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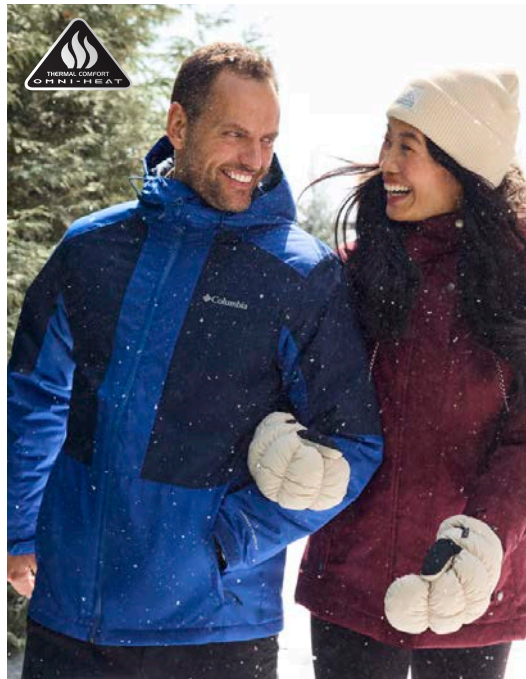
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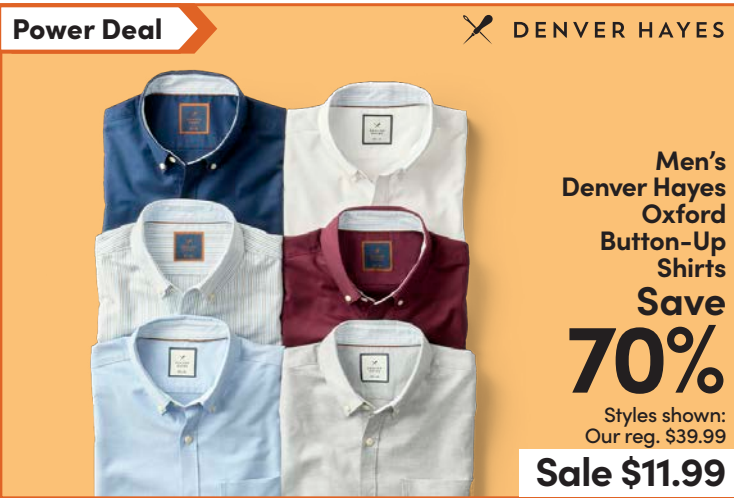


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HollyFest attracts thousands to Orangeville Fairgrounds for two-day Christmas market

Written By **SAM ODROWSKI**
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Orangeville Citizen's inaugural HollyFest Christmas market welcomed thousands of shoppers over two days, offering handcrafted and unique products from a curated selection of 100 vendors.

Dufferin-County-based businesses, charities, nonprofits, and crafters filled up the Orangeville Fairgrounds on Saturday, Nov. 22, and Sunday, Nov. 23, for a one-of-a-kind shopping experience.

"HollyFest was a wonderful addition to an already festive weekend in Orangeville. With Joy and Lights (Festival), the Christmas tree lighting, and our Santa Claus parade all bringing the community together, HollyFest added another warm and welcoming place for families to shop and celebrate," Orangeville Mayor Lisa Post enthused.

"I was so impressed by the incredibly diverse array of vendors, the overall energy of the event, and, most importantly, the generosity shown by the community to support the Orangeville Food Bank... Events like this one remind us what makes Orangeville so special."

HollyFest was free to attend, and instead of charging an admission fee, donations to the Orangeville Food Bank were encouraged at the door.

In the end, the food bank collected 1,131 pounds of food and over \$5,400.

Carrie-Anne DeCaprio, donor engagement and community outreach manager at the Orangeville Food Bank, told the Citizen she was impressed with the success of HollyFest and enjoyed having conversations with attendees about the important work being done at the food bank.

"HollyFest was great because when it opened on both days, there was a lineup



SCOTT MARTIN PHOTOS

FESTIVE FUN: The HollyFest Christmas market came to the Orangeville Fairgrounds on Saturday, Nov. 22, and Sunday, Nov. 23, featuring over 100 vendors. Thousands of people attended and browsed a variety of hand-crafted and unique items during the two-day event. Donations were collected at the entrance for the Orangeville Food Bank, and in total, the organization received 1,131 pounds of food and over \$5,400.

out the door," she said. "I think for myself and the other vendors who were there, that just gives you an initial rush, goosebumps, and excitement that it's going to be a great day."

DeCaprio continued, "Then it just kept getting better and better, with Santa Claus wandering around, the Grinch wandering around, and getting to see all the different artisans and crafters. It's just amazing to see what the people in our community had on display and what they bring to the table."

"It was a beautiful event, and I really look forward to it next year," she smiled.

The Orangeville-based 1849 Lorne Scots Royal Canadian Army Cadets directed traffic through the parking lot, and Dufferin DJs played Christmas music for the duration of HollyFest.

"HollyFest Christmas market was truly magical this year — huge crowds came out to support us, the weekend was full of festive energy, and we were able to contribute to such a great cause in our community," said Janine Taylor, HollyFest event manager. "Thanks to our incredible vendors, whose talent and heart made the market sparkle brighter than we could have imagined."

HollyFest Event Director Doug Rowe said he's thrilled with the community support he witnessed at the market over the weekend.

"What an amazing community," he said. "Thank you to everyone who stopped by and supported the event. Whether you shopped the vendors, dropped off a donation for the food bank, or just chatted with us at the Orangeville Citizen booth, we are grateful to everyone who checked out HollyFest."

Rowe added, "We look forward to hosting it again in 2026."



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Last day to call is November 26, 2025
Pick up dates/times will be assigned at registration.

Mono council looks at improvements for Purple Hill Park in budget talks

Written By JAMES MATTHEWS

When a town council gets out its figurative pocketbook with an eye toward annual municipal budget discussions, it is a good time to broach the state of a neighbourhood playground.

Mono resident Bradley Mayer-Harman said playgrounds and park facilities are generally updated in some fashion every 15 years or so. The Purple Hill playground hasn't gotten any attention in that regard since about 2002.

He asked Mono council during its Nov. 26 meeting if something could be done for that site's users.

"It is a budget item," Mono Mayor John Creelman said. "We're in the process of debating the budget. There is an allocation within the current draft budget for refurbishment of that park."

It's been a long road for the park's users to draw attention to the site, and Mayer-Harmon has been on it at every step.

He told town council as early as October 2023 that he hopes to one day be able to bring his future grandchildren to a revitalized Purple Hill Park. He said then that the 3.87 acres of grass at the park were underutilized, and

he suggested residents would benefit from the installation of a concrete multi-sports pad that can be utilized in summer and winter.

That was after area residents spent a winter maintaining an ice rink on the grassed portion of the park.

Mayer-Harman said he would like to see council recognize the effort and time the Purple Hill community has invested in the site.

"Based on what I've been hearing over the past (number of) meetings, it doesn't sound like there's a significant amount of push in this direction," he said. "We definitely want to see some more action and less talk when it comes to Purple Hill Park."

He said it seems Mono's other playground facilities and parks get ample attention.

"We just don't want it to be brushed under the rug for another year," Mayer-Harman said. "I'm hopeful that this council takes it seriously and recognizes the effort that's gone in the past to bring this to your attention."

"Thank you very much for bringing it to our attention," replied Councillor Melinda Davie.

She said she was waiting for his question about the playground because she was aware that members of the Purple Hill community had compiled a petition as part of their lobby-

ing efforts for the park.

Creelman asked Kim Heaton, the town's recreation director, to provide some details that have been discussed about recreation as part of setting the 2026 municipal operating and capital budget.

Coun. Elaine Capes interjected that the new annual spending plan hasn't yet been finalized.

Coun. Davie said the Purple Hill playground has already been discussed and likely will come up again before the budget is finalized.

"This is an opportunity for Mr. Mayer-Harman to hear from Kim regarding this particular park," Coun. Davie said.

"Does Mr. Mayer-Harman also want to hear that's a two per cent increase to the tax rate?" Coun. Capes said.

"That is getting into the budget discussion," Creelman said.

"So it's only half a conversation we're having here," Coun. Capes said.

Creelman suggested Heaton speak on what's in the budget and, later, explain the rationale for that when council continues budget deliberations. He said the funds could come from both reserve funds and taxpayer-supported sources.

Heaton said there have been recent discussions about replacing playground equipment at Purple Hill Park and a rubber surface at the site.

The requested amount is \$250,000. There is \$104,000 in recreation reserves, so the department requested an additional \$146,000.

Creelman suggested Mayer-Harman take part in the coming budget discussions.

"I totally respect the fact that you're being financially responsible as best as you can," Mayer-Harman said. "But I do completely discard the notion that somehow there's a special tax or the Purple Hill Park being maintained is somehow an additional tax on the community of Mono."

The reality is that there are reserve funds and money every year to go toward maintaining such infrastructure. It isn't fair to suggest Mono ratepayers' taxes are going up because of work for the Purple Hill Park.

"Whenever you did parks in the past, you don't tell everyone, say it's because of this park we're increasing taxes by two per cent," Mayer-Harman said.

Coun. Ralph Manktelow said he's a three-term councillor and he can't recall blaming a tax increase on a particular item.

Downtown Orangeville's Firelight and Frost Weekend cancelled due to inclement weather

Continued from FRONT

Organizers of the Joy and Lights Festival are now exploring new dates in 2026 to safely present these activities and will share information on their plans as soon as details are confirmed.

"We are always focused on the safety and well-being of our community," said Alison Scheel, executive director of the Orangeville BIA. "While we're disappointed to cancel this portion of Joy and Lights, we look forward to bringing these magical ex-

periences back in 2026. In the meantime, we encourage our community to support local businesses this holiday season by shopping local, collecting Joy Book stamps at participating businesses, and earning some chances to win Downtown Dollar prize packs."

Downtown Orangeville would like to thank the many volunteers, vendors, and attendees who helped make the Merry and Bright Weekend, Nov. 21 to 23, "truly magical."

Despite the Merry and Bright Weekend's

cancellation, the Winter Farmers' Market will still take place as usual inside Town Hall at 87 Broadway, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday. As well, Downtown Orangeville's Joy Book promotion is still ongoing.

"Plus, free Santa Selfies and a free Crafty Santa Workshop at Art with Jada Studio (at) 28 Mill Street will still take place this weekend," Downtown Orangeville stated.

