loss in Game 6 of their best-of-seven semi-final series against the Six Nations Ironmen.

The Blitz had a good season, finishing first in the North Division of the Northern Premier Hockey League with a 12-8 record.

With a schedule that started back on Sept.

20, the Blitz played their first game of the season against the Six Nations Ironmen on Oct. 3.

The League has four teams in the North Division. Along with Orangeville, there were teams from Halton Hills, Six Nations and Woodstock in the lineup this season.

The South Division has squads from Alvinston, Stratford, Strathroy, and Tilbury.

During the playoffs, the Blitz eliminated

the Woodstock Lakers in a quarter-final series that went five games and wrapped up on Feb. 27.

In their series, the Ironmen knocked out the Halton Hills Coyotes in a series that went five games and ended on Feb. 28 to set up a Blitz/Ironmen semi-final to see which team would be going to the Apex Cup.

The semi-final series got underway on March 6 at the Alder Street area with the Ironmen leaving the ice with a 5-3 win.

The Blitz tied the series after winning 7-3 in Game 2 on Ironmen home ice.

Blitz fans were hopeful after the Orangeville team took a 2-1 lead in the series with a 5-3 win in Game 3.

The series was tied when Six Nations responded with a 3-2 win in Game 4.

A 4-2 loss in Game 5 put the pressure on the Blitz to get back in the series.

The Blitz' season ended on March 21, when Game 6 resulted in a 7-3 win for the Ironmen on Six Nations home ice at the Six Nations Sports & Cultural Memorial Centre.

The Ironmen will now go to the Apex Cup championship final.

In the South Division semi-final, the Alvinston Killer Bees are up against the Strathroy Jets.

The Killer Bees are leading that series 3-1, with Game 5 scheduled for Tuesday, March 24.

The results of that game were not available at press time.

The winner of that series will face the Ironmen in the League championship.

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BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

SEASON ENDER: The Orangeville Blitz are done for the season after taking a 7-3 loss in Game 6 of their best-of-seven semi-final series against the Six Nations Ironmen on Saturday, March 21, on Six Nations home ice. Blitz goalie Ryan Mantle takes a shot from an Ironmen attacker during the first period of Game 5 at the Alder Street arena on Friday, March 20.

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OPINION

A cashless society

When you were a kid, you likely received an envelope from an older relative on your birthday or at Christmas.

Usually, it had a few dollars inside, although these days it's probably more like a \$50 bill.

It was an easy way to give a kid a chance to buy something they want, rather than trying to guess what a 10-year-old would like to receive for a special day.

It's a lot more fun for a kid to find money in an envelope rather than to receive a gift of new socks or underwear.

Our society is moving dangerously close to a cashless society. I can't remember the last time I put gas in my vehicle and paid with cash.

I still carry some cash in my pocket. It seems ridiculous to pay for a \$1.95 coffee with a debit card.

It seems the goal is to move to a strictly cashless situation.

However, with that cashless system comes some very serious issues that must be examined.

The thing is, with a cashless society, money is no longer tangible. It just becomes digital numbers on a screen.

On the lower end of the problem, no more piggy banks for your kids to learn how to save money, and forget the birthday card with the cash gift.

No more Craigslist or Facebook Marketplace transactions, unless you happen to own and carry a debit machine in your car.

No more opportunities for a kid to earn \$20 by shovelling snow in the winter or cutting grass in summer.

You won't be able to save that \$20 a week you stuff in an envelope because you are saving up for a new Johnson Rod accessory for the hot rod you store in the garage.

No more yard sales, garage sales, or charity sales, unless everyone goes back to a barter-type system.

You may want to buy that fancy trinket at a yard sale, but with no cash available, you may have to bring a chicken from your backyard chicken coop to trade.

Those are just the little annoyances that will plague a cashless society.

The real issue is the absolute control the state will have over you. And this is a very scary thing to think about.

