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**SWEET DONATION:** Tim Hortons owner Krista Goudreault presents a \$50,000 cheque to Headwaters Health Care Foundation CEO K.C. Carruthers, sourced from the 2026 Tim Hortons Smile Cookie campaign in Orangeville. Read a full story on Page A5.

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## Orangeville woman tells council about alleged drug house

Written By JAMES MATTHEWS

At least one Orangeville resident wonders who she can turn to about ending illicit activities at a suspected drug house in her neighbourhood.

A Montgomery Boulevard resident drew attention to an alleged “drug house” when council met on May 25. She said she lives near a high school, an elementary school, and a recreation facility. There’s also a drug house close by, she said.

“I’m here because I don’t know who can help me,” she said.

She said the drug house is very busy and has become familiar to Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP)

“They always validate my concerns, saying that they know what is happening at the house, yet here I am,” the resident said of the OPP’s response to complaints about the house.

She said she’s reached out to municipal bylaw enforcement staff, and she’s called the Fire Marshall’s Office for various alleged infractions. She’s even made reports to Crime Stoppers.

“Although all is great and I’m sure there’s things happening in the background, I’m here because someone has to be able to do some-

thing,” she said. “I should feel safe in my own home.”

She said her daughter should be safe, but that’s difficult when there are used syringes littering the area because of the alleged drug use.

“There are people smoking crack in the back [of the house], in the front during the day as kids are walking by,” she said.

She’s knocked on the house’s windows and pleaded for the drug users to take their activities inside.

“Do what you need to do, but it doesn’t have to be at 8 a.m. when kids are walking to school,” she said.

Orangeville Mayor Lisa Post said it sounds as if the resident has taken the correct steps and done the right things to alert the authorities. Post and Deputy Mayor Todd Taylor are members of the town’s Police Services Board, and the allegation will be raised at the board’s next meeting, she said.

Councillor Rick Stevens said he also lives in that neighbourhood, and he’s read social media posts by other Montgomery Boulevard residents about the house. He applauded the woman for coming forward and bringing it to council.

“We are listening,” Stevens said.

Taylor said it is important for people to bring such concerns to council. He said he contacted the local OPP detachment’s inspector and asked some questions.

“The answers that I can give you are frustrating, but should also make you feel good,” Taylor said.

He said the police’s street crime officers have a good grasp of illicit drug activity in Orangeville. At some point, the drug dealers and users get what’s coming to them, but there’s a process that needs to play out.

“They know all the spots,” he said. “They know all the players. They’re on these guys.”

Crime in Orangeville is on the decline, he said. Compared to similar-sized Ontario municipalities, Orangeville’s crime rate is low.

“Orangeville is a very safe place to be,” Taylor said, and added that there are indeed some issues that need to be addressed.

Coun. Tess Prendergast thanked the resident for sharing her story. She knows what it is like living in a city where you have to watch for needles before children play.

“And I’m sad that Orangeville is turning into that kind of place,” Prendergast said. “There are people using intravenous drugs and the reality is we need to be more diligent when our kids are playing.”

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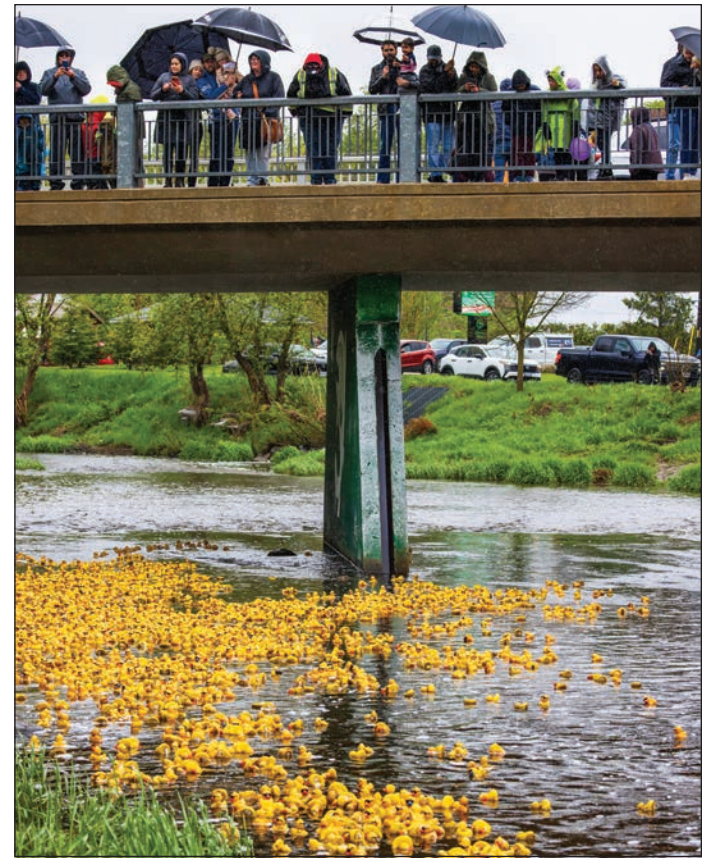


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SCOTT MARTIN PHOTOS

**BIG SPLASH:** The Grand Valley Lions Annual Duck Race came to Hereward Park on Saturday, May 23, with 4,000 ducks dropping from a crane into the Grand River. Early estimates indicate the event raised about \$35,000 for the Grand Valley Lions, who will use those funds to support local not-for-profits, community projects, and initiatives. In total, 86 people had winning ducks and received a total of \$32,520.14, with the top prize of \$2,700 going to Ken Foster. The event had a solid turnout despite torrential downpours throughout the day.

## Orangeville's second annual Mrs. Roper Romp returns to Broadway this weekend

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The second annual Mrs. Roper Romp is set to return to downtown Orangeville on May 30, bringing a colourful celebration of 1970s nostalgia, community spirit and fundraising to Broadway.

The event, inspired by the beloved catan-wearing character Helen Roper from the classic sitcom *Three's Company*, will take place Saturday, beginning at noon at Orangeville Town Hall (87 Broadway).

Event organizer Sophie Weber said this romp is even bigger than the first one, and is now at her capacity to coordinate.

"I was hoping we'd get 100 people in the first one, and when we got 50, it was manageable," she said. "But now that we've got 100, I want more. I think we can do more. I'll need more

hands to do that, but I believe Orangeville can do it."

Participants are encouraged to dress in flowing kaftans, bright polyester outfits, oversized wigs and retro accessories before taking part in a lively "romp" through the downtown core. While advance online registration has been strongly encouraged, organizers say walk-ins will still be accepted on Saturday. Admission at the door will be \$25, cash only.

Following check-in and a group photo at Town Hall, participants will walk along Broadway and Mill Street before heading to an after-party at Josie's Tap House, which organizers say will be transformed into a 1970s-style "Regal Beagle" inspired by the show. The afternoon will include music, a "Romper Catwalk," games, prizes, themed snacks and specialty drinks.

This year's event will support the Alzheimer

Society of Dufferin County, helping fund programs and services for residents living with dementia and their families.

One of the biggest additions this year will be the appearance of actress and voice performer Stevie Vallance, who appeared on the spin-off series *The Ropers* as the character Jenny Weber. She believes it could be one of the first Mrs. Roper Romps to feature a cast member from the television franchise on-site and in character.

"It is amazing to have her, and more so, she's gonna be in character," Weber said. "She said that she has not dressed up as Jenny, which was her character on *The Ropers*, for 46 years."

Weber also highlighted the event's focus on accessibility and inclusion, noting that the after-party venue, the recently rebranded Josie's Tap House at 34 Mill Street, was selected in

part because it is accessible to attendees of all abilities. She also spoke highly of the new owners for their willingness to accommodate the romp.

"You can't have an event like this without having it accessible and making it good for everyone to attend," she said. "That's one of the things I look for every time I choose an event space. The new owners of the Taphouse have been so fabulous. They didn't have to really do this, but they really wanted us to come back."

With more experience, a bigger crowd, and celebrity guests, the second annual Orangeville Mrs. Roper Romp promises to bring back all the fun the first year had, with even more to offer in 2026.

For more information, go to [facebook.com/events/orangeville-town-hall/mrs-roper-romp-orangeville-season-2/2106266713508684/](https://facebook.com/events/orangeville-town-hall/mrs-roper-romp-orangeville-season-2/2106266713508684/)

## School bus driver charged with stunt driving after travelling 100km/h in posted 50km/h zone

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers have charged a school bus driver from Beeton with stunt driving after she was observed travelling 100 km/h in a posted 50 km/h zone.

On May 26, just before 4 p.m., Dufferin OPP officers were conducting traffic enforcement

in the area of County Road 17 and Prince of Wales Road in Mulmur when they observed a school bus travelling at a high rate of speed.

Officers initiated a traffic stop and spoke with the driver regarding the excessive speed, particularly given that children were on board the bus at the time of the offence.

As a result of the investigation, a 56-year-old female from Beeton has been charged with:

- Speeding 50+ km/h over posted limit
- Drive motor vehicle - perform stunt - excessive speed
- Driver fail to surrender licence

This incident is particularly concerning given the location. Just over five weeks ago, the same intersection was the scene of a fatal two-vehicle collision. Incidents such as this highlight the importance of safe and responsible driving, especially when transporting children.