To learn more, visit DowntownOrangeville.ca, where times and locations are listed.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Town Page

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UPCOMING MEETINGS

Date	Time	Location	Meeting	To listen in
Monday, Dec. 1	7:30 p.m.	Council chambers and livestream	Special council meeting	orangeville.ca/WatchLive
Tuesday, Dec. 2	12 p.m.	Council chambers and by phone	Official Plan Steering Committee	1-289-801-5774 ID: 114 176 900 #
Tuesday, Dec. 2	4:30 p.m.	Council chambers and by phone	Mayor's Youth Advisory Council	1-289-801-5774 ID: 572 263 932 #
Thursday, Dec. 4	6 p.m.	Council chambers and by phone	Sustainable Orangeville	1-289-801-5774 ID: 369 846 519 #

*Start time of council and committee meetings is subject to change

*For more information on how to participate and to view council and committee agendas, please visit orangeville.ca/meetings.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Discuss life, love and loss in the context of great books

100% CERTAINTY BOOK CLUB

Thursday, Dec. 4
7 to 8:30 p.m.

Mill Street Library

Register at orangevillelibrary.ca

The 100% Certainty Project

Death: Something To Talk About

A Community Reading Initiative

orangevillelibrary.ca

Stories & songs with Santa

Stories with Santa

Friday, Dec. 5, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Alder Recreation Centre atrium
275 Alder Street

orangevillelibrary.ca

Winter parking restrictions

Dec. 1 to March 31

- No street parking between 2 to 7 a.m.
- Street parking is restricted during snow events

Need somewhere to park overnight?

Lots are available at the locations below. Pay attention to the signs and park on the designated side where you will pick up your vehicle in the morning.

- Rotary Park and Fendley Park
- Municipal lot at the rear of 168-178 Broadway
- Municipal lot at the rear of 82-90 Broadway
- 180 Broadway

For how to park on the lower part of your driveway and more, visit orangeville.ca/WinterParking.

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Application deadline: December 5 at 4 p.m.

For full duties, qualifications, compensation breakdown and employment terms or to apply visit orangeville.ca/jobs.

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After-hours emergency	Related to municipal service	416-736-7096
Emergency services	Police, fire and ambulance	9-1-1

Bethell Hospice unveils Butterfly Bereavement display at Headwaters Hospital

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A new art display by Bethell Hospice was unveiled at Headwaters Hospital on Thursday, Nov. 20, to recognize those who struggle with grief and loss.

In recognition of National Grief and Bereavement Day and National Children's Grief Awareness Day on Nov. 20, this initiative provides a butterfly to each participant, who are encouraged to draw, decorate, and colour it however they see fit. The process allows participants to express and release their grief in a healthy, controlled way to help in the healing process.

The butterflies on display were arranged in hanging circles to represent the circle of life and how people express themselves when confronted with it.

Kim Delahunt, president & CEO of Headwaters, said that displays like this one are positive examples of what happens when healthcare organizations work together, and praised Bethell Hospice for its continued support of Dufferin and Caledon residents.

"This is a profoundly important project, and it's, of course, created to honour the national bereavement month," she said. "This project is much more than an art installation. I think it speaks to all of us. These butterflies, which I'm told there are more than 3,500, represent love, remembrance and the transformation that accompanies grief."

"Grief touches every one of us at some point in our lives, and healing is nurtured when we come together to support one another," she added.

Margaret Paan, executive director of Bethell Hospice, said that she is extremely

grateful to Headwaters for cooperating with them to set up this display.

Over the five years that Butterfly Bereavement has operated, participation has skyrocketed, and Bethell Hospice needed to expand its spaces to host the displays, and Headwaters was quick to step up.

"We reached out to the hospital three years ago, during our fourth year, and we said 'could we expand this a bit?'" Paan said. "Headwaters didn't miss a beat. They said 'yes, absolutely, how can we work together?'"

Thanks to Headwaters' support, Paan said more people in the community will know they are not alone, that others are struggling, working through their own grief in their own ways, and that support is available.

"I think bringing grief and loss out into the community is really important," she said. "Letting people know that they're not alone is important. This display gives people coming up and down the hallways an opportunity to see that, to see all the people that participated and reflected."

There is no other group where this reinforcement is needed more than with youth. Thanks to investments by the Ontario government, Bethell Hospice now has a registered social worker who specializes in working with youth, Jessica Marsella.

She said that helping children move through grief is both complex and slow, requiring patience and adaptability.

"According to the children and youth group network, one in 14 children will experience the death of a parent or sibling," Marsella said. "Despite these statistics, it can still be a challenge for parents, caregivers and even service providers to connect these



JOSHUA DRAKES PHOTO

BEREAVEMENT BUTTERFLIES: Staff from Bethell Hospice, including Executive Director Margaret Paan, unveiled the Butterfly Bereavement display at Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC), joined by the hospital's CEO and President Kim Delahunt. The displays are visible to all those passing through the hospital's Ambulatory Care Wing..

children with appropriate support in their communities. Children are often said to be the forgotten mourners, with their resilience, flexibility and play-oriented processing serving as protective factors."

She continued, "These traits can be misunderstood as a lack of understanding or care. The reality is that they express themselves differently from adults. The Butterfly Bereavement project draws attention to the importance of ensuring even our littlest members of our communities have access to the care and support that they need."

As National Grief and Bereavement Day and National Children's Grief Awareness Day pass, Bethell Hospice, Headwaters Hospital,

and their partners continue to advocate for compassion, communication, and understanding throughout the grieving process.

They also hope the butterfly displays will continue to inspire and comfort those who pass them, reminding them that everyone processes grief differently, but support remains available for everyone, no matter the circumstances or age.

In addition to Headwaters, a butterfly display was unveiled at the Orangeville Public Library on Mill Street, with a viewing event on Nov. 21.

For more information on the Butterfly Bereavement project, visit <https://bethellhospice.org/>.

Orangeville council to review 2026 budget with 2 per cent tax increase at Dec. 1 meeting

Continued from FRONT

"Affordability continues to guide the town's long-term financial planning. Like a homeowner deciding what repairs to move forward with now and what can wait, or where to reduce costs on groceries, the town has taken a practical, strategic approach to using taxpayer dollars responsibly, making each dollar stretch as much as possible," said Orangeville CAO David Smith.

"The 2026 proposed budget is about planning responsibly and investing wisely in what matters. Staff have worked hard with council's guidance to develop a modest budget that accomplishes these goals."

Only projects deemed necessary by the town were introduced for the 2026 budget.

When looking at OPP costs, the 2026 budget is estimated at \$6.8 million, representing an 11

per cent increase from 2025.

"Final billing details weren't available when the budget was prepared, but the Ministry of the Solicitor General confirmed increases will be capped at 11 per cent," the town stated.

"Even at the capped amount, OPP costs remain below the \$8.4 million spent on local policing in 2020 (under the Orangeville Police Service), with the gap widening further when inflation is considered. Most municipalities, including those with their own police services, are facing inflationary pressures."

The town added, "The transition to OPP continues to generate savings in Orangeville."

Projects the town says will improve the community are included in the 2026 spending plan.

New fire hall construction is in the 2026 budget, with an additional council-approved cost of \$745,662. This brings the project's total cost \$26.5 million, which is what's required to build

the new facility.

A major project continuing next year is upgrades to Rotary Park, beginning with the installation of a new playground.

A new water storage tank is being funded for 2026, with construction completed in 2025, and the town expects it will be functional next year.

"This facility will help meet increased demand and strengthen the reliability of our water supply," the town stated.

An active transportation corridor project is set to begin in early 2026, and the town continues to prepare for the development of a town-wide trail system. This system is intended to create an accessible, active way for people to get around the community.

Two new Orangeville Transit buses have been ordered, with expected delivery in late 2026.

An additional bus is proposed for the 2026 budget.

"The new buses will help create consistency, support greater accessibility and improve services for transit riders," the town stated.

After the draft 2026 budget is presented to Orangeville council on Dec. 1, there will be a capital budget deliberation on Dec. 9.

On Dec. 10, council will undergo an operating budget deliberation and approve the consolidated budget.

Orangeville taxpayers who would like to get involved in the budget process can provide feedback by attending the listed council meetings and delegating. During a delegation, town residents can ask municipal officials and staff questions in an open forum.

Visit orangeville.ca/SpeakUp to learn more about how to speak or appear as a delegate at these meetings at Orangeville Town Hall.



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Orangeville Town Hall 87 Broadway	DUCA Financial Services 16 Broadway	10 and 10 Garden Centre 634026 Ontario 10 Mono
The Salvation Army New Hope CC 690 Riddell Road	Royal LePage RCR Realty 75 First Street	LCBO WEST 510 Riddell Road
7-Eleven 288 Broadway		



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2026 GMC SIERRA 1500 ELEVATION 4X4 2025 GMC SIERRA 2500HD PRO REG 4X4



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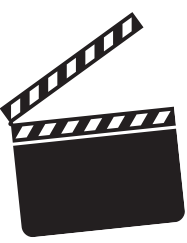
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Arts & Entertainment



LOCAL COMMUNITY EVENTS

Orangeville Lions Club donates \$5,000 to Theatre Orangeville

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Theatre Orangeville is getting a much-appreciated boost to its operations, as the Orangeville Lions Club recently donated money from its bingo fund to help support the arts in town.

“It came out of nowhere for me; we’re absolutely thrilled to accept it,” said Jennifer Stewart, artistic director for Theatre Orangeville. “It’s just wonderful to be supported so much by the community and the Lions Club.”

She continued, “This money is going right into our programming at the theatre. We’re truly honoured.”

Stewart said that every dollar is a great help to the theatre, which is still working — slowly but surely — to recover its income and viewer base from the pandemic. Any and all support, whether that’s coming from individual supporters or other clubs and organizations like the Lions Club, is greatly appreciated by the theatre.

“Donations are greatly appreciated at this time, especially as we’re still recovering from COVID-19 and the drop we saw,” Stewart said. “But I can say we’re up the upward slope, things are getting better. Every boost just helps us get up that hill.”

She continued by saying that support during the fall and winter seasons is crucial. “Donations like this really show us how special our community is,” Stewart said. “People need laughter and joy in their lives, especially this time of year. We need more laughter and joy.”

Sharyn Ayliffe, the theatre’s executive director, agreed.

“This is what makes organizations like the Lions Club so special,” she said. “All the service clubs in town are extremely generous, of course. But the Lions Club really understands the profound impact that arts and culture have on a community, and that’s a very special thing that I think gets overlooked.”