A cashless society means someone else will

have absolute control over your life. A bank will have full control of every single cent you have.

Bank robber Willie Sutton was asked, 'Why do you rob banks?' His notorious reply was, 'because that's where the money is.'

The banks don't have the money anymore. Try withdrawing several thousand dollars in cash from your bank account.

Most likely, you will be politely asked to come back in a couple of days because they will have to source the cash for you.

In a cashless society, every transaction you make will be recorded. Someone will be able to track your spending habits and your income.

Someone will be able to track your location and follow you across the country if you're on a road trip.

Every time you buy something, someone else can know exactly where you are.

It's a scary thought to think that a total stranger will be able to follow your every move.

If you are on Facebook, you know you are already being observed. Try looking for an item online, and sure enough, your Facebook page will suddenly start sending you ads for sim-

BRIAN LOCKHART
FROM THE SECOND ROW



ilar products because it has been watching you every online move.

A cashless society reduces your wealth to nothing more than numbers on a screen.

If the power goes out, so does your money.

Those numbers on the screen are not backed by anything. There is no gold standard anymore; there is nothing to back up those numbers as tangible assets, other than the fact that people have faith they mean something.

I'm not sure of the high-level security measures surrounding online banking and control, but I have wondered what stops a computer genius with access to computer systems from simply moving a decimal point to another spot on a bank account?

A cashless society will create a whole new way of life where everything you do, everything you buy, everywhere you go, will be recorded.

I'd rather carry a few \$20 bills in my pocket, rather than have it known that I'm currently sitting in Tim Hortons having a coffee by some unseen person tracking my movements.

War on Iran: A series of miscalculations

Still not four full weeks into the war, and already Donald Trump's "short-term excursion" – decapitate the Iranian regime with a surprise attack and impose harsh terms on the defeated survivors – has morphed into a global economic crisis and a region-wide war that could destroy the wealth of all the countries on both sides of the Gulf. At the very least.

Back in January Trump was high on his success in changing the regime in Venezuela (just a bit), so he was an easy mark for Israeli prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu's suggestion that he could do the same to Iran. Netanyahu probably knew better than that himself, but his life's goal has been to inveigle the United States into a joint attack on Israel's greatest enemy.

Trump swallowed the plan hook, line and sinker, and they cobbled together a story about a new nuclear threat from Iran.

Nobody really believed it, maybe not even Trump. His Director of National Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, wrote last week that "Iran's nuclear enrichment program has been obliterated. There have been no efforts since (US air strikes last June) to rebuild their enrichment capability," and she probably tried to tell him that herself.

Even if untrue, the Israeli-American allegations and threats were grave enough to frighten the Iranians back to the negotiating table, and this time they surprised the American team by offering major concessions. The new offer didn't meet every US demand in full, but it certainly warranted further discussion and the next meeting was fixed for 3 March.

Oman's foreign minister Badr Albusaidi, who was mediating the talks, explains what happened then: "It was a shock but not a surprise when on 28 February – just a few hours after the latest and most substantive talks – Israel and America again launched an unlawful military strike against the peace that had briefly appeared really possible."

Even then, US foreign secretary Marco Rubio says Israel had to push Trump into the war by telling him that otherwise it would launch the surprise attack alone. (The US would still have to follow, but the Iranians would then be on the alert and there would be more American casualties.) The Israeli tail was definitely wagging the American dog at this point.

So the 'decapitation' strike went in as planned and killed Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and most of Iran's other senior leaders – but it made no difference whatever to Iran's long-

planned responses. Khamenei knew from past experience that Trump favoured surprise attacks during negotiations and had taken the appropriate precautions.

If you fear decapitation, turn yourself into a Hydra, a many-headed monster. In the jargon of the regime, which in the 1980s survived an eight-year war of attrition against a far better armed invader (Saddam Hussein's Iraq, which had strong support from the United States), the strategy is known as the doctrine of 'the fourth successor.'