Orangeville Transit

### Orangeville Transit updates coming June 1

Orangeville Transit will be making updates to stops on the Blue and Orange routes. These changes reflect feedback from riders, drivers and the transit accessibility audit, with a focus on safety, reliability and convenience.

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# Island Lake Conservation Area hosting Seniors Day event in early June

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Seniors from across Dufferin County are encouraged to spend a morning outdoors at Island Lake Conservation Area during a dedicated Seniors Day on Wednesday, June 3, which offers free admission and a full slate of accessible activities.

Organized by the Friends of Island Lake in partnership with conservation area staff, the event runs from 9 a.m. to noon and is designed to help older adults discover – or rediscover – a major natural asset sitting just across Highway 10 from Orangeville.

Event organizer Jane Lightle said that the event is one of many activities run by the Friends of Island Lake to boost community engagement and get people outside.

“It’s one more activity that we’re trying to

do to encourage seniors to get out into nature and appreciate Island Lake in our community,” she said. “It’s a real collaborative event between the Friends of Island Lake and the staff here. The volunteers, along with the staff, work really well together.”

Volunteers and staff have been working together on the program since at least 2017, with the goal of giving seniors an easy, welcoming way to enjoy nature close to home.

Entertainment will be centred around the amphitheatre stage, where local ukulele groups, including the Ukuladies & Ukuladdies, are scheduled to perform alongside visiting groups from Fergus and Orillia.

The program also features line dancing from Chartwell Montgomery Village, along with a chair yoga session led by Taylor from GoYoga, offering participants low-impact options to get moving and stay active.

Lightle said that accessibility is a core focus of the event.

“It’s going to be free admission for 65-plus and a companion through the gatehouse,” she said.

“We actually have three of our senior centers bringing groups by their shuttle, and then we’ll provide a shuttle from the parking lot over to the amphitheatre where the performances will be.”

For those looking to see more of the site, wagon-ride tours will travel to the Memorial Forest, a feature many seniors appreciate for its natural setting and reflective atmosphere.

Light refreshments will be available on-site, supported by longstanding event sponsors who have backed the Seniors Day for several years. Additional sponsorship from Avalon and Chartwell Montgomery Village

helps the Friends of Island Lake raise funds for trail repairs and other conservation projects at the site.

The event will proceed rain or shine, with organizers hopeful for clear skies after past years where weather and air quality have posed challenges. With fun performances, interactive activities, prepared food and refreshments, the Island Lake Seniors Day promises to be a fun opportunity to get out and get moving.

Alongside promoting Seniors Day, the Friends of Island Lake group continues to recruit new members, host trail donation days, and support other community events to keep Island Lake active, accessible, and well-used by local residents.

For more information on Friends of Island Lake, go to: [cvcfoundation.ca/about-us/friends-of-island-lake](http://cvcfoundation.ca/about-us/friends-of-island-lake).

# Organizers deem Community Living’s Walk, Roll or Ride event an overwhelming success

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

About 100 people filled the streets of downtown Orangeville last week as Community Living Dufferin’s rescheduled Inclusive Walk, Roll or Ride event brought residents together in celebration of inclusion, belonging and community spirit during Community Living Month.

Originally postponed by a week due to poor weather, the May 21 event saw participants gather at Rotary Park in Orangeville before making their way through the downtown core dressed in blue and green Community Living Dufferin gear. Participants carried signs spreading positive messages of inclusion.

Executive Director Diane Kite described the event as a success, bringing together individuals supported by the organization, staff, families and supporters.

“The community walk was a tremendous success this year,” she said. “The event brought together individuals supported by Community Living Dufferin, staff, families and supporters in a meaningful and positive way. It was wonderful to see so many people come together to celebrate inclusion, community connection, and belonging during Community Living Month.”

Kite described the atmosphere as powerful, saying that the walk’s family-friendly features appealed to everyone, not just those on the walk.

“The atmosphere throughout the event was energetic, welcoming, and full of community spirit,” she said. “Duffy, our Community Living Dufferin mascot, was a huge hit with participants and members of the public alike.”

Kite estimated approximately 100 people took part throughout the event, creating what organizers called a visible and positive presence in the community while helping raise awareness for people with developmental disabilities.

As participants moved through downtown, organizers said members of the public responded enthusiastically, waving, honking their horns, and cheering on the walkers.

“Throughout the walk, community members waved, smiled, honked their horns, and cheered participants on in support,” Kite said. “We were extremely pleased with the level of participation and support shown by the community. Having such a great number of participants helped create a visible and positive presence in the community.”

Although the walk had originally been planned to stop near Orangeville Town Hall to connect with local council members, organizers said municipal representatives and dignitaries were unable to attend due to scheduling conflicts connected to the rescheduled date.

“While we were disappointed they could not join us, we appreciated the support and encouragement many community leaders expressed beforehand,” Kite said. “We look forward to strengthening those connections and hopefully welcoming local representatives to future events alongside Duffy and our growing community participation.”

Following the strong turnout and public response, Kite said Community Living Dufferin plans to make the walk a yearly tradition.

“Based on the overwhelmingly positive response and successful turnout, we absolutely see this becoming an annual Community Living Month event,” she said. “The walk



RACHEL IVANYSHYN PHOTO

**SUCCESSFUL STEPS:** With 100 participants energized by the Community Living Dufferin (CLD) mascot, Duffy, the CLD’s Walk, Roll or Ride event was a resounding success. It engaged the public and advocated for community members with disabilities. Due to strong local support, the walk is likely to become an annual event.

provided a wonderful opportunity to bring people together, raise awareness, celebrate inclusion, and strengthen community relationships.”

Kite continued, “We believe events like this are an important reminder of the value of creating inclusive communities where everyone feels welcomed, respected, and connected.”

She added that more awareness campaigns, volunteer opportunities, fundraising events, and inclusive community activities are planned throughout the year as the organization continues to promote inclusion and community engagement across Dufferin County.

Community Living is always looking for contributions from the public, and anyone interested is encouraged to reach out.

“There are many ways for people to get involved and support Community Living Dufferin,” Kite said. “Community members can participate in future events, volunteer their time, attend fundraising activities, make donations, advocate for inclusion, partner with us through local businesses or organizations, or simply help spread awareness about the importance of inclusive communities.”

“Every contribution, whether through time, resources, or financial support, helps strengthen programs and opportunities for individuals supported by Community Living Dufferin,” she added.

With a successful walk behind them, Community Living continues to make a lasting impact on the community by advocating for and supporting people with disabilities.

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**Town of Orangeville**

## Upcoming meetings

June 2026

<b>Official Plan Steering Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, June 2 at 12 p.m.</b> Council chambers, 87 Broadway
<b>Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council</b>	<b>Tuesday, June 2 at 4:30 p.m.</b> Council chambers, 87 Broadway
<b>Committee of Adjustment</b>	<b>Wednesday, June 3 at 6 p.m.</b> Council chambers, 87 Broadway
<b>Sustainable Orangeville</b>	<b>Thursday, June 4 at 6 p.m.</b> Council chambers, 87 Broadway
<b>Council (regular)</b>	<b>Monday, June 8 at 7 p.m.</b> Council chambers, 87 Broadway Live stream: <a href="http://orangeville.ca/WatchLive">orangeville.ca/WatchLive</a>
<b>Economic Development and Culture Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, June 9 at 8 a.m.</b> Lakeview boardroom (upper level), 200 Lakeview Crt. Call in: 1-289-801-5774 ID: 181 820 288#
<b>Access Orangeville</b>	<b>Thursday, June 11 at 6 p.m.</b> Council chambers, 87 Broadway
<b>Orangeville OPP Detachment Board</b>	<b>Tuesday, June 16 at 4:30 p.m.</b> Council chambers, 87 Broadway
<b>Heritage Orangeville</b>	<b>Thursday, June 18 at 6 p.m.</b> Council chambers, 87 Broadway
<b>Council (public meeting)</b>	<b>Monday, June 22 at 7 p.m.</b> Council chambers, 87 Broadway Live stream: <a href="http://orangeville.ca/WatchLive">orangeville.ca/WatchLive</a>
<b>Orangeville Public Library Board</b>	<b>Wednesday, June 24 at 5 p.m.</b> Mill Street Library, 1 Mill St. Call in: 1-289-801-5774 ID: 409 287 03#

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

Meeting dates/times are subject to change.

For agendas and participation details, visit [orangeville.ca/meetings](http://orangeville.ca/meetings).



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**SUPPORTING HEADWATERS:** Orangeville M&M Food Market raised nearly \$1,000 for Headwaters Health Care Foundation during its annual community BBQ on Saturday, May 31. Despite heavy rain and strong wind, there was still a solid turnout, with attendees exchanging donations for a hamburger, hot dog and M&M's free samples. Money is still be collected at the local M&M Food Market until May 31.

## Knowledge is power against human trafficking, advocate tells council

Written By JAMES MATTHEWS

Gender and geography matter little when it comes to people who victimize others through human trafficking.

Arunas Kalinauskas, the CRYNoT committee's chairperson, told Orangeville council during its May 25 meeting that Dufferin County's proximity to the 400 series of highways should increase wariness of human trafficking.

CRYNoT is a committee of citizens, members of the Compass Community Church, Orangeville Rotary Club, and youth representatives who came together to safeguard Dufferin-Caledon against human trafficking.