“It’s something that we can take for granted, our books, TV, films, theatre, music, etc.,



JOSHUA DRAKES PHOTO

FUNDING BOOST: Leadership from Theatre Orangeville and the Orangeville Lions Club has been in communication to decide how best to support the creative arts in town, and the Lions Club felt that directly supporting the theatre was the best way to stay involved. As a result, they have made a \$5,000 donation to the theatre, which will go right into the Creative Partners on Stage Program.

until its gone. Then it’s just the void that people notice.”

Ayliffe said that the money from this donation will go straight back into the theatre to help fund its Creative Partners on Stage program, a program specifically designed for adults with neurodiversities.

Creative Partners on Stage actors work directly with directors and choreographers to create two new and original scripts every year, made with the support of Theatre Orangeville’s production team and the accredited support workers of Community Living Dufferin.

The Orangeville Lions Club members said they love supporting the creative arts in town.

Orangeville Lion Dan Roach said they are consistently impressed by the theatre’s hard work.

“The Lions Club is very community involved,” he said. “Arts and culture is very important, and thankfully very well run in our town and very well received. We want to continue playing a part in that, so this is our way of helping to contribute.”

“The Orangeville Theatre is the headstone of arts and culture in this town, and it’s very important to us that we’re involved; they are absolutely a worthy cause to support,”

Roach added.

He continued by saying on a personal level, he has always enjoyed the high quality of productions put on by the theatre, and said that the experience is like no other.

“For a small town, you know, the shows are so well done, so professionally made. My wife and I have seen shows here. Even the venue itself is second to none. There’s so many things there for you to see and enjoy.”

The Lions Club is just one in a long line of supporters who continue to help the theatre do what it does best - deliver quality entertainment right in the heart of Orangeville for all to see.



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Krystal Norris
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Chantal Soper
Administrative Assistant

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Bonnie Rayburn
Receptionist

Bonnie is often the first friendly face you'll see at Orangeville Volkswagen. With a warm smile and a helpful attitude, she makes sure every guest feels welcome and looked after. Whether directing calls or greeting visitors, Bonnie helps create a positive and professional first impression every time.

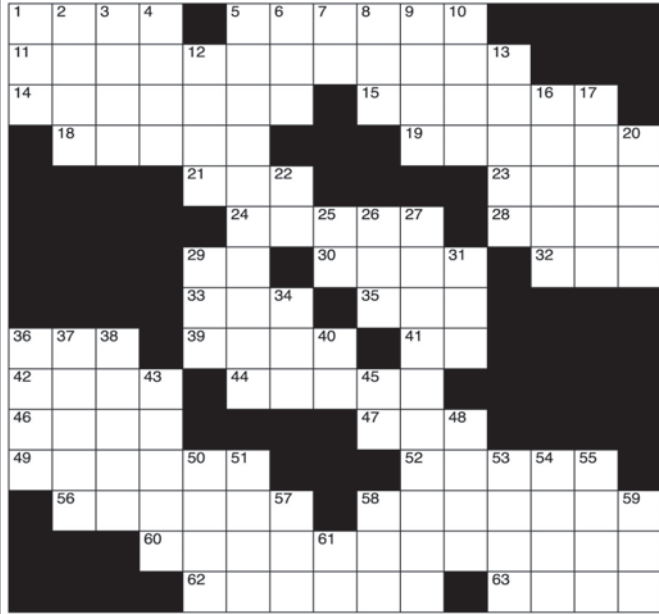


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3 Dealerships, 1 Community

The Citizen CROSSWORD

Puzzle No. 25C110 • Solution on page: CLASSIFIEDS SECTION



CLUES ACROSS

1. Dough made from corn flour
5. Rise
11. Gratitude
14. A low wall
15. Kidnap
18. A cup golfers want to win
19. Outgoing
21. “Partner” to flow
23. Former Michigan coach Brady
24. Proverb
28. Gasteyer and de Armas are two
29. Helps a body recover
30. Baseball Cy Young winner
32. Very fast airplane
33. Offensive baseball stat
35. Body of water
36. Record of one’s

CLUES DOWN

1. A way to plan
2. Three-banded armadillo
3. Mobile
4. Roman city
5. Making sour

6. Take a seat
7. “The Golden State”
8. When you hope to arrive
9. Pointed ends of pens
10. Extinct flightless bird
12. Sharp-pointed dueling sword
13. Nape of neck
16. Problems (Spanish slang)
17. Narrow carpet
20. To avoid the risk of
22. Spiritual academic degree (abbr.)
25. Equally
26. Traditional cars still need it
27. Eligible voters
29. Greek alphabet letter
31. Body part
34. Referee-declared outcome
36. Means to moving money
37. Popular footwear brand
38. Cockatoo
40. NFL’s big game
43. Botswana currencies
45. News-reporting organization
48. Batman villain
50. Urgent request
51. Not all
53. Hallmark’s specialty
54. Knot in a tree
55. Satisfy
57. Notable space station
58. Baby’s dining accessory
59. Stitch clothing
61. ___ and behold

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



kids' corner

How they say that in...

English: Sight
Spanish: Vista
Italian: Vista
French: Vue
German: Sicht



Health FACT!

What is the name of the chart that eye doctors use to measure vision?

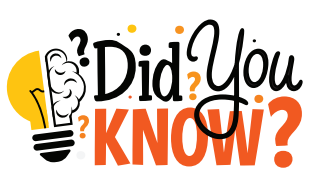
Answer: Snellen scale

Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

REPCEFT NVOIS

Answer: Perfect vision



Did You Know?

Bifocal or multifocal lenses help people who have different visual impairments see clearly with one pair of eyeglasses.





Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Eye exam equipment



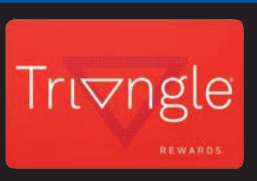
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Orangeville council hears proposal for stacked townhouses on Amanda Street

Written By **JAMES MATTHEWS**
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A housing developer believes an Orangeville neighbourhood can accommodate more residential units than what town officials have classified.

And their case for a higher-density residential development on Amanda Street was laid out for council during its Nov. 24 meeting.

The proposed development will be on

Broadway's south side at the east side of Amanda Street between Wellington Street and Townline. The four properties are located at 9, 11, 13 and 15 Amanda Street.

The proprietors of an Ontario numbered company are asking the town to amend its Official Plan and Zoning bylaw to allow the construction of a five-storey condo development. The land would need to be designated for high-density residential use.

"This is a fairly complete community al-

ready," said Robert Russell, a planning consultant.

"It has community services. It has commercial areas. It has residential. It's growing a bit. It's starting to get some of that more high density residential because to be transit-supportive, the current neighbourhood is not."

Quite simply, Russel says if you have a neighbourhood that can be intensified, then it would be a good idea to allow that to happen.

The proposed development will feature 120 two-bedroom stacked townhouse units over seven blocks.

Some will have two bathrooms, while others will have a single bathroom.

The existing dwellings at 13 and 15 Amanda Street will be kept.

The development will come with 132 underground parking spaces and 124 secure bicycle parking spaces.

"These properties are already designated as an intensification area in the Official Plan," Russel said. "So you've already decided that these properties can be redeveloped at a higher density. We're just saying that, since you approved that, we think the density should be higher than what you previously approved."

The stacked townhouse concept is relatively new to the Greater Toronto Area, and the design provides more density, Russell added.

"The difference between this and an apartment (building) is there are no interior corridors," he said. "Everyone has their own private entrance from outside."

And it provides a more attainable housing unit, he told council.

"I don't want to speak about affordability at this point because we don't know what the prices will be," Russel said. "But, generally, when you're able to put more units on a property and an efficient construction, prices become much more attainable to the people in town."

Some concerns raised about the proposed development include worries that a five-story building may be too tall and have too many units for the area. There have been concerns about neighbours' privacy, given the possible sightlines from an overlooking building into backyards.

People have fretted about the possibility that the development may not complement the existing streetscape and that excess parking will spill onto outside Amanda Street spaces. Increased traffic has also been a point of worry.

Some of the space to be developed, should the proposal get the green light, includes grassed and open areas that are near a creek.

Before all that, some people have expressed concern about the possibility of excess noise and debris during the construction phase.

Councillor Debbie Sherwood said 11 Amanda Street is on the non-designated heritage

registry and, as such, the proposal will need to be looked at by the town's heritage committee.

"I would imagine, since it was built in 1878, it's probably a little rough looking around the edge," she said. "But, even still, we have to think about protecting those types of properties."

Given that the houses at 13 and 15 Amanda Street are being retained, Coun. Sherwood asked whether it's necessary to demolish the other two structures.

Russell said a structure would have to be removed to get a driveway into the condo development, and 11 Amanda Street is centrally located for that.

Coun. Joe Andrews is chairperson of the town's affordable housing taskforce. He said Russell's reference to affordable or attainable housing piqued his interest.

And the stacked townhouse design is a "game changer" in providing such housing options, Andrews added. But the number of parking spaces and the lack of elevators, if entrances outside upper units are accessed by stairs, may rule out some buyers.

The nature of the stacked townhouse style, in which everyone has their own outside door, makes all-encompassing accessibility virtually impossible, Russell said.

"Obviously, everyone has different accessibility needs," Russell said. "So there could be some opportunity."

However, he said the proposed development may not be suitable for people with greater mobility needs.

There will be underground parking for 120 units. Coun. Andy Macintosh asked municipal planning staff how that would fit with the town's model of a minimum 1.5 spaces per unit.

Staff said the development's proponent asks that the policy be amended for the project.

Coun. Tess Prendergast said that 120 parking spaces could double if some of the housing units are rented.

"So as you can see that is a really big concern for us," she said.

"Our target demographic is not families," Russell said. "We have to do our best to reply on the fact that every sales agreement will say there's only one parking space."

Prendergast said Russell cited proximity to elementary schools as one of the attributes for housing at the location. And that would be at odds with saying families aren't among the targeted demographic.

"I'm confused," she said and drew applause from the people assembled in the gallery.

"A two-bedroom unit with one bathroom is not very family-friendly," Russell said. "I don't anticipate there will be demand from families. We can target who we market it to, but we can't prevent anyone from buying a unit."

Amanda Street residents fear proposed development's impact on wetlands, wildlife

Written By **JAMES MATTHEWS**
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Amanda Street residents brought their concerns to Orangeville council about a proposed housing development.

The proprietors of an Ontario numbered company have requested that the town amend its Official Plan and Zoning bylaw to allow the construction of a five-storey condo development. The land would need to be designated for high-density residential use.