That is why the regime was not destroyed by the initial 'decapitating' strike and has not crumbled under the relentless bombing of subsequent weeks. Khamenei ordered each senior official and officer to designate, in order of preference, up to four potential successors capable of replacing him. Knock off one, up pops another.

Iran's system has been created to endure and outlast the superior weapons technologies that its enemies will bring against it, and so far, it is doing very well. The stockpile of missiles is doing havoc to the economies of America's Gulf allies, the Strait of Hormuz is blocked to international shipping (although Chinese and Indian tankers pass through),

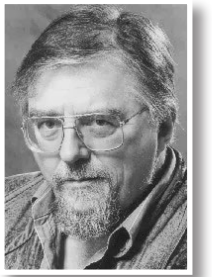
and time is on Iran's side.

In effect the initiative has passed into the hands of the Iranians, and they only have to go on doing what they are already doing to keep it. Their enemies have to figure out what to do next, and their choices now diverge: the Israelis want to go on bombing until the remaining Iranians overthrow their government (good luck with that!), and Trump just wants to get out.

His usual strategy (in business) has been to declare a victory and leave, but in this case his own pride gets in the way. His attempts to shift the blame for pulling out to the 'cowardly' Europeans or assorted other bystanders fall flat, and the escalation that would be required to bring the regime to its knees is so big and dangerous that it even frightens him.

So Trump runs back and forth in fury and confusion, changing his story twice a day. Obviously this cannot go on forever, but it may last long enough for me to write another article in which I calmly expound his viable remaining options. None come to mind right now except 'Boots on the Ground' or a small nuclear weapon (both highly undesirable).

GWYNNE DYER
OUR WORLD TODAY



Historic relics do not promote hate

Niagara Region's Chair Bob Gale resigned recently, when it became known he owned a piece of history, namely a book signed by Adolf Hitler.

It was reported he owns a copy of "Mein Kampf," Hitler's political manifesto, written in the 1920s.

Saleh Waziruddin, of the Niagara Region Anti-Racism Association, said authenticating "hate material signed by Hitler makes any reasonable person wonder."

And Sherri Darlene of Justice 4 Black Lives Niagara added: "It's shocking ... that Niagara's highest elected municipal official owns hate literature."

Sorry to break it to you Sherri, but our public libraries are filled to the brim with what could be deemed "hate literature."

The book is widely available in Canada. It is banned in Germany and Austria, but not banned in Israel, where it's primarily available for research and academic purposes.

Gale described himself as a "passionate historian with a broad collection of historical art and artifacts."

He said his collection includes an 1859 letter from anti-slavery advocate John Brown, a letter from George Washington, a letter from Winston Churchill and Vatican archives and a signed copy of the first book in 1685 about Niagara Falls by Father Hennepin.

People collect many historic documents, even wanted posters of some of history's worst criminals. Photos of dead gunslingers who had a price on their heads were quite the rave in our not-too-distant past.

These items are physical reminders of our past – they tell stories and tales about life,

death, conflict and even debauchery. Our history is filled with all of those things.

Some collect these things because they are quite valuable, and historically significant, not unlike signed sports cards.

Believe it or not, the swastika is not illegal or banned in Canada, but it is in several countries around the world. Even those where the ban is in place, the symbol is allowed for "academic, educational, artistic and scientific purposes."

The swastika was (and is) a symbol of divinity and spirituality in several religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, but was perverted by Hitler.

We have to clarify and focus whether we're talking about hate-mongering or preserving history.

Nazi memorabilia includes a variety of objects from the war, especially those featuring swastikas and other Nazi symbolism and imagery or connected to Nazi propaganda. Examples are military and paramilitary uniforms, insignia, coins and banknotes, medals, flags, daggers, guns, posters, contemporary photos, books, publications, and more.

During the Second World War, Allied soldiers often took small items from fallen enemies as war trophies. Many found their way back here, to North America. A lot of items, to this day, are still being donated to museums around the world.