"It could be anyone," Kalinauskas said of victims. "Could be of any race, colour, creed, gender. It really doesn't matter, and it's challenging that way."

According to Dufferin-Caledon Victim Services, there were 22 human trafficking victims from that area in 2018-19. Those victims were the ones of whom authorities were aware. Seven of them were younger than 18 years old.

That number increased to 35 in 2024-25.

Again, that number represents victims of which authorities are aware.

Kalinauskas said the average recruitment age is between 12 and 14 years old. Peel Region is a hub for human trafficking because of its proximity to Pearson International Airport and Highway 401.

"Traffickers are usually known to their

victims, which is also concerning," he said. "Each victim is worth around \$280,000 a year to the trafficker."

Orangeville is a small, rural municipality, and Kalinauskas said that makes it an attractive target to traffickers.

Trafficking begins with the luring of the victim before what's called grooming and gaming. Then coercion and manipulation lead to exploitation.

Kalinauskas said CRYNoT is a small group that does what it can to raise awareness about the scourge of human trafficking. They speak to school parent councils, service clubs, church groups, and youth clubs.

"Any group that is willing to listen and be concerned because the more people that know about this, the better off we all will be," he said.

The committee has also undertaken social media campaigns.

"But more needs to be done," Kalinauskas said.

Councillor Joe Andrews said it is well known that the Highway 9-Highway 10 intersection is one of the province's most vulnerable human trafficking sites.

"People don't believe it, but it is, in fact, data-driven," he said of that intersection.

He said that, given the fact that such crime is under the radar in comparison to other criminal enterprises, it is imperative to increase awareness about human trafficking.

"The community needs to know about this," he said.

## Orangeville accessibility advocates recognized for their contributions

Written By JAMES MATTHEWS

A pair of advocates for improved accessibility in Orangeville received kudos for their efforts.

Orangeville residents Tamara Limebeer and Rick Ugolini were recognized during council's May 25 meeting for their efforts lobbying for a safer and more inclusive municipal environment.

Gary Marchand said their efforts should not go unrecognized and, further, their contributions to the community should be celebrated.

Limebeer and Ugolini are hardworking community assets who regularly attend council meetings and contribute to the public discourse about important issues on residents'

behalf, he said.

Michelle Hartley, another Orangeville resident, spoke about a Letter to the Editor published in the May 21 edition of The Citizen in appreciation of Limebeer and Ugolini. Particularly, she cited a claim in the letter that the advocates are not always accepted at council meetings with the respect and dignity they are due.

"I have not seen that and that upset me," Hartley said.

She said she is a member of a town committee, and she has at times been spoken to rudely.

"That happens in the heat of a moment," she said, and added that the letter writer may have been misinformed.

## Smile Cookie Campaign celebrates 20 years of giving back with \$50,000 raised

Headwaters Health Care Foundation (HHCF) is proud to celebrate another year of community generosity, as the 2026 Tim Hortons Smile Cookie campaign raised \$50,000 in support of local health care.

This milestone year also marks the 20th consecutive year that Orangeville Tim Hortons restaurant owners and their teams have supported HHCF through the annual initiative.

Over the course of the week-long campaign, thousands of Smile Cookies were sold across all Orangeville Tim Hortons locations, with 100 per cent of proceeds once again directed to HHCF. Funds raised will help support priority equipment needs and enhance patient care at Headwaters Health Care Centre.

"We are so grateful for the continued commitment of our Tim Hortons partners and this caring community," said K.C. Carruthers, CEO of Headwaters Health Care Foundation. "For two decades, the Smile Cookie campaign has brought people together in a simple but powerful way. Every cookie purchased represents compassion, generosity, and a shared belief in the importance of local health care. This year is especially meaningful as we celebrate 20 years of impact at our community hospital."

The success of the campaign is made possible by the dedication of Orangeville's

Tim Hortons restaurant owners, their staff, customers and the many volunteers who lend their time to decorate cookies and engage the community.

"We are incredibly proud to continue this tradition and to mark 20 years of supporting Headwaters Health Care Foundation," said Krista Goudreault and Cara Preuss, owners of local Orangeville Tim Hortons.

"The Smile Cookie campaign is something our guests look forward to every year, and it's inspiring to see how such a small gesture can make such a big difference right here at home. We're thankful to everyone who helped make this year such a success."

Since its inception, the Smile Cookie campaign has become a cornerstone fundraising initiative, especially for HHCF, contributing over \$500,000 toward ensuring exceptional health care close to home. The 2026 campaign builds on that legacy, reinforcing the power of community partnerships.

"The impact of this program cannot be overstated," said Carruthers. "Year after year, it helps us invest in vital equipment that benefit patients and families across our region. From the irresistible smell and taste of Smile Cookies to the generosity behind each purchase, we deeply appreciate the ongoing support from Tim Hortons and everyone who participates."

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# Special Olympics athlete heading to Unified Football World Cup in Paris

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

Shelburne's Yazmine Wilson-Daponte is headed to Paris, France, this summer after earning a spot on Team Canada's roster for the 2026 Special Olympics Unified Football World Cup.

"I'm very excited for Paris," she said. "I'm excited to meet new friends there. I'm excited to have a good time."

Yazmine, 18, will join her 10 teammates from across the province for an international competition featuring teams from 24 countries. Team Canada will play matches against Egypt, Slovakia, and Hong Kong in group-stage play from July 6 to 11.

Unified sports teams, such as the one Yazmine is competing with in Paris, pair athletes with and without intellectual disabilities. This helps athletes with disabilities thrive alongside their teammates who can set them up for plays and mentor them off the field.

Yazmine, who has autism, is among six athletes with intellectual disabilities on Team Canada.

Her mother, Karrie Daponte, said while her daughter may not fully grasp the scale of the opportunity, she is elated in her own way, and the significance may catch up to her once

she's on the soccer field in Paris.

"She is so excited to be on the team and wear the uniform... but she doesn't really understand what an opportunity this is," said Daponte.

That opportunity began with a tryout. One where Yazmine had no idea she was being evaluated.

Daponte simply told her daughter they were going to play soccer with some women and learn new skills. They attended three sessions that way, with no pressure, no expectations.

"I never thought she would make it," Daponte said. "I personally think she was picked because of her enthusiasm... when she plays soccer she's always encouraging everybody, and all you hear is her."

Yazmine's enthusiasm and encouragement of teammates didn't go unnoticed.

Special Olympics Ontario said during tryouts, athletes were selected not only for their athletic ability but also their commitment to inclusion, teamwork and community leadership.

By that measure, Yazmine was a natural fit.

Team Canada needs to raise \$1,500 per athlete (part of a \$25,000 goal). To help reach that goal, Yazmine is participating in a Celebrity Server Night at Orangeville Boston Pizza

on June 2 from 5 to 8 p.m., with a men's soccer jersey raffle.

She's also collecting Canadian-themed pins and maple leaf memorabilia to trade with athletes from other countries, and is encouraging donations. Those looking to donate can reach Daponte at kdaponte1975@hotmail.com.

For her, Yazmine's journey to Paris represents something much bigger than soccer.

"At one point, she was nonverbal, so you appreciate all the little things," Daponte said.

She has navigated the challenges of raising a child with autism largely out of public view — from meltdowns during drives to sports to uncertainty about the future

Daponte kept Yazmine involved in the community, not because it was easy, but because it was necessary. Yazmine thrives outside the home, and her mother recognized early that giving her every opportunity to be part of something, whether it was a team, a program, or a community, was the best thing she could do.

Those years of showing up, of pushing through, of appreciating every small step forward, led Yazmine here — a flight to Paris and a place on Team Canada.

"Those little successes may not mean anything to anybody else, but to her, to us, it's a big thing," she said.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PARIS BOUND: Shelburne's Yazmine Wilson-Daponte holds up a medal from a Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools competition ahead of representing Team Canada at the 2026 Special Olympics Unified Football World Cup in Paris this summer.

# County report shows more paramedics are needed to improve rural response times

Written By JAMES MATTHEWS

In keeping with the universal truth found in Beatles lyrics, rural paramedic services sometimes "get by with a little help from their friends" — or in this case, neighbours.

That's one of the takeaways from a look at Dufferin County Paramedic Services' rural response times, detailed in a report tabled at a May county council meeting.

The average response time in 2025 for all types of calls countywide was almost nine minutes. For high acuity calls, the average response time in 2025 was 07:02. The shortest average response time for high-acuity calls last year was in Shelburne at 05:32.

The longest average response time for high-acuity calls was in Mulmur at 15:11.

Councillor Chris Gerrits, Amaranth's mayor, said some of the rural response times are nothing short of amazing. Regarding Amaranth's northwest corner in particular, he said it's amazing the time it takes for paramedics to respond there.

However, the county's boundary municipalities, Mulmur, Melancthon, and East Garafraxa, seemed to have slower response times. Gerrits asked if those areas are being served by other paramedic services.

Gary Staples, the chief at the Dufferin

County Paramedic Service, confirmed that it was indeed the case.

"There are a number of calls that are being serviced by other municipalities," he said and stressed that it was because of proximity to those municipalities.

Some areas of East Garafraxa's south would be closer to Hillsburgh than to Orangeville or Grand Valley, he said. Dufferin County paramedics operate from stations in Orangeville, Grand Valley, and a third in Shelburne.

Staples said other municipalities in Dufferin County served a total of 737 calls last year.