The proposed development involves 9, 11, 13, and 15 Amanda Street on Broadway's south side at the east side of Amanda Street between Wellington Street and Townline. The existing structures at 13 and 15 Amanda Street will be retained.

The proposed development will feature 120 two-bedroom stacked townhouse units over seven blocks. Some will have two bathrooms, while others will have a single bathroom.

The development will come with 132 underground parking spaces and 124 secure bicycle parking spaces.

"These properties are already designated as an intensification area in the Official Plan," Robert Russell, a planning consultant, told council on Nov. 24.

"So you've already decided that these properties can be redeveloped at a higher density. We're just saying that, since you approved that, we think the density should be higher than what you previously approved."

Rather than offering an opinion, area resident David Waugh said he had a few questions about the project.

He said he wanted to make an informed decision about the proposal. As a close neighbour to the development site, he said information is crucial to maybe becoming a collaborative supporter of the construction.

By the same token, it's important to know if the condos aren't suitable for the area.

"When we moved here five years ago, this was not something that we saw coming," Waugh said.

And then: "I don't mind bad news, but I friggin' hate surprises," he remarked.

Pouring over the available information regarding the proposed development, Waugh said there's much that was surprising as it relates to the town's Official Plan.

"It doesn't meet the plan," he noted.

His copy of the latest version of the Official Plan is dated March 2025, he said. And he asked if the development's proponents had an opportunity to participate in the plan's review process.

"If they did, hopefully it would've been reflected in the updated plan," Waugh said. "If they didn't, I'd be curious as to why not because that was an opportunity fairly recently."

He said he learned about the plans for the street by way of a mailed notice, and it would've been more courteous to have gotten a knock on his door and heard about it that way. He fears that might be taken as a sign of how the project as a whole will be handled.

The people who became Waugh's neighbours were the reason he and his family decided to move to Amanda Street, he said.

"That's why we're all here," Deputy Mayor Todd Taylor said. "We all love Orangeville. We all love where we live."

Taylor said council doesn't make decisions during such public meetings. Any developer has the right to present a case for their proposed development. And affected residents have the right to give their feedback, he added.

Continued on Page A16



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Olga Saras opens Alton Mill studio offering woven clothing art

Written By **CONSTANCE SCRAFIELD**

Newly arrived as a tenant at the Alton Mill Arts Centre, Olga Saras is also ramping up for her 10 days at the One-of-a-Kind Show in Toronto. These are two of her busiest days of the year. Nevertheless, she was happy to join a brief interview with the Orangeville Citizen to let people know about her new spot at the Mill.

Olga Saras’ studio is set in the former Rare Threads space next to Anne-Marie Warburton’s Gallery Gemma and the also newly settled Magpies’ Nest, on the ground floor.

“Ten years ago, Jordon Grant approached me,” Saras commented. And she has finally been welcomed at the Alton Mill full-time.

Saras started and has been “playing with yarns forever, actually,” is how she remembers her climb up the ladder of design.

“I make very small batches at a time,” she said.

Saras loves to style clothing, especially sweaters and knitwear - it’s her passion.

She said she makes “quite a bit of garments - I love dressing up women.”

Like a motto, Saras believes “beauty will

save the world,” and it gives her inspiration. In her life, she seeks the “beautiful beauty” and rejoices when women embrace it. Nature is huge in design, very much with the Toronto crowd, in that busy place.

“You give them their items with a little branch, an element of nature, and it makes people feel a bit calmer,” Saras noted. “The influence of nature is everywhere.”

As a side note of interest, Saras used to sell her sweaters in a shop in Toronto, and one day, one of her creations was purchased by actress Meryl Streep!

Everything is created on the basis of nature’s design.

Illustrating her point, “We take everything from nature; we’re inspired by nature. We look at a bird – we design a plane.”

This appreciation of nature in her designs resonates with most of her clients.

“Upcycling,” as she works, Saras said, “With the development of my patterns, I make sure nothing goes in the garbage. Sustainability is important.”

She also thinks people don’t need more clothes; they need inspiration.

“My designs are flying out of the shop in peace and lively Alton,” a joke to contrast Alton to the likes of Toronto, which is lively,

but where there is very little peace.

Saras came to Canada from Russia in 1992 on her own, but with a theatre group, trained as a classical dancer.

Just at the beginning of her time here, she was on tour with her theatre group as an actress. They performed in Toronto, and she applied to stay in Canada.

Then: “I met a young man and we got married. We have a son,” Saras said.

They have been based in Caledon for many years: she is local, living locally to the arts centre.

Her new studio at the Alton Mill opened on Oct. 1.

“I was part of Rare Threads,” Saras mentioned, and she has a few ambitions about being otherwise, as well, involved locally.

“I am content. I just want to create almost like a girls’ club. More and more, I have been thinking about how can I incorporate my ballet background?” Saras said.

To teach movement, she considers, “May-

be dancing is very important for someone – you can’t just buy clothes, you have to be able to carry those clothes. I completely abandoned dancing for a long time but I think I should share that with people – right here in Alton – there are a variety of places that would be suitable.”

Saras was clear in how she sees it, saying she would love to spread the word of personal styling and movement, even with and especially in an aging population.

She would like to mentor others to create beautiful clothing as well.

Yet, the One of a Kind Show opens today (Nov. 27), and she has help with the shows; Olga Saras has done the One of a Kind Show for many years – it is very strong for her, she says.

Just in case you like the show too and are planning a visit, you can find Saras at booth F-20.

To get in touch with Saras, visit her Facebook or Instagram at @olga.saras.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NEW SPOT: Olga Saras has opened her new studio at the Alton Mill Arts Centre. Pictured here are two of Saras’ pieces, showing her passion for creating knitwear and beauty.

Dufferin OPP to host free photos with Santa event

On Tuesday, Dec. 9, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) members are hosting a community event at its detachment in Orangeville (390 C Line).

“Bring your big smiles and holiday cheer, Santa is waiting with his sleigh parked near,” reads a press release from Dufferin OPP. “Watch out for a fella who’s green and sly, he might also pop by to say ‘Hi!’”

“Photos and laughter, oh what a scene, Santa will wear red, and Mr. Grinch will be in green,” the release continued.

Dufferin OPP is asking that those attending bring either a non-perishable food item or a new unwrapped Children’s Toy in support of the Orangeville Food Bank and Dufferin Victim Services.

Attendees are welcome to park in the front parking lot of the Orangeville detachment and enter through the front lobby where they will be greeted by members of the Dufferin OPP.

“Please join us in creating a memorable keepsake for your families this holiday season,” reads the press release.

Participants are asked to bring their own camera and register ahead of time at rb.gy/tpz1lc to secure their spot.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PHOTOS WITH SANTA: Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) members are inviting the community to stop by its Orangeville detachment at 390 C Line for photos with Santa on Dec. 9 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

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Orangeville Citizen

HOLLYFEST

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Age Category 3-7

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PHOTOS BY JASPREET SINGH OF SINGHJSNAPSHOT

COMMUNITY SPIRIT: Orangeville's Santa Claus Parade brought the community together for an evening of holiday cheer on Saturday, Nov. 22. Colourful and creative floats rolled up First St. and onto Broadway, sponsored by a variety of local organizations, businesses, and dignitaries. Thousands lined the streets to enjoy the parade, which is ran through a partnership between the Orangeville BIA and Town of Orangeville.



THANK YOU

from all of us at Orangeville

HOLLYFEST

From all of us at the Orangeville Citizen and HollyFest team, we would like to thank everyone in the community who came out to support us this past weekend at our Christmas market.

We would also like to give a special thank you to:

- Orangeville Fairgrounds Staff •1849 Lorne Scots Army Cadets
- Our volunteers and families for their help throughout the event
- Our community who graciously provided 1,131 pounds of donations and over \$5,400 to the Orangeville Food Bank

orangevillehollyfest.ca

Be sure to follow us on social media to stay up-to-date on next year's event.

Federal government narrowly approves 2025 budget with \$78.3 billion deficit

Written By **SAM ODROWSKI**
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Prime Minister Mark Carney’s minority Liberal government approved its 2025 spending plan last Monday, Nov. 17, passing with a narrow 170-168 vote.

The federal budget, which had \$585.9 billion in expenses and \$507.5 billion in revenue, ran a \$78.3 billion deficit. While this is the largest non-pandemic year deficit the Government of Canada has ever run, the Liberals argue it is a “generational” budget with key “investments” to stimulate the economy.

“Budget 2025 is our plan to build Canada Strong – with major infrastructure projects, millions more homes, new defence industries, and thousands of new high-quality careers all across our country,” said Prime Minister Carney. “As we build big and bold, we will build Canadian and buy Canadian. We will be our own best customer, creating new orders, more business, and new careers in our industries across the country.”

However, Dufferin–Caledon MP Kyle Seeback, who said he and his fellow Conservatives reluctantly voted against the budget, classified the deficit spending as “generational debt.” If the budget didn’t pass it would have triggered a vote of non-confidence, sparking an election.

“It was a close vote,” said MP Seeback. “I would have liked to have supported the budget because Canada’s having a difficult time with the trade war with the United States, but unfortunately, the budget really missed the mark.”

He added, “We know that Canadians don’t want an election right now, but this budget was so bad we had no choice.”

MP Seeback criticized the budget for, in his view, failing to address Canada’s rising cost of living, the ongoing housing crisis, and its record non-pandemic-year deficit spending.

In regard to new spending, which the Liberals have called “investments” in Canada’s economy, MP Seeback pointed to a recent statement from the Parliamentary Budget Officer (PBO) Jason Jacques.

Jacques wrote in a recent report that the “PBO maintains its view that the government’s definition of capital investments is overly expansive.”

Jacques criticized Finance Canada for changing the way it reports deficit spending by separating capital from operational spending.

The PBO also suggested that there is less than a 10 per cent chance the Liberal government will be able to stay within its deficit targets.

“The budget is just an estimate of what that (deficit spending) is going to be,” said MP Seeback. “We won’t find out what the actual numbers are until we get all the estimates brought before the House (of Commons) in June.”

“I suspect that the deficit is going to be much higher than what they project in the budget of 78 billion,” he added.

MP Seeback said he’s not convinced the federal government will find the spending reductions they’re expecting and is underestimating the impact of the ongoing trade war with the U.S.

When asked what the Conservative Party would have done differently to reduce the deficit, MP Seeback said program and global spending must be cut.

“If you look at the kind of spending that goes on in certain departments, or what we spend around the world... most Canadians would be outraged,” he said. “Billions of dollars could be saved in what we spend on foreign aid.”