Some people are offended by, and condemn, auctions, militaria shops, online stores and other businesses selling Nazi antiques, and find the goods and commercial trading as tasteless and hateful. Maybe, but most collectors are mainly interested in the historical background and are fascinated by the distinc-

tive design of the items.

Collecting Egyptian, Roman, Viking or even medieval artifacts could then be seen in a similar light as these "regimes" were all guilty of mass murder and genocide.

I believe these are mere objects steeped in antiquity. If they are religious, they bring comfort to people. If they are "evil," they serve as a warning. They all have value in terms of academic importance.

While not exactly the same, this line of thinking extends to freedom of speech and expression.

Any "sentinel" of free speech is adamantly opposed to censorship and book burning. We journalists are among the most steadfast in preserving the sanctity of the written word.

The U.S. First Amendment's protection of free speech means that Mein Kampf is legal to publish, sell, and own. The Supreme Court has consistently ruled that even "hate speech" is protected unless it directly incites imminent lawless action.

Here in Canada, public libraries have a similar opinion:

"Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and facilitate access to constitutionally protected expressions of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, including those which some individuals and groups consider unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable ... Libraries provide, defend and promote equitable access to the widest possible variety of expressive content and resist calls for censorship and the adoption of systems that deny or restrict access to resources," says the Canadian Federation of Association Libraries (CFLA, 2019, para. 6).

MARK PAVILONS



Unfortunately, book banning has become our new national pastime.

The Centre for Free Expression defines censorship as the, "suppression of words, images, or ideas that are deemed 'harmful' by those attempting to impose their personal, political, religious, or moral values on others," while also noting that it can be carried out not only by governments, but private parties as well.

Does that mean The Holy Bible, Quran and Torah are all next on the chopping block?

In 2023, the Peel District School Board engaged in an "equity-based book weeding process," leading some schools to purge thousands of books. These books were, according to the social justice framework that motivated their removal, potential sources of student "harm." I wonder who sat in judgement of such a thing.

Should we remove all printed material that deals with hate, religion, war, murder, genocide, gender, slavery...

That's not a true reflection of our world, and our past. You know they say if you don't learn from history, you're damned to repeat it.

I find it difficult to believe that a collection of memorabilia or regalia incites hatred against a group of people. That, my friends, is the evil that lies in the human heart.

We have legislated against blatant public displays of hate.

But we still allow people to gather, protest, debate and discuss what separates us, and brings us together.

Let's make the latter a priority.

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COMMUNITY VOICES

Monthly Message: FTP marks International Women's Day with empowering event

International Women's Day (IWD) – celebrated annually on March 8 – is always meaningful for us at Family Transition Place (FTP). It's a time to reflect on the service we provide to women, children, and families and on the collective responsibility we all share in creating a community where safety, hope, and equality are possible.

This year's theme, Give to Gain, resonates deeply within our work and agency culture. Working in social services, we see every day how our values and giving align; compassion creates safety and trust, equity helps people receive what they truly need to move forward, social responsibility strengthens our collective well-being, and integrity guides us to act with care and accountability.

The IWD 2026 Give to Gain campaign focuses on fostering a mindset of generosity and collaboration. Living and working in our ever-growing rural community, we see first-

hand how deeply connected we are and how progress happens when we show up for one another.

We know that you, our community and supporters, understand how powerful "giving" is and the ripple effect it has. The fundraising support we've received from the community to operate our Youth Education program since 2001 has helped us reach thousands of students each year. Hearing feedback from a grade 5 student who talks about her classmates being more accepting and inclusive of her cultural clothing speaks to the power of encouraging this young girl to be proud of who she is and, at the same time, teaching others about respecting differences.

At FTP, giving takes many forms. It's the generosity of our donors who share their resources to make a difference, especially at a time when our services remain chronically underfunded and operating costs continue to rise in 2026. It's community partners who collaborate with us to strengthen and streamline services. It's the time, care, and expertise our staff and volunteers bring to their work that help the people we serve move forward in their lives. It's the courage of survivors who share their voices and help shape better systems.