"Some of them would be due to closeness," he said. "Some of them would be because we don't have ambulances. And some would be because they (outside ambulance) are at Headwaters hospital. Even though we have an ambulance in town, they might be the closest one."

That goes both ways: Dufferin County Road 109 through Orangeville is technically in Caledon. Gerrits said that's one of the busier roads.

"It's considered Caledon, even though it's a Dufferin road, so we would technically respond because we are closer," Staples said.

Dufferin paramedics would respond to calls in some of the more northern Caledon



centres because of proximity, he said.

"We tend to respond to those, but they are low numbers," Staples said.

In 2025, local paramedics sprang into action on 299 external calls, those from outside Dufferin County, Staples said.

Coun. Janet Horner, the mayor of Mulmur, asked whether anything could be done to reduce response time for high-acuity calls in her municipality. Mulmur recorded the longest average response time.

There's been talk in the past about locating a paramedic substation nearby in an effort to curtail response time, she said.

Horner asked if there was anything that could decrease the paramedic response times to Mulmur.

"That is a tough question of what can be done," Staples said.

Staples said 80 per cent of calls to the service are from Orangeville, Shelburne, and the boundaries of Grand Valley.

"So we're really speaking to 20 per cent of the calls that are spread out through a large area," Staples said.

He said finances will be reviewed over the summer to better determine what next steps may be to improve those response times. He said there has been talk about a paramedic station on County Road 17.

"(If) there was dedicated staff to that station, the response times across the community would decrease as a result," Staples said.

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## hazardous & electronic waste event THIS SATURDAY!

**Date:** Saturday, May 30, 2026

**Time:** 8am-3pm

**Location:** Shelburne Operations Centre  
124 Luxton Way, Shelburne



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<b>Limitations</b>	No waste from industrial, commercial, or institutional sources. No white goods/large appliances (including any appliances with freon). No garbage, or recycling. No unidentified/unknown materials. No drums of materials.

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*See website for details on hours & locations for each scheduled event.*  
*Dufferin County residents, including Amaranth, East Garafraxa, Grand Valley, Melancthon, Mono, Mulmur, Orangeville and Shelburne can attend any of these events.*

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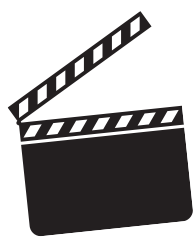


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# Arts & Entertainment

## LOCAL COMMUNITY EVENTS



### Neurodiverse talent to shine at Creative Partners on Stage Festival this weekend

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The stage at Theatre Orangeville will once again become a celebration of creativity, inclusion and community connection as Community Living Dufferin (CLD) and Theatre Orangeville prepare to host its annual Creative Partners on Stage (CPOS) Festival this weekend.

Running May 29 to 31 at the Opera House, the festival brings together theatre, music, art and storytelling while spotlighting neurodiverse performers, artists and entrepreneurs from across the community. CLD said in a statement that everyone is welcome to attend to help support the performers.

"This festival is an incredible opportunity to celebrate inclusion, creativity, and the amazing accomplishments of the CPOS program participants. We encourage staff, families, friends, and community supporters to attend and help us fill the theatre with encouragement and support."

This year's festival will feature two original productions, *Life OFF Mars* and *Picture This*, each exploring themes of belonging, family, and identity through humour and heart.

*Life OFF Mars* tells the story of a group of stranded aliens who crash-land on Earth and must find a new place to call home while being pursued by the mysterious "Men in

Beige." The production is a mix of comedy with deeper messages about acceptance and finding community in unfamiliar places.

Following the end of the first performance, audience members can move down to the Lower Atrium for an artisan market showcasing neurodiverse-led businesses and artists.

The market will also include concessions and interactive art activities, giving guests the chance to meet local creators, purchase handmade works and participate in their own artistic experiences.

Following this extended intermission is the second production, *Picture This*.

This story centres around a family gathering for a grandfather's 70th birthday celebration. As an old photo album comes to life, younger versions of family members come to life right from the pages, revisiting memories, milestones and dreams from across generations.

CLD describes the show as a reminder that every family story continues to evolve.

Organizers said that the festival is about more than just the performances themselves. The weekend is intended to celebrate the accomplishments of CPOS participants while encouraging inclusion, visibility and support for neurodiverse artists throughout Dufferin County.

Performances begin Friday evening with *Life OFF Mars* at 6:30 p.m., followed by the



THEATRE ORANGEVILLE PHOTO

**INCLUSIVE THEATRE IN ACTION:** The Community Partners on Stage (CPOS) Festival is a collaborative project run jointly by Theatre Orangeville and Community Living Dufferin. The theatrical performances are built from scratch to support and feature neurodiverse community members, amplify their voices, and showcase their skills. Alongside the performances, neuro-diverse artists and vendors will also be on scene at the festival. Pictured here is CPOS's performance of their latest production, *Life OFF Mars*.

artisan market at 7:30 p.m. and *Picture This* at 8:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday both share the same schedule with afternoon performances beginning at 1 p.m.

Individual show tickets are \$25, while double-feature festival passes are \$40.

To purchase tickets, call the Box Office at 519-942-3423.

### Local 80s cover band Stölen packs Broadway Beat with high-energy performance

Local 80s cover band Stölen performed on Saturday, May 23, at Broadway Beat, to a packed house and kept the dance floor full across three electrifying sets.

Blending New Wave, pop, and rock hits from iconic acts like Depeche Mode, INXS, Journey, and Tears for Fears, the band delivered a nostalgic, synth-heavy, high-energy experience that resonated with the lively, enthusiastic crowd.

"We loved the vibe Saturday night," said the band. "We could feel the energy coming off the crowd and that just fed our own ener-

gy on stage."

Stölen features a lineup of seasoned local musicians: Rich Adam (guitar and vocals), Kirk Dawson (drums and backing vocals), Peter LeBlanc (keys and vocals), Sebastian LeBlanc (keys and backing vocals), Andy Murray (bass), and Natasha Trumble (vocals).

Deeply rooted in the Orangeville community, most members live within walking distance of the downtown core and are heavily involved in local life.

Formed in 2017 and reconfigured in 2021, Stölen has built a strong reputation across

the region. The band appeared on the Broadway Stage at the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival in 2024 to rave reviews and has performed at numerous local benefits, helping raise thousands of dollars for causes including Syrian newcomer support, MS Canada, Epilepsy Canada, and music programs in Orangeville schools.

Their growing local profile was recently highlighted when a resident in a community Facebook group sought help identifying the "awesome sounding" band rehearsing nearby — only to discover it was Stölen.

Saturday's show also underscored Broadway Beat's role as one of Orangeville's growing hot spots for live music, with Stölen expressing appreciation for being part of the venue's expanding roster of homegrown talent.

Looking ahead, the band is finalizing several summer performance dates across Southwestern Ontario. They are also set to reunite with Guelph favourites Lennox and the Hot Flashes at Stölen's 5th annual "Fergus Farm" event. For more information on upcoming shows, visit [stolentheband.com](http://stolentheband.com).

**David Gauthier**  
Service Consultant

David brings a calm, customer-first mindset to every service appointment. As a MacMaster Certified Service Consultant, he works hard to ensure every visit is smooth and stress-free. Whether you're dropping in for maintenance or need help navigating a repair, David is ready with clear communication, helpful insight, and a friendly attitude.

**Maurice McDonald**  
Service Consultant

Maurice is the kind of advisor who makes service feel easy. He's known for his warm, approachable style and his ability to keep customers informed every step of the way. With strong product knowledge and a passion for helping people, Maurice takes the guesswork out of vehicle service at Orangeville Chrysler.

**Jazz Matharu**  
Service Consultant

Jazz combines technical knowledge with an easygoing, professional style that customers appreciate. Bilingual in English and Punjabi, he makes sure every guest feels heard and understood. Whether it's a routine visit or a more involved repair, Jazz helps keep the process efficient, transparent, and tailored to your needs.

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## The Citizen CROSSWORD

Puzzle No. 265410 • Solution on page: CLASSIFIEDS SECTION

**CLUES ACROSS**

1. Streetcar
5. Take \_\_\_ of it!
10. SW Asia peninsula
12. Beating wings to escape from a perch
14. One who revitalizes
16. Indicates position
18. Dishonorable man
19. Singer King Cole
20. Short-tailed marten
22. One point east (clockwise) of due north
23. The god of the underworld in ancient mythology
25. Dirt
26. Superconducting super collider
27. Not good
28. A way to sink
30. Unwell
31. Follow orders
33. Deep ravine
35. Perfumery practice
37. Indian film director Sultan
38. Member of U.S. Navy
40. Wing-like
41. Very fast airplane
42. Slang for cigarette
44. Most cars still need it
45. Political war chest
48. Cools down
50. Diminish toward one end
52. Indigenous person of Thailand
53. Combined
55. Container
56. Expression of satisfaction
57. Thou
58. Return a favor
63. Go over once more
65. Removed
66. "Silence of the \_\_\_"
67. Comedian Rogen

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Children's game
2. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
3. Own (Scottish)
4. Female follower of Bacchus
5. Subsides
6. Protects from weather
7. Spanish municipality
8. Supermarket chain
9. Domain name
10. Semitic peoples
11. Designs anew
13. City associated with Jesus
15. Cool!
17. Bank employee
18. Central nervous system
21. Standardized piece of text
23. A type of fever
24. Baglike structure in a plant or animal
27. Threaten persistently
29. Aspirations
32. Baby's eating
34. Actress Thurman
35. Turn into bone
36. One who saves you
39. Consume
40. Swiss river
43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
44. Categories
46. Expressed amazement
47. It's important in respiration (abbr.)
49. Greek war dance
51. Bland, semi-liquid food
54. Regard in a specified way
59. Taxi
60. Naturally occurring solid material
61. Feline
62. Post-burning residue
64. Elevated railroad

*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:** Crop  
**Spanish:** Cultivo  
**Italian:** Coltivazione  
**French:** Culture  
**German:** Ernte

## Did You Know?

The earliest gardens were strictly practical and used to grow food and medicinal herbs. Decorative gardens appeared in Egypt in 1500 B.C.