Secondly, he said improvements to the economy could lower the deficit. MP Seeback argues that repealing Bill C-69 would enable more mining, pipeline, and processing projects to be approved in Canada, boosting economic activity.

He said the Conservatives believe they could have lowered this year’s deficit to roughly \$40 to \$42 billion by getting more projects approved and cutting program spending.

Looking at the broader Canadian economy, Seeback is critical of the current unemployment rate, which sits at 6.9 per cent.

Most economists argue that an unemployment rate between 3.5 and 4.5 per cent is ideal for maintaining a healthy and expanding economy.

MP Seeback also noted that Canadians who are not actively seeking employment are not counted in official unemployment data.

To officially be counted by Statistics Canada, an unemployed person must be actively searching for a job within the last four weeks or be on a temporary layoff.

“The actual rate (of unemployment) is higher than that (6.9 per cent), because I know lots of people in the (Dufferin–Caledon) riding who send emails saying they’ve given up trying to find a job,” MP Seeback told the Citizen.

Concerning immigration, the target for permanent residents increased from 272,000 in 2015 to a peak of 485,000 in 2024. Under Prime Minister Carney, immigration is projected to reach 415,000 permanent residents by the end of 2025, but the new immigration target for 2026 has been lowered to 380,000. The Liberal Government said this is to alleviate pressure on housing and public services while stabilizing population growth.

Seeback calls the lower immigration targets “marginal improvement,” but noted that the number of temporary residents in Canada remains high. There were approximately 3 million temporary residents in 2024’s third quarter, of whom roughly 1.5 million held work permits.

“We need to reduce immigration levels, number one, to the level that we can comfortably house (people), not overwhelm our hospitals, and not overwhelm our schools,” said



FILE PHOTO

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE: Dufferin–Caledon MP Kyle Seeback was critical of the federal government’s 2025 budget and voted against it on Monday, Nov. 17.

MP Seeback. “We’ve said that we would get rid of the temporary foreign worker program because too many Canadians are losing jobs to temporary foreign workers.”

While many corporations support the temporary foreign worker program to fill labour shortages, MP Seeback said he disagrees with this sentiment.

“British Columbia brings in hundreds and hundreds of temporary foreign iron workers; meanwhile, the iron workers union out there has people who aren’t working. That’s the perfect example of what’s happening,” he remarked.

Regarding the budget, while the Liberals view it as a strategic, investment-led plan focused on protecting national sovereignty while boosting productivity, MP Seeback and the Conservatives argue it significantly increases the national debt while failing to address Canada’s cost-of-living crisis.

Local museum invites the community to celebrate the holidays at its upcoming events

It’s the most wonderful time of the year for cozy crafts and handcrafted holiday treasures at the Museum of Dufferin (MoD).

“Whether you’re looking for a perfect gift handmade by local artisans or are ready to roll up your sleeves and learn to make something new in one of our hands on programs, the MoD is the place to be this holiday season,” reads an MoD press release.

Register today for workshops on making soap, clay earrings or felt ornaments, and be sure to visit the MoD from Nov. 26 to Dec. 7 for its Holiday Treasures Craft Market. Attendees will be able to browse over 60 local vendors and curated exhibits all at once.

Below is a list of the various programs and

events coming to MoD. Early registration is encouraged to ensure residents looking to attend don’t miss out.

Members Preview Day - Holiday Treasures Craft Market

Free for museum members, the MoD encourages the community to be first to experience this year’s Holiday Treasures on Nov. 23 from noon to 4 p.m.

Registration is available online at dufferinmuseum.shop/pages/events.

Holiday Treasures Craft Market

Taking place from Nov. 26 to Dec. 7, and running from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day, discover unique, handcrafted gifts from more than 60 artisans and creators.

Holiday Treasures Felt Ornament Workshop

Registration is required for this workshop at a cost of \$25 + HST per participant. The event takes place from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Dec. 5. To register, visit dufferinmuseum.shop/pages/events.

Holiday Treasures Soap Making Workshop

The cost to attend this workshop is \$50 + HST per participant and registration is required at dufferinmuseum.shop/pages/events. The event takes place on Dec. 6 from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Holiday Treasures Polymer Clay Earrings Workshop

Registration is required for this event on Dec.

7 from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. The cost is \$35 + HST per participant. Registration is available at dufferinmuseum.shop/pages/events.

Give the gift of history this holiday season

Looking for a gift that keeps on giving all year? Give the gift of a MoD membership this holiday season! Members even get the chance to shop the MoD’s Holiday Treasures event in advance.

MoD members also enjoy:

- Free year-round admission
- Discounts on MoD studio workshops
- Gift shop savings

It’s the perfect gift for history lovers, makers and anyone who loves supporting local culture. Visit dufferinmuseum.com to learn more.

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Grateful Giving creates opportunity to support the Headwaters Arts Scholarship

Written By **CONSTANCE SCRAFIELD**

Headwaters Arts Scholarship Fund is appealing for the public’s support. A recent press release from the arts organization encourages donations to “change the trajectory of a young artist’s life” through the Grateful Giving 2025 campaign.

This campaign supports high school students in the Headwaters region who are pursuing advanced education and training in the creative arts.

The Headwaters Scholarship has helped to launch many young visual, literary/writing, music, theatre, dance and film/media artists since its beginnings in 2011-12.

The difficult news is that today its resources are running dangerously low. Help is needed to replenish the fund and keep these opportunities alive.

Here is a wonderful way to advance our budding creators: make a donation to this fund, as Headwaters promises, which can:

- allow graduating students to follow their creative passions;
- invest directly in local young talent to honour the arts;
- inspire tomorrow’s creators, makers, performers, and innovators; and
- spark aspiring artists to explore, experiment, and express themselves throughout all artistic disciplines.

Artist, musician, and environmentalist Andie Trepanier won a Headwaters Scholarship at age 17. At the time, it was a music scholarship. Trepanier had been accepted at Humber College for the jazz program.

They have now seen great success in their arts career.

“I have a gig on Dec. 5 in Etobicoke,” Trepanier said, “with a pianist, Kevin Stolz.”

Music is still important to them, while painting has overwhelmed their life. The scholarship mattered very much at the time, as there was a lack of funds otherwise, and the award gave a level of economic security.

Trepanier explained, “How much arts matter, there is a framing around asking

about the arts, where it is seen as auxiliary, instead of integral. The arts are not only the life blood of culture, but also a place where we can imagine the new futures we want to see manifest. There is nothing else I could do - there never has been since I was 17.”

Seeing their father, Cory Trepanier, persevere as an artist to fight for his right to create, he had given himself the right to follow that career.

When funding and support for the arts are lost, the community can lose sight of what’s important.

“That scholarship funded the barriers to art for those who couldn’t afford it. Young people deserve support to continue on in the legacy of the creation that artists before them have established,” Trepanier said.

Taking the story of the Headwaters Scholarship back to its 2011 origins led to a conversation with Wayne Baguley, the first person to promote the idea and run it for six years.

There was a journey for the idea and a coming together of people who liked it and could make it happen.

“I always wanted it – to start a scholarship,” said Baguley. “We started the awards and named the first one after Paul Burdette (behind the Burdette Gallery), who was honoured with a life time achievement award by Headwaters Arts.”

They brought it up to the Headwaters Arts Board, with Baguley offering to put up the \$1,000 goal if fundraising stalled.

Caledon Councillor Doug Befford said, “We like what you’re doing, I want to start the scholarship.”

At the time, Marolyn Morrison was the mayor of Caledon.

People were always supportive.

Doug Befford went to council, and they agreed to have a golf tournament. They did this fundraiser, and the owner of Osprey Valley Resorts, Jerry Humeniuck, issued a cheque for \$40,000.

Baguley laughed, “After I had offered \$1,000, there came this \$40,000!”

Philosophically, he offered, “Just from throwing that seed, it all came back.”

The focus was on all six arts. They held a David Petersen Art Ball under the tent at the Alton Mill. Dan Hill attended and agreed to have his name on the music scholarship, and the event was sold out at 230 seats.

There was a fundraiser with David Peterson, who went along, joking, “If it can make some money off my name, that’s okay.”

His wife, Shelley Peterson, is a well-known author.

The Scholarship was a go, “With all these pieces coming together.”

Baguley insists, “The whole future is our young people, and we need to support them. It’s important to keep this going to support the people in the arts. Everybody has to team up.”

He added that they were blessed with a lot of support, which he was grateful for, but now he is clear that another \$30,000 to \$40,000 is needed and that all the players should be involved.

His concern is that attention be given not just to visual arts but also to the rest: dance, theatre, literary art, music, and film.

“And then it’s huge. When we put the arts together, it outsells sports,” he observed.

To pay more attention to young artists, Baguley said, “How do you know the next Jimmy Hendrix isn’t sitting on a bench in Orangeville, if we don’t give him the support?”

There is an issue not as well discussed as it should be, the matter of business: 50 per cent art, 50 per cent business. There is a huge business behind art, and we have to be realistic.

Said Baguley, “This about money. From a business view point, a scholarship is a smart investment.”

Please visit <https://www.headwatersarts.org/grateful-giving/> to make your donation or drop by in-person to the Headwaters Arts Gallery in Alton, Ont., where its staff/artists will assist visitors. Donors will receive a personalized ornament on our Giving Tree.

Believe in the power of the arts. Donors of \$100 or more will receive a handmade or-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NURTURING YOUNG TALENT: Orangeville District Secondary School graduate Danielle Hawkins (right), pictured with Margi Taylor (left), received a Headwaters Arts scholarship to support her studies at OCAD University in Toronto. She focuses on visual arts and earned a dual credit by completing a life drawing class at Humber. Hawkins will be studying illustration at OCAD and plans to be a professional illustrator for comics and graphic novels. She said she feels that this scholarship not only is an endorsement of her talents but will help financially so that she can concentrate on her studies.

ment created by textile artist and Headwaters Arts member Lynn Gilbank.

The Headwaters Arts Grateful Giving Campaign runs from Nov. 22 to Dec. 31.

The Headwaters Arts Gallery, located in the Alton Mill Arts Centre, is open Wednesday-Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Holiday Mondays.

Visit <https://square.link/u/4TeUcyEs> to donate to Headwaters Arts online.



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Amanda Street residents fear proposed development's impact on wildlife

Continued from Page A11

That was the purpose of the public meeting on Nov. 24.

Taylor said it's rare for a developer to knock on neighbourhood doors to discuss their plans.