Each of these acts contributes to something larger: a ripple effect where support multiplies, barriers can be reduced, and women and children are better positioned to



MEGHAN BOND PHOTOGRAPHY

GIVE TO GAIN: Family Transition Place's International Women's Day event was held on March 8 with the theme, "Give to Gain."

thrive. When we give in these ways, through time, resources, and commitment, we all gain as we become stronger individuals, healthier families, and a more connected community. Thank you for being part of this movement.

To learn more about any of the ways you can support our work and the families we serve, please contact Brennan Solecky at brennan@familytransitionplace.ca or at 519-

942-4122 ext. 240.

If you or someone you know needs support, compassionate staff are available to help 24/7.

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This week's Community Voice submission was written by Lynette Pole-Langdon, executive director of Family Transition Place.



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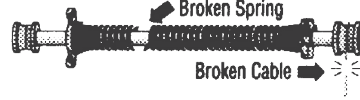
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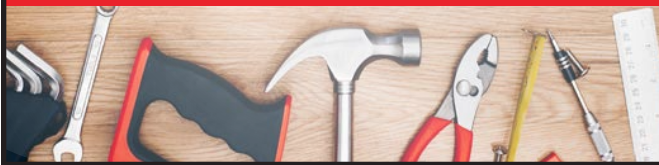
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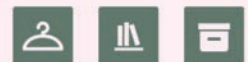
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Province opening HOV lanes to more drivers on provincial highways

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

The Ontario government is proposing a regulatory amendment to the Highway Traffic Act that would allow single-occupant vehicles to use High Occupancy Vehicle lanes during off-peak hours.

The idea is to better use existing highway infrastructure to reduce gridlock and keep drivers moving on provincial highways.

Ministry of Transportation modelling shows the change would improve travel times for all users, with average speeds increasing in both HOV and general-purpose lanes across major

highways during off-peak hours.

If implemented, this change would take place before the end of 2026, following a period of public consultation.

“Gridlock is costing our economy billions of dollars every year and robbing Ontario drivers of valuable time and quality of life,” said Prabmeet Sarkaria, Minister of Transportation. “By allowing single-occupant vehicles to use HOV lanes during off-peak hours, we would help keep drivers moving across the province, so they can spend less time in traffic and more time with their families and friends.”

HOV lanes are currently restricted to vehicles with two or more occupants, buses, licensed taxis, green-plate vehicles, airport limousines, motorcycles, and emergency vehicles.

The government is exploring regulatory changes to allow single-occupant vehicles to drive on all existing, planned, and future HOV lanes during off-peak hours.

Existing HOV lane rules would apply outside of off-peak hours.

These times will not include the busiest weekday morning or evening commute periods.

Ontario currently has 237 kilometres of HOV lanes, with plans underway to add another 146 kilometres to the network.

Single-occupant vehicles remain the dominant mode of transportation on Ontario highways, representing 72 per cent of vehicles on provincial roadways in 2022.

Single-occupant vehicles with High-Occupancy Toll permits can pay to access HOV lanes on sections of the Queen Elizabeth Way, Highway 403, and Highway 410.

Commercial motor vehicles longer than 6.5 metres would remain restricted from using HOV lanes under the proposed changes.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: Ontario government advertising and the 413

To the Editor,

In the 2024-25 fiscal year, Doug Ford's government spent a whopping \$ 112 million on advertising to tell us what a great job they were doing. It looks like they are on track to spend even more this year. The only problem is that Ford's government isn't doing a great job.

According to the Auditor General, the advertisements “aren't providing really good, solid information to the citizens of Ontario.”

This is the case with the recent government's advertisements in this paper. The March 12th and March 19th editions carried a large government ad telling us that the proposed Highway 413 will save commuters time. This is a misleading statement. According to the government's own study, the proposed highway will save commuters 30-60 seconds of travel time and will not reduce congestion on any 400-series highways, but the cost (\$14-18 billion) and the environmental destruction will

be enormous.