**NEW WORD**

## Get the PICTURE?

**Can you guess what the bigger picture is?**

Answer: Garden shovel

**SPADE**  
sharp-edged tool for digging or cutting earth

## Nature FACT!

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Answer: Dubai Miracle Garden

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# County appoints Antonietta Minichillo as Chief Administrative Officer

Some changes are being made to the leadership structure for County of Dufferin staff.

On May 26, the county announced the appointment of Antonietta Minichillo as its new Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), starting July 6.

Minichillo brings 20 years of progressive municipal leadership experience and a strong record of supporting good governance, financial sustainability, service modernization, responsible growth, community engagement, and organizational improvement.

"Antonietta brings the breadth of municipal experience, collaborative leadership style, and practical understanding of local government that Dufferin County needs at this important time. Her experience across corporate services, growth management, governance, financial planning, and organizational improvement will be a strong asset as council continues to support our communities, strengthen services, and plan responsibly for the future," said Dufferin County Warden Lisa Post, who also serves as Orangeville's mayor.

Most recently, Minichillo served as general manager of corporate services with the Town

of Orangeville, where she was a member of the senior leadership team and provided enterprise-wide leadership across finance and treasury services, human resources, information technology, communications, clerks, and by-law enforcement. In this role, she helped advance many significant corporate initiatives, including long-term financial planning, asset management, policy governance, project management, internal communications, organizational capacity planning, service modernization, and continuous improvement.

Minichillo's career also includes senior leadership roles with the Town of Caledon, Town of Grimsby, and City of Brampton. Across these municipalities, she has supported strategic planning, responsible growth management, community engagement, governance modernization, organizational change, and practical improvements to how municipal services are planned, delivered, and supported.

Known for her collaborative and people-centred leadership style, Minichillo has a strong ability to build trust, bring people

together, and help organizations move from strategy to action. She brings a balanced understanding of the pressures facing municipalities today, including growth, affordability, infrastructure needs, service expectations, fiscal responsibility, organizational capacity, and the importance of strong relationships with council, staff, local municipalities, community partners, and residents.

As CAO, Minichillo will lead Dufferin County's administration and support council in advancing its priorities, strengthening partnerships, and delivering effective, responsive, and financially responsible services for residents across Dufferin County.

"I am honoured to join Dufferin County and grateful for the opportunity to work with council, staff, local municipalities, and community partners. Dufferin County has strong communities, dedicated public servants, and important opportunities ahead. I look forward to building relationships, supporting thoughtful decision-making, and helping deliver meaningful results for residents," said Antonietta Minichillo, incoming CAO of Dufferin County.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**NEW LEAD:** Antonietta Minichillo is the County of Dufferin's incoming Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), starting July 6.

## Dunk Disposal holding free bicycle pick up in support of not-for-profit Heartbeat Bikes

Written By **CONSTANCE SCRAFIELD**

For the sixth year, Dunk Disposal will be doing the rounds in Orangeville, Caledon, Brampton, Shelburne, and further afield for their annual free bike pickup on June 3.

"Lots of people have old bikes sometimes for years in their garages or sheds and they don't want them, but they don't want to do with them," said Cameron Dunkerley, co-founder of this company.

"And we don't want to see them in landfills. So, we do this run as a public service for free to people. We pick up the bikes and take them to our partner HeartBeat Bikes in Brampton, where they will be rebuilt and refurbished as needed. Then they are sold to kids that need a bike for much less than a store would sell them."

Dunkerley added, "Heartbeat Bikes is a not-for-profit."

To catch up on the progress of his business, since beginning in 2016, Dunkerley commented that they now have five trucks and a staff of 15 people. They have new shops in Caledon Village, Bolton and Hamilton. At the company's office, the three staff members were added to handle bookings and sales.

"We're a good team," Dunkerley was happy to say.

He started the business out of necessity to earn a little gas money for his truck, which he used to pick up and deliver various items for family and friends. After a while, he and his brother Devon realized they liked it and were good at it, so well that they formed a company to do junk removal.

They worked hard, kept a positive and honest approach to the work and are doing well with clear ambitions to follow. At one point, Dunkerley decided to become a firefighter and is engaged in that career.

The other part of Dunkerley's life is his professional career in lacrosse. For the past several years, he has successfully divided his time between his business and the sport. Currently, he is playing for the San Diego team in the U.S., and he admits it involves a lot of travel.

"But [it's] the best of both worlds," was his cheerful remark.

The ambition for the company is about geography and seeing how far and wide in Ontario the company can expand its service throughout southern Ontario, its capacity and growth. Already, they are looking at possible places for seven or eight satellite locations.

By and large, they see this line of satellites following the water from London to Niagara.

Part of making this happen is to ensure the "best team culture."

The bike pickup is one of a number of such

events, which, although free to the community, also introduce the company to large numbers of prospective clients and help establish a justifiably good reputation.

Dunkerley also stated that there will be a similar service extended every month this year for a variety of specific items, like their tire pickup in past years.

"We will post every month what is next on our social media, so people can prepare," was his assurance. "Every single month."

As a final note, there was a tribute to his family for their support. To his mother, always at the front to help.

He said, "When we first started, she let me park my truck in her driveway. She's been the back bone since day one. Anything I need, she's the first person there."

To arrange a pickup time before the drive on June 3, call Dunk Disposal's office at 905 766 9008 or email [contact@dunkdisposal.ca](mailto:contact@dunkdisposal.ca).

## OPP lay impaired driving charges in East Garafraxa during Victoria Day long weekend

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers have charged an Acton resident with impaired driving-related offences following a traffic investigation conducted over the Victoria Day long weekend.

On May 18, at approximately 10:45 a.m., officers were flagged down in the area of County Road 24 and County Road 109 in East Garafraxa regarding a traffic com-

plaint involving a possible impaired driver.

Officers were able to locate the vehicle a short time later and conducted a traffic stop. While speaking with the driver, officers initiated an impaired driving investigation.

As a result of the investigation, Percy Hustler, 41, of Acton, has been charged with:

- Failure or refusal to comply with de-

mand

- Fail to yield to traffic on through highway
- Fail to surrender insurance card
- Driver fail to surrender licence
- Fail to surrender permit for motor vehicle
- Driving motor vehicle with liquor readily available

The accused individual is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Orangeville at a later date to answer to the charges.

In addition, the individuals' driver's licence was suspended, and their vehicle was impounded.

None of the listed charges have been proven in court.

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# THE 22ND ANNUAL ORANGEVILLE BLUES AND JAZZ FESTIVAL BY THE NUMBERS...



Written By SAM ODROWSKI

Now in its 22nd year, the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival has grown from a passion project backed by a personal bank loan into one of Ontario's most celebrated music events.

What began in June of 2003 with five volunteers and roughly 2,000 attendees has grown into a three-day downtown showcase drawing more than 40,000 and featuring over 200 performers across three stages. The event generates an estimated \$1.5 million in local economic impact, and the festival has appeared on Festivals and Events Ontario's Top 100 list for 13 consecutive years.

Festival founder and director Larry Kurtz sat down with the Citizen to share the figures behind the scenes — the volunteers, the budget pressures, the performers travelling from coast to coast, and what it truly takes to keep the music playing year after year.

With a \$300,000 operating budget, a volunteer army of 240, and a weekend ticket price of just \$40, the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival is, by any measure, a remarkable community undertaking. Here's a look at the event — by the numbers.

## Over 200 performers

More than 200 performers make up the over 40 acts performing at this year's festival. All of the acts are Canadian, flying in from coast to coast, and everywhere in between. The only exception is a blues band from Malta called Violent Paradise.

"There's a mix of acoustic music and electric music," said Kurtz. "If you like quieter acoustic, you can find that in the Opera House, and if you like the rock and blues bands, you'll see them out on the TD Main Stage and out on the street."

He added that the lineup features a diverse array of talent, from young emerging artists and local community bands to well-established headlining acts.

## Seven JUNO winners and nominees

Four JUNO Award winners and three nominees are set to perform at this year's Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival. Winners Emilie Claire Barlow, Steve Marriner, Paul James and Morgan Davis will take the stage alongside nominees Miss Emily, Blackburn Brothers and Alex Pangman.

"Friday night headliner Paul James is a legendary Canadian act, also a JUNO Award winner, who played with Bob Dylan and Bo Diddley," said Kurtz. "Steve Mariner just won a JUNO for his blues music this year in Canada. Miss Emily was also nominated. She's headlining on Saturday. They were both up against each other in the same category."