Meanwhile, Trudi Wood has lived on Amanda Street for about 20 years. Possible increased traffic is a concern for her. The thoroughfare was "inundated" with many cars during the recent Christmas parade, and she fears the introduction of condos will permanently increase traffic.

"I don't think more parking is the answer," she said. "Or no parking on Amanda Street. I (don't) think that's the answer either."

The proposed housing development

backs onto a wetland that's populated by many animals, Wood said.

"We would hate for that to be impacted," she said.

The wildlife and the integrity of the wetland area were a concern shared by resident Amber James, who conveyed her objection to the development by way of a letter to council.

She delivered a petition to council with 489 signatures from people opposed to the development.

"Amanda Street is a beautiful, peaceful, and scenic neighbourhood," James wrote. "I adore that it is quaint and (that is) one of the many reasons I chose this neighbourhood to put roots down 16 years ago."

She and her son enjoy walking around the

neighbourhood in any season and are often met with brief conversations from pleasant neighbours. It shows that there is something special about raising a child in a small town. She said that is something not easily found.

James and her son have seen deer, rabbits, coyotes, groundhogs, and other species of wildlife. The Amanda Street area is one of the last safe havens for wild animals close to the downtown core.

Allowing the proposed high-density development would destroy that natural environment and replace it with cement, further limiting Orangeville's tree canopy, James said.

"I am also concerned about this amendment going through which would cause ma-

lor traffic congestion on an already narrow roadway," she wrote. "It is already difficult to navigate at times when people are using Amanda Street for overflow parking, which many people do."

Mayor Lisa Post said the town's Official Plan allows 49 housing units per hectare. The proponent requests that the town allow a change that would permit 161 units per hectare.

A municipality goes through the Official Plan process as a means to have a say in how the community is built and grows.

"If it was a density request that was minor in nature, I think it could make some sense," Post said. "But when I'm looking at three-and-a-half times (the density), that's significant."



HOLIDAY GIVING: An Orangeville-based not-for-profit service club, the Lord Dufferin IODE, is trying to spread some cheer where it can this holiday season. On Monday, Nov. 17, the group donated \$1,000 to the Orangeville Food Bank and on Saturday, Nov. 22, they donated \$500 to the Salvation Army Christmas Fund.

Six people arrested in connection to copper theft ring impacting Dufferin County

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers recently executed search warrants at four locations, including two rural farm properties and a scrapyard in the northwest part of Dufferin County.

During the operation, police seized a quantity of stolen bell copper wire, stolen tools, stolen vehicles, cocaine, methamphetamine, firearms, ammunition, and numerous other items.

Six individuals from Melancthon and Dundalk were arrested in connection with the incident.

"Throughout 2025, copper thefts have

been on an upward trend in Dufferin County. The Dufferin OPP initiated an investigation following numerous reported thefts and complaints from the public," reads a Dufferin OPP press release.

On Nov. 19, the Dufferin OPP Community Street Crime Unit (CSCU), with assistance from the Caledon CSCU, Grey Bruce CSCU, Nottawasaga CSCU, and Dufferin A and D Platoon, executed the search warrants.

As a result of the operation, Samiullah Khan, 40, from Melancthon, has been charged with:

- Possession of Property Obtained by

- Crime Over \$5,000 - in Canada (two counts)
- Trafficking in Stolen Goods over \$5,000 (including possession with intent to traffic)
- Possession of a prohibited device or ammunition

Gordon Winslow, 33, from Melancthon, has been charged with:

- Trafficking in Stolen Goods over \$5,000 (including possession with intent to traffic)
- Mischief Endangering Life
- Possession of Property Obtained by Crime Over \$5,000 - in Canada (five counts)
- Possession of a Schedule I substance for the purpose of Trafficking - Methamphetamine



COPPER RING BUSTED: Six people were recently charged in connection to a copper wire theft ring by Dufferin OPP. Police seized a quantity of stolen bell copper wire, stolen tools, stolen vehicles, cocaine, methamphetamine, firearms, ammunition, and numerous other items.

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Northmen honours players and winning teams at annual awards night

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

It was the official end to the season when the Orangeville Northmen hosted their annual awards night to honour individual achievement as well as team success. The event was held at Orangeville District Secondary School on Tuesday, Nov. 18.

Players and teams present ranged in age from U9 to U22 and included recognition for several medal-winning squads.

The provincial championship teams that won gold this year were Rep Box U11-1, U22 B, U15 Men's Field, U15 Boys' Sixes, and U15 Girls' Sixes.

Teams that received medals include Men's Field U19 (Silver), Rep Box U17 (Silver), Rep Girls Box (Silver), Women's Field U11 (Bronze), Boys Sixes U9-1 (Bronze), and U13 (Silver)

The event also recognized 30 years of women's field lacrosse in Orangeville.

"I get the same question all the time – 'what makes the Northmen so successful?' I give them the same answer every time.

'It's the people, it's you,'" said Northmen president Kent Davis to the players, coaches, families, and supporters who attended the awards night. "In Orangeville, kids don't have a dream about being Junior A Hockey players. They dream about being Junior A Lacrosse players. The Minor Association is the beginning of that dream."

The evening celebrated the achievements of Northmen players on the Team Ontario Box team, Team Ontario Field team, and the Team Canada Development squad.

Special guests included Junior A Northmen from 1993 to 1996, and Canada Lacrosse Hall of Fame inductees for 2025.

Minor sports organizations can't exist without the work and dedication of an executive who puts it all together.

The Northmen executive for this season included Kent Davis, Cheryl Gillies, Tracy Noble, Kim Bovaird, Mary Lou Gardiner, Brenda Burman, Ashley Stager, Melissa Lackey, Gillian Sinclair, Kristy Hunter, Alanna Deaken, Thomas Witte, and Ashley Hopkins.



BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE: The Orangeville Northmen honoured players, teams and coaches at their annual awards night held at Orangeville District Secondary School on Tuesday, Nov. 18. Association President Kent Davis speaks to the crowd during the event.

Former Dufferin-Peel Skating Club member joins Disney On Ice tour across the U.S.

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

A former skater with the Dufferin-Peel Skating Club has transitioned to the professional skating world and is performing with the Disney On Ice tour in the U.S.

Sophia Thomas trained with the Dufferin-Peel Skating Club at Teen Ranch Ice Corral from age eight to 20.

She is a Skate Canada quadruple gold test medalist and a former competitive skater.

While attending university, Sophia competed for the York Lions figure skating team and coached young figure skaters at Teen Ranch.

Sophia was completing her university degree in the summer when she received

a call from Disney On Ice offering her a job. After finishing her final exams, she boarded a plane to Florida to begin her training.

Sophia has reported that rehearsals were very intense and it took a while to get used to living on the road, but she is enjoying the experience.

The show she is performing in is "Disney On Ice Presents Frozen & Encanto." It is a unique production because it focuses on only two stories – Frozen and Encanto.

The production brings the stories to life with iconic songs, effects and detailed props from both films.

In the show, Sophia portrays Dolores from Encanto.

Sohpia said she has had the chance

to challenge herself, learn new skills, and meet people from all over the world while continuing to grow as a skater and as a person.

She said the most fulfilling part is seeing the joy and excitement in the audience when they watch their favourite Disney characters brought to life on the ice.

Sophia's tour will travel to cities across the U.S.

The full tour schedule can be found online at DisneyOnIce.com.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

LIVING THE DREAM: Former skater with the Dufferin-Peel Skating Club, Sophia Thomas, is currently touring with the Disney On Ice production at cities across the U.S.

Orangeville Otters kick off new season with Spooky Splash event, showcasing outstanding swimming

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

The Orangeville Otters Swim Club opened its new season by hosting the second annual Otters Spooky Splash meet from Oct. 24 to 26.

The event welcomed visiting swim clubs from Hanover, Collingwood, Owen Sound,

Halton, and Port Elgin.

Not only did the event showcase outstanding swimming, but it also brought many visitors to Orangeville, providing a welcome boost to local restaurants, hotels, and businesses.

It was live-streamed, allowing those who couldn't attend to still see the action.

Swimmers, coaches, and spectators joined in the Halloween spirit with fun costumes and contests.

The Otters delivered exceptional performances, earning numerous personal bests, multiple club records, and new men's and women's open 4x100m medley relay records.

Austin Nelissen set a national para record in the 800m freestyle. Alyssa Smyth broke two national para records in the 800m freestyle and 100m backstroke.

This season also marks a new chapter for the club with the arrival of Head Coach Sam Kuntz.

A former swimmer with the Muskoka Aquatic Club and later the Guelph Gryphons, where he was a two-time MVP and OUA/USports finalist, Kuntz brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm to the Otters Club.

His coaching background with Muskoka, the Guelph Marlins, and the Barrie Trojans has already made a strong impression on the swim team.

"It was an amazing way to start the season," said Head Coach Kuntz of the opening meet. "Our swimmers showed incredible energy, teamwork, and determination throughout the weekend. Seeing so many personal bests and record-breaking swims this early is a great sign of what's ahead. I couldn't be prouder of how our team represented the Otters both in and out of the pool."

The 2025 Spooky Splash Meet was a memorable start to the year, giving the Otters the momentum to head into the season with confidence and excitement.

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SEASON OPENER: The Orangeville Otters Swim Club hosted the second annual Otters Spooky Splash meet from Oct. 24 to 26. It was the start of a new competitive season for the local swim club. The Spooky Splash meet welcomes swim clubs from several different towns.

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OPINION

It’s getting hot in here!

There is an old fable of sorts about a frog in boiling water that is meant as a warning for a person’s inability to see, or lack of awareness, of a rising threat.

The frog is placed in a bowl of water that is heated over a period of time. Because the temperature rises so slowly, the little amphibian doesn’t realize how warm it is becoming.

It gets hotter and hotter, and when the water reaches a boiling point, it is too late, and the frog dies without realizing the growing threat that ended its life.

Obviously, you can’t take this moral fable all that seriously as a tale. Any normal frog would just hop out of the bowl when the water temperature became uncomfortable. He’s a frog, not a snail, so animal rights activists don’t have to worry about this.

However, the slow-moving threat is very real in our everyday lives and citizens in this country are starting to respond.

Once again, the federal government is going after legal gun owners, banning more firearms and starting buy-back programs, while at the same time giving illegal gun owners a slap on the wrist for gun crimes.

Legal gun owners do not cause problems. Criminals with illegal guns do cause problems.

Just ask any police officer how he feels when called to an area where there is a possibility some thug has a pistol stuck in his waistband.