A recent study by Transportation Action Ontario and Environmental Defence said if the same amount of money were invested in public transit, it would move two and a half times as many people as the proposed highway. If the Ford government were doing the

kind of job they are spending our tax dollars to tell us they are, Doug's popularity wouldn't be at 31 per cent (Angus Reid Institute, March 17, 2026).

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sharon Sommerville, Mono

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At Bethell House in Inglewood, Robert passed away surrounded by his wife of 58 years, Joyce (Boettger), and daughters Tracy E. Winegar and Ivy Michelle Young.

“Poppa” will be deeply missed by his cherished grandchildren, Skarlytt and Sebastian Winegar-Tontegode. He is predeceased by his parents, Winnifred and W. Ray Winegar, his brother John, and his sister Ann.

Bob was loved by his brothers-in-law David Cunningham, Greg Koehn, Murray Shantz, Stan Shapiro, Herb Quickfall (D), and David Boettger Jr. (D), and by his sisters-in-law June Cunningham, Edith Shantz, Bonnie Koehn (D), and Barbara Quickfall (D). He was an inspiration to many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews, schoolmates, and friends.

By example, he encouraged countless people to take up cross-country skiing, triathlons, marathons, skating, biking, and hockey. His love of the outdoors was reflected in his beloved “Little Piece of Heaven” property.

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A Celebration of Life will take place Saturday, April 18, 2026, at Westminster United Church (247 Broadway, Orangeville) prelude at 12:30 Service to start at 1:00 pm. Reception to follow.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Bethell House in Inglewood or to Westminster United Church Roof Fund in Orangeville. E- Transfer to wucorangevilleroof@gmail.com

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Province to permit 'bring-your-own' alcoholic beverages at municipally approved events

Written By **BRIAN LOCKHART**

The Ontario government is expanding 'bring-your-own' event permits for municipally designated cultural or community outdoor public events, including farmer's markets, movie screenings, art exhibits and neighbourhood festivals.

The expanded permit will allow attendees of these events to bring their own alcohol for consumption in designated areas.

It's important to note that the permitting expansion does not mean patrons of any event can bring their own alcoholic beverages from home. This permit is only eligible in municipalities that approve it and at events where the organizer applies for it.

The province says this will help support local tourism and drive economic growth.

"Starting this spring, Ontario is giving communities more flexibility to safely and responsibly enjoy cultural and outdoor events," said Attorney General Doug Downey. "The 'bring-your-own' event permits will help save attendees money, lower overhead costs for event organizers and contribute to local economies."

Municipalities will be required to pass a bylaw authorizing the use of alcohol in public if they do not already have one in place. A municipality must establish a local process to determine whether an event qualifies as a community or cultural event and is there-

fore eligible for the 'bring-your-own' permit.

Beginning April 30 of this year, event organizers in participating municipalities will be able to apply for bring-your-own permits through the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.

"Our government is always working to find new ways to empower local communities, boost economic activity and increase tourism," said Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance. "By giving Ontario municipalities the choice to make use of this new initiative, our government is directly contributing to their economic well-being while ensuring adults can continue to safely and responsibly enjoy their favourite products."

The 'bring-your-own' permit change will be enabled by an amendment to a regulation under the Liquor Licence and Control Act, giving community and cultural organizations greater flexibility ahead of the spring and summer event season.

Previously, only organizers of live sporting events could obtain this type of permit, typically used for tailgating.

Only individuals 19 years of age and older will be allowed to bring alcohol to events holding a 'bring-your-own' event permit.

The province will continue to work closely with the AGCO to uphold existing rigorous standards for licensing, regulation and social responsibility, ensuring events are safe and reflect community priorities.