He added, "There are some legendary acts for sure, and just high-quality performances throughout the festival."

Continued on Page B2





**Age of performers – 15 to 76-plus**

The Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival's lineup spans generations — from local high school students taking the stage for the first time to seasoned veterans with decades of experience. This year's performers range in age from 15 to 76-plus.

**250-plus instruments**

An estimated 250 guitars, horns, keyboards, and other musical instruments will move through the festival grounds over the course of the weekend, with several performers playing multiple.

"There's going to be in the low hundreds of instruments being chucked around for the weekend, for sure," said Kurtz.

**40,000-plus attendees**

While the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival started with roughly 2,000 attendees, it now welcomes more than 40,000 over the three days it runs.

For many, the festival is as much a social tradition as it is a music event.

the main stages go dark.

The following event venues are participating this year: Orangeville Best Western Plus, Westminster United Church, Black Birch Restaurant, Barley Vine Rail Co., Revival 1863, Josie's Taphouse, Vesuvio's, Lightcaster Brewery, Orangeville Public Library, and Broadway Beat.

**56 hours of programming**

The Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival features 56 hours of programming this year, across all of its stages, workshops, and events. There are 21 hours of programming at the TD Main Stage, 10 hours at the Opera House, and 16 hours at the TD Broadway Stage. Blues and Bikes, Broadway Ramble and the Blues Cruise run for 12 hours altogether, and there are three hours of workshops to enjoy.

**13 Years on Festivals and Events Ontario's Top 100 List**

The Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival has earned a place on Festivals and Events



out anywhere else," said Kurtz. "The economic impact is very locally felt."

**\$300,000 budget**

Organizing one of Ontario's top music festivals isn't cheap. It costs approximately \$300,000 to produce the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival each year, funded through a combination of ticket sales, beer sales, sponsorships, grants, and donations. The festival spends over \$80,000 of that directly with local suppliers on products and services.

The financial pressure is real. Grants are down this year compared to last, and costs continue to rise, making community support more critical than ever.

"I just don't want people to take it for granted that the festival will always be there," said Kurtz. "It takes constant attention to raise the money and to keep the quality high."

Costs for patrons remain low, with full weekend passes at \$40 and single-day passes ranging from \$10 to \$30.

"Where can you go for \$40 and that's the whole weekend? That's like one show somewhere else for one act," said Kurtz of the festival's value.

12 teams, covering everything from food and beverage to stage crew, merchandise, admissions, and the festival's beloved Roust About Team (RATS), who handle setup and teardown. About half of the volunteers return year after year, with some involved since the festival's early days.

"It's a lot of fun," said Kurtz of the festival's volunteers. "You're going to meet lifelong friends doing this... some people have done it for over 20 years... it's a great way to give back to the community."

Volunteers also get up-close access to world-class music, a strong sense of community, and a celebratory appreciation party after the festival wraps. High school students can count their hours toward community service requirements.

Anyone aged 14 to 95 is welcome to get involved.

To sign up, visit [orangevillebluesandjazz.ca/volunteer](http://orangevillebluesandjazz.ca/volunteer) or contact Trudeau at Norm@orangevillebluesandjazz.ca or 647-281-1575.

"If a person wants to become a volunteer [during the festival], all they have to do is go to our main Volunteer Centre at the gazebo in Alexandra Park, and we'll put you to work," said Trudeau.



"It's kind of like old home week," said Kurtz. "People have been cooped up all winter, and they can reconnect with everybody. It's a great social hangout for the weekend for sure."

**Three stages**

The Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival's TD Broadway Stage brings free live music to the downtown core — and on the evening of Friday, June 5, Broadway comes alive with classic cars filling the street for the annual Blues Cruise. On Sunday, June 7, the annual Blues and Bikes event will fill Broadway with motorcycles.

"I always like to feel the bands that are performing out on the street could also be on the main stage. The quality is still high — it just happens to be where they're performing," said Kurtz.

The festival's two ticketed stages, featuring an assortment of headliners, are the Opera House and TD Main Stage in Alexandra Park.

Alexandra Park holds up to 2,500 ticketholders per day, while the Opera House seats 260. The TD Broadway Stage has no formal capacity, and during the Blues Cruise alone, an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 people fill the street.

"I hope people enjoy the experience and what a beautiful town we have. Having it in the downtown, it's like a real showcase for the town — there's an energy you can feel when the festival's on," Kurtz said.

**Nine event venues**

The festival extends well beyond its three main stages, with nine venues hosting musicians throughout the weekend. From craft breweries, historic churches and restaurants to live music bars, there's no shortage of places to enjoy — or extend the night after

Ontario's Top 100 list for 13 consecutive years. It's a significant accomplishment when considering the number of qualifying festivals and events held in the province each year.

"That's not just music festivals, that's all festivals," said Kurtz. "I think there's like 2,500 festivals in Ontario for different types of events, so for us to be in the top 100... that is really quite an honour."

**\$1.5 Million in economic impact**

The Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival generates an estimated \$1.5 million in local economic impact each year, calculated using the provincial model for festival assessment. The figure factors in hotel stays and increased spending at local businesses and restaurants throughout the weekend.

"Being a nonprofit, the money stays in the community — it's not being siphoned



**240-plus volunteers**

Behind every great festival is a dedicated group of volunteers — and the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival is powered by hundreds of them.

Volunteer coordinator Norm Trudeau leads a team of 240 people organized into

**4,100 volunteer service hours**

The total hours logged annually by all festival volunteers and the board of directors combined is approximately 4,100, and that clock starts well before festival weekend.

As Kurtz puts it, "It's pretty well year-round now." Official board meetings run from September through July, but the work of organizing, fundraising, and planning continues well beyond those sessions.

Trudeau noted one of the main benefits of getting involved.

"The real big advantage of being a volunteer is you get to be up close and personal to the music — and the music is what the festival is all about," he said.

**Six local organizations**

The Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival draws volunteer support from six local organizations. Students from ODSS, Westside Secondary School, and Georgian College lend their time to the festival, while community members who volunteer with the Orangeville Food Bank, the Optimist Club, and the Lions Club also pitch in on festival weekend.

"It really is a fantastic experience for any demographic," said Trudeau.



# MUST-SEE SETS AT THIS YEAR'S BLUES AND JAZZ FESTIVAL

This year's Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival features more than 200 performers, from Juno Award winners and international acts to emerging talent and local favourites. Here are a few artists to should check out this year.

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

## Miss Emily eager for return to Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival with soulful sounds

Two-time JUNO nominee Miss Emily is bringing her Soul Blues Americana sound back to the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival (OBJF) on Saturday, June 6.

Kingston, Ont.-based musician Emily Fennell, known professionally as Miss Emily, has built her career on her own terms — though it wasn't always easy. Two decades ago, breaking into the blues industry as a mother was far from celebrated.

"I was actually kind of a freak show," Miss Emily said. "I didn't really feel welcome in a lot of spaces being a woman, let alone a woman who was a parent who sometimes had her kid toting around with her."

Now, she's a touring headliner with four Canadian Blues Awards.

Miss Emily will take the TD Main Stage in Alexandra Park at 9:45 p.m.

"I love to sing music that makes me move. Moves me emotionally, moves me physically, that's always my goal on stage," she said.

Miss Emily said connecting with the audience is central to her live show.

"I think it's very powerful when people sing together, and it's definitely powerful for me from the stage. But I watch the joy that brings to the [audience's] faces when they get to be part of the show, and that in turn brings me a lot of joy. I look forward to that specifically."

Beyond the music, Miss Emily said she hopes audiences leave with something

deeper.

"I want people to feel better after watching our show. I want them to feel motivated, and to feel like they matter," she said. "That seems like a lot to ask of an audience who's there to see a live music performance, but I really try and cover those topics in my lyrics, and I really try and bring as much energy and enthusiasm as possible."

That drive to inspire others is one she's carried throughout a career built against the odds. Despite early challenges in the music industry, Miss Emily said the landscape looks very different today.

"The world's changed a lot. Some would say for the worst, but I'm going to say there's a lot of change for the better, and I love the evolution of this business, because I find it more warm and friendly and inviting for women, and for mothers, and for family people in general."

That evolution is something Miss Emily has witnessed firsthand over a career that started quite far from the festival stage.

"My beginnings were fairly humble, singing in churches, singing anthems at hockey



Photo by LOGAN SOMERS

games, then singing in bars, and now it's festivals and theatres primarily," she said.

Miss Emily released her fifth studio album last fall, *The Medicine*, which was nominated for Best Blues Album of the Year at the 2026 JUNO Awards.

Beyond the new record, Miss Emily has another major project on the horizon.

She's the lead role in the Blue Rodeo musical, *In The Key of Blue*, launching in July, with three weekends' worth of dates throughout Ontario.

"I haven't done musical theatre in a long time... It's been over a dozen years since I've had a professional opportunity. But I do love musical theatre, and I'm quite excited to be singing that awesome music with a really wonderful script and great storyline," Miss Emily said.

As excited as she is about the musical, she told the Citizen she is equally looking forward to her return to Orangeville.

"I already have an idea of what to bring to the amazing audiences that attend that festival, and I love Larry (Kurtz, festival director), and the folks that put it on," Miss Emily said. "I'm excited to match the vibe that they already set the table with."