However, the courts and the federal government continually go after those who lawfully own guns and follow the laws about the use and storage of firearms.

If you think being disarmed isn’t a big deal, do some research on 20th century world history and see how many hundreds of millions of people were killed by world governments after disarming the population.

I could print some of that history here, but the list is too long.

The water is also getting a little too warm when it comes to free speech. Laws and more laws are being made around ‘hate speech.’

Hate speech is difficult to define. What may be considered ‘hateful’ to some may be seen as just bad social form to someone else.

It is the fact that speech is being attacked

at all is the scary part. Imagine being charged and jailed for having an opinion?

You can be charged, and rightfully so, for threatening someone, however, having a different opinion should not ever land someone behind bars.

I noticed there is a growing number of groups that are trending across the country that are now starting a movement to restore our nation to what it was, and should be.

I’ve monitored some of these groups quite closely, just as an interest. I’ve never seen any notion of violence, threatening behaviour, or illegal activity.

They are just citizens who want the government to listen to them. They are tired of the water being heated and want the heat turned off.

Talking to many people over the past couple of years, I’ve noticed that there are many people who feel the same way. They will speak about it in private, but not publicly, because they know that announcing a public opinion could get you labelled as ‘phobic’, ‘fascist,’ or the popular ‘nazi.’

I’m sure a lot of people who use those terms don’t even know what they mean.

I was at a small gathering a few years ago. There was one woman there who was actually a very friendly and pleasant person.

She was a bit of an activist of sorts, and I think her one flaw was that she would spend too much time in a social setting telling everyone of her political views. Most people I know didn’t appreciate that.

She made a reference to a person, and followed up by saying, ‘He’s a nazi.’

I couldn’t let that slide, and said ‘You mean he’s a member of a political party?’

She replied, ‘No, not a political party, he’s a nazi.’

I chose not to point out her error.

Many people are not happy with the current situation, both economically and socially in the country.

These new groups at least intend to have a voice and make our politicians listen to them rather than towing the line and being afraid to speak up and agree that we have to get a grip and keep our cultural integrity intact.

If the water does start to boil, it will be too late.

BRIAN LOCKHART
FROM THE SECOND ROW



Iran: Drought, incompetence – maybe revolution

Twenty years of strict sanctions on Iran by both the United States and the United Nations did not bring down the regime of the ayatollahs. Half a dozen major waves of non-violent protest involving several thousand deaths have not brought it down either. Even last June’s massive bombing campaign by Israel and the United States did not bring it to heel.

But the lack of water may do what all those other challenges failed to do: destroy the rule of the religious extremists who seized power in Iran in 1979 and have turned the country into an international pariah. The oldest part of every religion is purely transactional, and in Tehran the imams are praying for rain.

They should pray quite hard, because President Masoud Pezeshkian warned last month that “There is no water behind the dams. The wells beneath our feet are also running dry... If it doesn’t rain, we’ll have to start rationing water in [November].”

Well, it hasn’t started raining yet and we are running out of November, so what should people do next? “If the lack of rainfall continues past that, we simply won’t have water and will have to evacuate Tehran,” Pezeshkian said. All ten million people?

Where would the government put them, given that the other 80 million Iranians are also suffering from a drought now in its fifth year?

Nobody knows. If President Pezeshkian sounds well-intentioned but hopeless and basically useless, that’s because he’s not really the government. For the past 45 years, all the big decisions in Iran have been made not by the elected parliament but by the unelected ‘Supreme Leader’, a role that has been filled since 1989 by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Ayatollahs are the supreme religious authorities in the Twelver strand of Shia Islam that prevails in Iran and Iraq. They are not necessarily secular leaders, but in the turbulent aftermath of the Iranian revolution of 1979 that overthrew the monarchy an ayatollah called Ruhollah Khomeini sought and gained absolute power in Iran.

Khomeini only lasted 10 more years, but his designated successor Ali Khamenei is still in office 36 years later at the age of 86. As one would expect, he heads a regime that sees matters of faith and morals (like ensuring that women’s hair is properly concealed) as more important than mere material concerns like looking after the

water supply.

This general neglect of practical matters by the regime also opened the door to widespread corruption among those in charge of the economy, which partly explains why Iran’s GDP per capita is still stuck at about the same level as it was in 1985. The other reason is the sheer incompetence of even those officials who don’t take bribes.

Iran is a mostly arid country with tens of millions of farm families, so it would make sense to import crops that need a lot of water like rice from abroad while growing less thirsty crops at home. After all, a well-run Iran would have lots of oil money to pay for food imports.

Instead, the government has aimed at ‘strategic self-sufficiency’, including in food, and the amount of land being cultivated has doubled in thirty years in some areas. There are around a million deep wells (80-200 metres) for irrigation, and groundwater is vanishing. Subsidence is now as big a problem in Iran as in the areas of the Arctic that are losing permafrost.

Now add in an unprecedented multi-year drought that is hitting city dwellers as well as rural people. Rainfall was down by almost half in last year’s rainy season, so

there was very little water left behind the dams when the winter rains failed to arrive in late October this year.

The great unspoken fear in the minds of Iranians who are paying attention is that this may not be just wayward weather. It could be the leading edge of permanent climate change: five years is a long time for a random deviation from the norm.

In the shorter run, however, it could be the trigger for an uprising that finally dispatches a regime that has overstayed its welcome. All the other challenges to the regime over the years could be blamed on wicked and godless foreigners who were stirring up impressionable locals, but this problem is entirely home-grown. No excuses available.

There are no reliable opinion polls in Iran, but the best guess is that after 45 years at least half the population of Iran actively dislikes the regime while most other people just accept it as inevitable. If the rain doesn’t come soon, and especially if they start evacuating cities, a decisive shift in the balance of opinion is entirely possible.

GWYNNE DYER
OUR WORLD TODAY



My path to local journalism

Good morning, afternoon, or evening to whoever might be reading this. I hope this little article finds you well.

I’m Joshua Drakes, and I’m the new reporter you might have noticed in the Shelburne Free Press and Orangeville Citizen. I’m the new Local Journalism Initiative reporter for Shelburne and Orangeville.

It’s been a couple of weeks since I started covering these communities, and I think it’s about time we should get properly introduced.

I didn’t originally plan to be a reporter. My high school life mostly revolved around running the drama club, playing in school orchestras, and generally being a nerd. English class was really the only time I took writing seriously.

That all promptly shifted when I got to Humber College in the fall of 2019. I tried to pursue a career in engineering.

To put it mildly, it did not go well.

Then COVID happened, and school shut down. That March of 2020 was when I looked around for alternatives that played to my strengths. Acting was too risky and not a very secure career, but then I saw journalism. I could put my writing to good

use.

I actually managed to get a phone call with the program coordinator for the Journalism program at Humber College, and we talked about what I was looking for. She encouraged me to take journalism at the start of the next semester.

I did just that.

The next three years were a blur. I got to experience all the different avenues journalism has to offer. Print, magazines, radio, TV, everything there was to see. I loved doing all of it; each avenue had a new angle to challenge me to do better than last time.

It took me all three years to figure out which avenue I wanted to pursue, but by the end, only one truly captivated me despite all odds.

Newspaper reporting won out, in no small part due to the tough professors I had along the way. I credit most of my decision-making to Rob Lamberti, my old school reporter/professor, who really hammered home the responsibility we have to reporting and what it means to be a journalist.

I didn’t immediately jump into my career after graduation, as my family had just moved to Orangeville, so I instead sought a

temporary retail job to hold me over.

After some time, I started writing for the Orangeville Citizen as a freelancer, covering stories here and there. It wasn’t much, but it was a solid start. In the end, I must have been doing something right, because I was offered the full-time position I currently have. And now the rest is, as the saying goes, history.

So, about my focus.

I cover everything, to put it simply. That means I’ll be covering community events like fundraisers, festivals, and the like, as well as town council meetings and some other political events around the town.

I’ve already done extensive coverage in Shelburne, including the Remembrance Day services earlier this month, local events like volunteer fairs, and, of course, council meetings.

In Orangeville, I have been providing continuous coverage of Theatre Orangeville, leadership changes at the local library, and, more recently, the Christmas Tree Lighting and the Joy + Lights Festival downtown.

You might have seen some of those articles and photos already – I hope that I’ve done a good job so far. I look forward

to continuing to serve Orangeville and Shelburne and bringing you as much info as I can.

Should you have any story ideas you think might be newsworthy, feel free to reach me at josh@lpcmedia.ca – I’m always open to hearing from the community.

If you see me wandering around town, don’t hesitate to introduce yourself. I’m always looking to meet new people from this beautiful community.

On a more personal note, all you really need to know about me is that I’m a nerd.

What that means is that I have hobbies in programming, voice acting, some online streaming, and costume making. None of these are professional, I must add, so I’m far from an authority.

I love movies, especially science fiction and fantasy. Star Wars and The Lord of the Rings are my bread and butter.

That’s about it, really. Now you know a little bit more about me.

I hope you continue to enjoy the writing I produce for the Orangeville Citizen and Shelburne Free Press!

JOSHUA DRAKES
BEHIND THE BYLINES



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COMMUNITY VOICES

Monthly Message: FTP issues community call-to-action for National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

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A lone gunman entered l'École Polytechnique de Montréal in the early evening of Dec. 6, 1989. He methodically targeted female students — in corridors, in the cafeteria, and in classrooms.

Beginning in a mechanical engineering class, he separated female and male students, ordering the males to leave the room. The killer told the women he was fighting feminism and opened fire on them from left to right where they stood, shooting every woman in the classroom. In 20 minutes, the gunman used his semi-automatic rifle and hunting knife to kill 14 women and wound 10 women and four men before killing himself.

Fourteen young women were murdered because the man who killed them hated women.

Also known as the Montréal Massacre, this antifeminist mass shooting was the deadliest mass shooting in Canada at the time. Members of the legislature were swift to respond by passing stricter gun control laws and by changing emergency services policies during shootings to reduce casualties.

In 1991, Dec. 6 was commemorated by the Parliament of Canada as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women — and informally, White Ribbon Day. Annually, flags on all federal buildings in Canada are flown at half-mast, and Canadians coast-to-coast are implored to both wear white and purple ribbons and recognize a minute of silence in solidarity and as a demonstration of their commitment to ending violence against women (VAW).