CVC plans controlled grass burn at Upper Credit Conservation Area in Alton

Written By **SAM ODROWSKI**

The Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) recently issued a notice, notifying the community that grassland burning will be taking place at the Upper Credit Conservation Area in Alton.

When the burn takes place is dependent on weather conditions but it will occur on a single day between March 30 and May 15.

The CVC says the park will be closed the day of the burn, with no access to the parking lot or trails.

"Controlled burns are carefully planned fires used to create, maintain and protect prairie and grassland habitats," said Kate Hayes, senior manager of ecosystem restoration and management at CVC.

"They help native plants grow while reducing invasive species and are conducted by fire experts to minimize impacts to wild-

life and surrounding habitats."

The intention of the controlled burn is removing invasive, non-native plants. The CVC says this helps to create a healthy native grassland where diverse species can thrive.

"Under ideal weather conditions, smoke from the controlled burn will rise without impacting surrounding properties. However, changing weather conditions could cause smoke to temporarily reach nearby homes or businesses," reads a statement from the CVC. "As a precaution, neighbours are encouraged to close windows and doors on the day of the burn. People with sensitivity to smoke, especially young children and older adults, are encouraged to stay indoors at the time of the burn."

The Upper Credit Conservation Area is located at 20073 Porterfield Road, Alton.

Visit cvc.ca/UCburn for more information and updates.

Fetch a life-changing prize in the Ontario SPCA's Spring Draws for Paws 50/50 Lottery

The Ontario SPCA and Humane Society's Spring Draws for Paws 50/50 Lottery is back, giving Ontarians the chance to win a major cash prize while making a meaningful difference for animals across the province.

The Grand Prize draw takes place May 7, when one lucky winner will fetch a life-changing cash prize. The winner of the fall Draws for Paws 50/50 Lottery took home more than \$144,000 – the largest jackpot yet – showing just how powerful community support can be.

Tickets start at just \$10 and are available online at ontariospcalottery.ca. Supporters can multiply their chances to win with bundle options:

- \$10 for 10 tickets
- \$20 for 40 tickets
- \$40 for 200 tickets
- \$75 for 500 tickets
- \$100 for 650 tickets

And don't paws – buying early means even more chances to win. Four Early Bird prizes of \$2,000 are also up for grabs.

"When you buy a ticket in the Ontario SPCA's Draws for Paws 50/50 Lottery, you're directly supporting programs that keep pets healthy and families together," says Stephanie Miller, vice president of development at the Ontario SPCA and Humane Society. "And, of course, there's the thrill of knowing you could be the one to walk away with a life-changing jackpot."

Funds raised through the Draws for Paws 50/50 Lottery support the Ontario SPCA's Community Access to Resources, Education, and Support (CARES) Fund – a grant program that helps SPCAs and humane societies across Ontario. The CARES Fund provides financial support for initiatives that enhance animal welfare, including spay/neuter programs, veterinary care, and shelter improvements.

Don't miss your chance to win big and help animals today. It's a win-win that's sure to have tails wagging.

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APR 17TH – The Canvas, Carvings & Keepsakes Sale

APR 24TH – The Springtime Tool & Equipment Sale

MAY 1ST – The Locked & Loaded - Handgun Auction

MAY 8TH – May 8th – Toys, Toys and more Toys.

MAY 15TH – Strike It Rich: The Coins & Currency Auction

MAY 26TH - 30TH – Straight Shooter Sale

JUN 13TH – Antiques and Collectibles Auction



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IF YOU or a FAMILY MEMBER are struggling with gambling, Gamblers Anonymous is there to HELP. Call: 1(855)222-5542 or visit www.gatoronto.ca.

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The Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation Board of Directors is inviting applications for available Board positions.

We're seeking community leaders with experience in **finance, marketing, law, community development, or business management** to help guide fundraising efforts and support the future of care at Stevenson Memorial Hospital.

If you are passionate about advancing health care close to home and wish to contribute your skills at a governance level, we encourage you to apply.

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