Tickets to see Miss Emily at the TD Main Stage on June 6 are available at the Orangeville Blues and Jazz website. Single-day Saturday passes are \$30, and weekend passes are \$40.

After 22 years, the opportunity to take a headline stage never gets old for Miss Emily.

"It never ceases to amaze me how awesome this business is," she said. "I'm just really grateful I still have the opportunity to do this."

## All aboard: Glenn Marais and The Mojo Train take TD Main Stage next Saturday

Glenn Marais and The Mojo Train are bringing their blues-rock show to the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival on Saturday, June 6 — and if Marais has anything to say about it, audiences should expect a high-octane performance.

"To me it's not a good show if you're not soaked in sweat by the end of it," he said. "If I come off and I have energy left, I didn't do the show."

Juno-nominated frontman of the Toronto-based four-piece band, Glenn Marais, is no stranger to OBJF, having performed at the festival a couple of times over the past several years.

"We're really excited. It's a great way to kick off what's going to be an amazing Saturday," said Marais, who added that his band will be playing at 1:45 p.m. on the TD Main Stage in Alexandra Park. "We're going to bring midnight energy to the middle of the day. It's going to be pure fire when we hit the stage."

That level of ambition doesn't come without preparation. The band has been rehearsing since February, fine-tuning a show Marais said is designed to hit differently than anything they've brought before.

"We have a reputation for being a high energy act, and we try to engage with the crowd, so those elements we want to keep, but we're trying to take the performance up to another level," Marais said. "We put a lot of thought into this year's show for the festivals that we're doing... how the songs hit live, and adding some special moments."

Reflecting on the band's sound, Marais



said it is blues rock at its core, but with a funk groove element and a knack for surprises that keep audiences — and even band members — guessing.

"We don't put cages around our songs live, we often go off and just improvise on the spot and feed off of each other's energy," he told the Citizen. "We're not a jam band, but we do like to have that improv capacity and ability to share with people."

That spontaneity has been sharpened over years of touring, culminating in a recent milestone that put the band on an international stage.

The Mojo Train made it to the semi-finals of the International Blues Challenge in Memphis, Tennessee, earlier this year — one of the most prestigious competitions in the blues world. The experience, Marais said, reinforced something he already believed: Canadian blues gets less credit than it deserves.

"The common mindset is that American blues bands are some of the best in the world, but then when you hear from

people in America, 'Man, you Canadian bands are really good' — that is something that we're so proud of to be part of," Marais said.

That pride is part of what makes his upcoming performance at OBJF significant. What sets the festival apart, according to Marais, is the people behind it. He's developed a personal friendship with founder Larry Kurtz and his family over the years, and describes the entire operation — from organizers to volunteers — as genuinely invested in seeing performers succeed.

"It's a level of excitement that I haven't experienced at other festivals," he said.

Marais also reflected on what festivals like OBJF mean for aspiring artists, recalling how the festival gave his own band their first break.

"Larry is the kind of promoter — if you're good, you're eager, you approach him with intent and enthusiasm, and you're nice, they'll give you a shot. We were brand new into the blues scene, and he put us right on the street at a really good time slot."

Beyond his own performance, Marais said events like OBJF play a vital role in Canada's live music landscape.

"They're hugely important. If you get into the fiscal part of it, they bring a lot of money into the downtown cores and into local businesses — they provide an identity for the town," he said. "Orangeville is known for the blues festival, not just regionally, but across Canada as being one of the best festivals in Ontario, possibly the world."

For those on the fence about attending, Marais offered a simple message.

"When you go to a festival like this, it's worth coming for the whole day because there's going to be an unbelievable lineup... fantastic food, and lots of places to sit and eat. It's just very well organized," he said.

Tickets for festival admission to the Opera House and Alexandra Park stages are available now on the OBJF website, with single-day admission priced at \$20 for Friday, \$30 for Saturday, and \$10 for Sunday. Weekend passes are available for \$40.

"For what you pay to attend the festival, you can see 10 bands. It's an unbelievable

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# MUST-SEE SETS AT THIS YEAR'S BLUES AND JAZZ FESTIVAL

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

## 'Canada's Sweetheart of Swing' brings vintage jazz and story of resilience to Orangeville

Juno nominee Alex Pangman is returning to the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival (OBJF) nearly two decades after her first appearance, having survived not one but two lung transplants along the way.

"I come to you through the courtesy of organ donation," she said. "When I say I'm a whole new person, I mean almost literally."

The Canadian jazz and swing vocalist will perform at OBJF with her quintet, Alex Pangman and Her Alleycats, on the Orangeville Opera House stage at 5 p.m. on Saturday, June 6.

"I was really happy that Larry [festival director] remembered me and was happy to have me back," she said. "It feels great to reconnect."

Known as "Canada's Sweetheart of Swing," she is eager to take listeners on a journey through the jazz of the 1920s and 1930s, blending upbeat swing numbers with thoughtful, reflective ballads.

"You'll find it a good mix of happy,

buoyant music and a couple of thoughtful ballads that will hopefully help people reflect on life," she said. "It's a vintage repertoire, but it's so current. These songs never go out of style – and there is a little hint of the retro to it."

Pangman draws influences from young Ella Fitzgerald and Jack Teagarden – artists who are wonderful with a melody but could also swing the beat to make audiences dance and laugh.

Grateful for the ability to continue performing after undergoing a lung transplant in 2008 and an additional one in 2013 to treat end-stage cystic fibrosis, Pangman didn't hesitate when describing the experience.

"It was like somebody gave me a new engine in my car... It's truly the gift of life," she told the Citizen.

"I like the music from the 1930s, but I like the medicine from this era a lot better."

And for Pangman, healing extends beyond the operating room.

"There's a lot that is stressful and wrong in this world right now. Music can't fix everything, but an hour with good melodies and good rhythms and good lyrics is quite curative for the soul," she said.

Host of Swing Set on Jazz.FM91, Pangman is well-versed in the genre and knows how to put together a strong performance.

A standout moment of her quintet's set at OBJF will be when they perform "Swing That Music," by Louis Armstrong.

"He is so important to the history of early jazz music and to the art form of jazz and entertainment," Pangman said. "I think it's really im-

portant that we always include some Louis Armstrong."

That reverence carries over to the musicians she shares the stage with.

"It feels like you put on your favourite sweater — everything just fits well and is harmonious," Pangman said of the band's chemistry. "That's what the interplay between the guys on stage feels like – it feels like home."

Founded in 1999, Alex Pangman and Her Alleycats are midway through a new recording project, and look forward to its release.

The OBJF runs from June 5 to 7 with a free stage on Broadway, near Second Street, a ticketed stage in Alexandra Park and a ticketed stage at the Opera House.

Tickets to see Alex Pangman and Her Alleycats take the Opera House stage, at 87 Broadway, Orangeville, on June 6 at 5 p.m. are available for \$30 or a weekend pass is costs \$40 at [ticketscene.ca/series/1633/](https://ticketscene.ca/series/1633/).

"This music is joyful. Hopefully it will make people happy for the hour that they hear us and take them away from the troubles," she said.



FRIDAY, JUNE 5	SATURDAY, JUNE 6	SUNDAY, JUNE 7
<b>BLUES CRUISE ON BROADWAY</b>	<b>TD BROADWAY STAGE</b>	<b>TD MAIN STAGE</b>
MARK CRISSINGER..... 5:00 PM JE LOPEZ..... 5:00 PM BOATHOUSE BLUES BAND..... 5:00 PM FIFTY 50..... 5:00 PM	EMILY GILBART..... 12:30 PM BECKI LYNN & THE FELICITY ALLIANCE..... 2:00 PM JUMP JIVE & WAIL TRIBUTE TO LOUIS PRIMA..... 3:30 PM ISY ABOAGYE..... 5:00 PM STEVIE T BAND..... 6:30 PM	JAZZ SOCIETY TRIBUTE TO SINATRA & BASIE... 12:00 PM VINYL PARADISE..... 1:30 PM EMILIE-CLAIRE BARLOW..... 3:00 PM BLACKBURN BROTHERS..... 4:45 PM
<b>TD BROADWAY STAGE</b>	<b>OPERA HOUSE</b>	<b>BLUES &amp; BIKES</b>
DANNY MARKS..... 5:00 PM JOEL DUPUIS..... 6:30 PM BONECAT..... 8:00 PM	STAN CHANG..... 12:30 PM GRAHAM COSTER QUARTET..... 2:00 PM RONNIE DOUGLAS BLUES BAND..... 3:30 PM ALEX PANGMAN & HER ALLEYCATS..... 5:00 PM	LITTLE JOE & THE WEREWOLVES..... 12:00 PM 40 WATT..... 12:00 PM CONOR GAINS..... 12:00 PM
<b>TD MAIN STAGE</b>	<b>WORKSHOPS AT THE LIBRARY</b>	<b>OPERA HOUSE</b>
VOODOO PAWNSHOP..... 6:15 PM CAMPFIRE POETS..... 7:45 PM PAUL JAMES BAND..... 9:30 PM	HARMONICA WITH MARK STAFFORD..... 12:00 PM ROOTS AND RESONANCE WITH DANNY BOY PHELAN: A CENTURY OF INFLUENCE FROM GUITAR, BANJO, AND HARMONICA..... 1:30 PM	KEN WHITELEY..... 12:30 PM STEVE MARRINER..... 2:00 PM MORGAN DAVIS..... 3:30 PM
<b>TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE!</b>	<b>TD MAIN STAGE</b>	<b>TD BROADWAY STAGE</b>
TICKETS ARE REQUIRED FOR THE MAIN STAGE AND OPERA HOUSE. 	GLENN MARAIS & MOJO TRAIN..... 1:45 PM LARRY KURTZ & THE LAWBREAKERS..... 3:15 PM DURHAM COUNTY POETS..... 4:45 PM THE SUGAR DARLINGS..... 6:15 PM STEVE MARRINER & LOCAL ELECTRIC..... 7:45 PM MISS EMILY..... 9:30 PM	ODSS JAZZ BAND..... 12:30 PM TRAVELING WANNABES..... 2:00 PM SOUL COLLECTIVE..... 3:30 PM
	<b>DOWNTOWN RAMBLE</b>	<b>CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION &amp; PARTICIPATING EVENT VENUES</b>
	JOYFUL SOUND GOSPEL CHOIR..... 11:00 AM WESTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BAND..... 12:30 PM ORANGEVILLE COMMUNITY BAND..... 2:00 PM ODSS TEACHERS BAND..... 2:00 PM ORANGEVILLE COMMUNITY BAND..... 2:00 PM LIAM BALCH..... 2:00 PM	