Each year, for the last 34 years, Family Transition Place (FTP) has remembered the women whose lives were senselessly taken and recognizes this important day. Annually, FTP also honours all the womxn on the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses' (OAITH's) Annual Femicide List. OAITH's femicide definition in-



cludes a gender-based killing of a woman, child, trans woman, 2-Spirited Person, or gender non-conforming individual where a man has been charged in relation to the death in Ontario. By this definition, we know there are many womxn—known and unknown—who are not counted on this list because charges are outstanding.

Moreover, there are countless more victims of gender-based violence (GBV) who are not safe in their homes, safe at work or safe in their communities. Make no mistake, this is happening in all our communities. Yes, this means Dufferin and Caledon, too.

Last year, there were 62 women and children on OAITH's Femicide List. Mothers, sisters, aunties, friends, daughters... people we all care about. One of these womxn was from our own community. Nowhere is immune to the devastating impacts of GBV.

Every year, this day serves as a painful and poignant reminder that we continue to have much work to do to end GBV — and we know we can't do it without the support of our communities.

This year, FTP will be hosting an outdoor candlelight vigil on the evening of December 4th, to recognize the 14 women murdered in 1989, as well as the many more womxn who have lost their lives across Ontario. Additionally, on Dec. 6, we will recognize the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women on our social media channels. We hope you will join us at the vigil in solidarity and share our social posts within your networks.

We are also asking every member of our community to please consider the important actions you can take in your day-to-day lives — this and every month — to demonstrate your commitment to creating a world free from GBV. While it's important to recognize the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, this commitment needs to be enduring if we truly want a future free of violence.

So, what can you do to help us end the stigma and break the cycle of violence?

Please consider our calls to action below to generate important awareness of, and advocacy for, ending VAW throughout the year, at home, and in the workplace.

- Attend our candlelight vigil on Thursday, Dec. 4, 2025, from 5 to 5:30 p.m. at 20 Bredin Parkway, Orangeville.

- This will be an outdoor event — please dress accordingly.

- Share this Call-to-Action letter and engage with and share FTP's social media posts within your networks.

- During the month of November, help us Shine the Light on Woman Abuse (an initiative developed by London Abused Women's Centre) by lighting up your home with a purple bulb. Add a Shine the Light polybag sign to your order to show your community the meaning behind your purple light. Let's turn our communities purple to raise awareness.

- Visit familytransitionplace.ca to access FTP's online store for all awareness items.

- Reach out to your local members of parliament, municipalities and community leaders to ask about their awareness activities and actions related to femicide and ending GBV in our communities and our country. Advocate for more.

- Educate yourself on GBV and VAW issues and rates in Ontario by visiting OAITH.ca.

- Research to understand our current government's position and policies on VAW.

- If you have a flagpole, lower your Canadian flag to half-mast on December 6th.

- Model and talk about healthy relationships and behaviours at home and in the workplace.

ships and behaviours at home and in the workplace.

- Need support or resources? FTP is available 24/7 to help. Just call 1-800-265-9178.

- Donate to FTP.

- Visit familytransitionplace.ca/give to learn about the ways you can support our critical programs and services—many of which are completely donor-funded. Right now, this is more important than ever.

For businesses:

- Support staff to take time away from work to attend GBV and VAW advocacy and remembrance activities.

- Share your Workplace Violence Policy with staff. If you don't have one, create one.

- Familiarize yourself with Bill 168, and your responsibilities as an employer to support and protect staff experiencing GBV.

- Create opportunities for staff to learn about and discuss this important issue, and advocacy efforts you can undertake as an agency or company to help break the cycle of violence.

If you have any questions or ideas not shared here, we would love to hear from you. FTP also provides healthy relationship education and can present to staff and community groups. Please contact Brennan Solecky, director of development and community engagement at 519-942-9142 ext. 240, or brennan@familytransitionplace.ca to learn more.

Please know that any advocacy efforts are helpful. If you are sharing on social media, please tag FTP on Facebook, Instagram or Threads — @familytransitionplace.

If you need support, our compassionate staff are available to help 24/7. Call 1-800-265-9178. If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

Thank you for your support. Woman abuse is not a women's issue. It's a human rights issue and affects us all.

This Community Voice submission was provided by Lynette Pole-Langdon, executive director of Family Transition Place.

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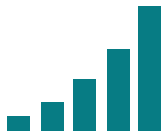


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This role involves photographing community events, photo-ops, cheque presentations, announcements, and other noteworthy occasions. The successful candidate will receive weekly assignments and be compensated for each photo published in the Orangeville Citizen and/or Free Press.

Must be available evenings and weekends based on event coverage needs.

To apply, please email your resume and samples of your work to jobs@citizen.on.ca by December 19, 2025.

Qualifications

- Professional photography experience
- Strong understanding of journalistic ethics
- Diploma or degree in photography (not required but considered an asset)
- Ability to take notes and write clear, accurate cutlines

Requirements

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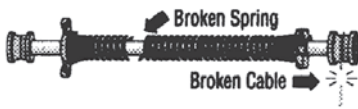
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To breathe or not to breathe

My head is full of the poor results of the COP30, the United Nations Climate Change Conference held this year in Brazil in Belem, a city known as the gateway to the Amazon, to demonstrate at the outset the need internationally to curb and discourage in every possible way, the deforestation of forests and old-growth trees around the world. As these valuable forests are decimated, here in Canada, with the decades of destroying our Boreal forest by development, logging to excess and climate change, the job forests do of absorbing carbon increases the ever-growing dangers of climate change, as they are depleted.

Diana Beresford-Kroeger, “author, biologist and poet of the global forests,” who took part in an Authors on Stage event here in Orangeville, insists:

“When there are no trees, there will be no clean air.

“We won’t be able to breathe.” Simple as that.

That was one of the two-pronged important disappointments of COP30 in the final document, that suggested, at the very least, there be established a “roadmap” to sustainable logging be established, which was only finalized as voluntary.

The second prong vied for how much it also matters: in 2023, for the first time, at the COP28 in Dubai, it was agreed to begin “transitioning away from fossil fuels.” However contentious and difficult this historic declaration was, it survived until this year, when, although the cause of many heated debates, fossil fuels were

actually left off the table at COP30! Left off the table both, but nevertheless it was acknowledged that “fossil fuels are the major cause of climate change” and there exists the absolute necessity to halt and reverse deforestation.

A general agreement was met that funds sent to developing countries that suffer the most harshly from the brunt of climate change should be tripled by 2035, yet without actually naming which developed countries would be sending financial assistance.

Overall, COP30 was greeted with disappointment.

Wopke Hoekstra, European Union climate commissioner, said to reporters, “We’re not going to hide the fact that we would have preferred ... to have more ambition on everything.”

From Colombian President Gustavo Petro, “...the cause of the climate crisis is the fossil fuels used by capital. If that is not stated, everything else is hypocrisy.”

China was okay with COP30. No one from the United States attended.

Here in Dufferin County, there is a constant push and pull to the worst possible proposals that municipal and provincial governments could put forward. It is as though there is a strange and terrible race to do as much harm as possible in the name of beneficial development and jobs.

Doug Ford and his government yakking on about the Highway 413, we might present the 413 as the star of the bad plans. A highway with a useless 52-kilometre route that would cross the Gore Road and cut

directly through the headwaters of Etobicoke Creek and the Humber and Credit Rivers. Picture only those few assaults, followed by many on this region and go on to imagine the destruction of hundreds of acres of prime farmland and the habitats of many species, including some in danger of being lost altogether.

It is very well known, and the Ford government has been advised many times that studies have shown that no highway digging up the Green Belt and the Headwaters is useful when traffic can be better solved by opening the 407 to trucks and increase the convenience of the GO system from Union Station to a number of stations to the “long awaited GO line in Caledon.”

This is a highway with an unknown price tag, last predicted at \$10 billion, but now no number is offered. The assurance is that it will take at least a decade to build leaves us all trying to imagine the trials of a long-term, chaotic and devastating project under construction for years.

One has to ask why. Why so much damage for an unnecessary highway – because it will allow sprawling conditions for developers to profit– but “sprawl is the most expensive and inefficient way to build housing,” according to Environmental Defence. For more information, go to www.environmentaldefence.ca.

Why are we failing to begin truly transitioning from oil and gas? Because fossil fuel corporations love the profits, the ease of staying the course and even the lovely subsidies – lots of money - from our gov-

ernments. No one in Western Canada is talking about transitioning away from fossil fuels.

As for deforestation, here in the north, it is used to supply the States with toilet paper, and in South America, to provide land for cattle. All reasons with better solutions.

The cap of 1.5°C as defined and agreed by the Paris Agreement, so the United Nations Climate Action tells us, is breached temporarily for a month or a week now and then. Hear the bells ringing? Namely:

“The science is clear: 1.5°C must not be breached, to avert the worst impacts of climate change and preserve a liveable planet; global warming needs to be limited as much as possible and as a matter of urgency,” according to the IPCC.

Are we so entitled that we believe we can carry on exactly as we wish, scorning the clear warnings of science and seeing the damage in real time all around the world? Don’t we have to go to the bother of transitioning away from fossil fuels? We do have to stop deforesting the most valuable harbour of them all – our forests.

Don’t we have to mend anything or apologize to our children of the future?

Can we go on exactly as the fools we have been because Elon or Jeff are going to get us to live on Mars, and it is already so bad for us, we’ll feel right at home?

Viviana Santiago, executive director of Oxfam Brasil, said COP30 “offered a spark of hope but far more heartbreak, as the ambition of global leaders continues to fall short of what is needed for a liveable planet.”

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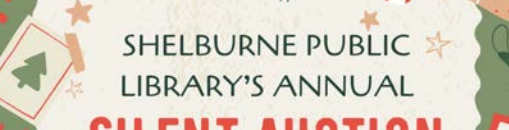


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OBITUARIES

WILLIAM (BILL) CHARLES MCKAY

On Sunday, November 9, 2025, at Mississauga Hospital, Bill passed away at the age of 48 years, surrounded by love with his best friend and wife, Michelle by his side. Loving and devoted dad of Mason Charles and Emmett William. Dear son of Dianne and Ken McKay. Cherished brother of Linda and Adam Fewster, Margaret and Bernard Patterson, Katherine and Jim Obando. Fondly remembered by many nieces and nephews. The family will receive their friends at the Egan Funeral Home, 203 Queen St. S. (Hwy. 50), Bolton (905-857-2213) on Saturday, November 29 for a Celebration of Life from 1:00 – 5:00 o'clock. If desired, memorial donations may be made to SickKids (kindly request donations are specifically directed to the cardiac unit) (sickkidsfoundation.com). Condolences for the family may be offered at www.EganFuneralHome.com



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