# MUST-SEE SETS AT THIS YEAR'S BLUES AND JAZZ FESTIVAL

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

## Three bands, two stages, one weekend: Ryan Grist to takeover Blues and Jazz Festival

Ryan Grist has been part of the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival since nearly the beginning — and this weekend, he'll be hard to miss, performing across two stages with three different acts.

As artistic director of the Orangeville Jazz Society Big Band, he'll be paying tribute to the legendary Frank Sinatra-Count Basie collaborations with pianist Nicholas Mustapha and vocalist John Amato at the TD Main Stage on Sunday, June 7, starting at noon.

"It's got that nostalgic vibe of just the swing era of big band — when Frank was at the height of his powers," said Grist. "I grew up on Sinatra — my dad always had him on, so I know the music really, really well."

Later in the afternoon, he'll perform with Soul Collective on the TD Broadway Stage at 3:30 p.m., trading big band swing for classic soul. The sounds of Michael Jackson, Stevie Wonder, and the stylings of Scary Pockets, among others, will drive the set.

And on Saturday, he'll sit in with Becky Lynn and the Felicity Alliance as a guest, performing on the TD Broadway Stage at

2 p.m. "We're really lucky, really privileged to have these gigs and have them in town," said Grist.

But more than anything, he hopes the music stays with people.

"I hope that it just helps people breathe — that they can take a breath, maybe a reset, and feel a little better when they walk away," he said.

A Humber College graduate in jazz and commercial music, Grist spent 18 years balancing music with carpentry before a 2018 shoulder injury forced a change. He returned to school, earning a full scholarship to York University, where he completed a master's in ethnomusicology. He is currently in the final stages of a PhD.

A longtime saxophone teacher, he has since expanded to flute and clarinet — studying under noted woodwind doubler Andy Ballantyne on a Canada Council for the Arts grant — and has added pit orchestra work to his resume.

Grist isn't just another performer on the lineup — he has been involved with the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival (OBJF) since its second year.

He served on the festival's board of directors for numerous years, and he still remembers what those early days felt like as a young musician.

"It was exciting to be on stages with city performers — more established, well-known artists that I didn't have to drive to the city to hear anymore. They were coming up to Orangeville, and some of them were like coming up and playing with me. It was pretty exciting to have that opportunity."

Grist's connection to the fes-

tival has only deepened over the years.

He has watched it grow into one of Ontario's top 100 events, and credits festival founder Larry Kurtz's programming and organization for its great reputation among artists.

"You go to other festivals and maybe things aren't as organized, or you can't trust the process. Being a musician, sometimes it can get a little sketchy," said Grist. "For the [OBJF] it's been really solid — just the operational aspect of it, it's reliable."

Grist's upcoming performance with the Orangeville Jazz Society Big Band builds on momentum from a similar show last year.

The band played the same Sinatra-Basie tribute at the Orangeville Opera House last year to a near-sold-out crowd, which caught Kurtz's attention.

"Larry was there and said, 'I want to put you guys on the main stage,'" Grist said. "We were like, 'okay, let's do it.'"



Tickets to see Grist perform with the Orangeville Jazz Society Big Band at the TD Main Stage on Sunday are available online for \$10 as a Sunday-only pass. A full weekend festival pass is also available for \$40.

**Check out next week's Orangeville Citizen for more coverage leading up to the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival.**

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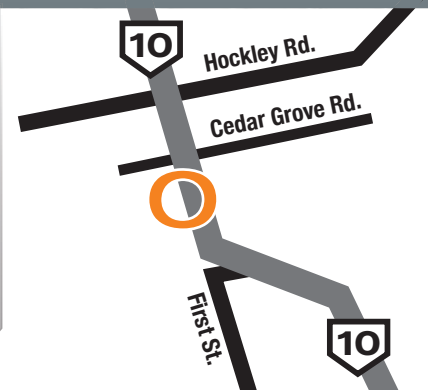


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## Westside Secondary School's Ultimate Frisbee team competes at CWOSSA

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

The Westside Secondary School Thunder Ultimate Frisbee team had a good season that culminated in a trip to the regional competition at the Centre Western Ontario Secondary Schools Association (CWOSSA) in Brantford.

Westside hosted the District 4/10 Ultimate Frisbee championships on the field at Westside on Friday, May 8. Seven teams from District 4/10 schools were entered in the competition.

The Thunder made it to the District Championship finals, but lost 4-2 to Guelph Collegiate Vocational Institute in a hard fought game.

As the top District 4 team, the Thunder qualified for CWOSSA, along with GCVI as the top District 10 team.

The Thunder travelled to Brantford on Friday, May 18, to compete in CWOSSA at North Park Collegiate. The Thunder played some of their best games this year at the event.

Westside made it to the semi-finals and defeated North Park 6-3.

"The play started to get a bit chippy, but our Spirit Captain Lilah Penfold helped the teams see the error of their ways through some spirited banter and a reminder of the rules," said Thunder coach Michael Pinkney.

It was the first time that the Thunder reached the CWOSSA finals for Ultimate Frisbee.

In the CWOSSA final, the Thunder faced the defending champion Paris Panthers. The Thunder lost a game to the Panthers earlier in the day.

It was a hot day, and the heat took a toll



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**COMPETING AT CWOSSA:** The Westside Secondary School Thunder Ultimate Frisbee team hosted the District 4/10 championships, then competed at CWOSSA in Brantford on May 18. The Thunder reached the finals of the CWOSSA competition but lost the final game.

on the players, but the Thunder kept up the pressure on the Paris team.

The Thunder lost the final 12-8.

"They were defending CWOSSA champions and played a great game, making many tricky throws and plays in a windy game,"

coach Pinkney said. "We stayed with them, competed hard, and in the end, they made Coach Kleist and I very proud."

## Junior C Northmen lacrosse team struggles to get on the plus side this season

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

The Orangeville Junior C Northmen are scoring; they just aren't outscoring their opponents this season.

The Northmen are struggling to get on the plus side after winning only two games in nine sides on the floor this year.

Lacrosse season for the Junior C team got underway on April 24, when they played their first game against the West Grey Rampage. The Orangeville team lost 4-3.

The Northmen lost their next four games against Huntsville, Six Nations, Fergus, and

Burlington.

They picked up their first win of the season on May 8, when they left the floor with a 9-6 win over the Halton Hills Bulldogs at Tony Rose Arena in Orangeville.

They have lost two more games since then. They picked up a win over West Grey on May 16, winning by a single goal with a 13-12 score.

Orangeville now has a 2-9 record and is in fifth place in the Western Division of the Ontario Junior C Lacrosse League.

The Northmen are scoring a lot; they have just been unable to win. Most of their losses

have been tight games with the other team winning by a two or three-goal advantage.

None of the teams in the Western Division, other than Six Nations, is really having a stellar season.

In the Western Division of the Ontario Junior C Lacrosse League (OJCLL), the Six Nations Stealth have moved into the number one spot in the standings and are dominating the division this season.

The Stealth are undefeated after eight games.

In second place, the Burlington Warriors are even, with a 4-4 record.

The Fergus Thistles have a 4-5 record and are in third place. That includes three overtime losses.

In the number four spot, the West Grey Rampage has a 2-6 record.

The Northmen are in fifth place.

In the basement, the Halton Hills Bulldogs have only one game after six times on the floor this year.

The Junior C Northmen will return to their home floor at Tony Rose Arena on Sunday, May 31, when they will host the Burlington Warriors.

Game time is 7 p.m.

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**SEMI FINAL LOSS:** The Orangeville District Secondary School (ODSS) Scartlett Bears take on the team from John F. Ross CVI on the soccer pitch at ODSS during their District 10 semi-final match on Tuesday, May 20. The Bears' season ended with a 3-0 loss. The ODSS girls had a good season, finishing in second place in the District 10 standings with a 4-1-1 record, before defeating Guelph Collegiate 4-0 in the quarter-final round of the playoffs.

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# OPINION

## Time will tell

We were gathered around the television set, my dad, my brother and I, to watch heavyweight champion Joe Frazier defend his title against George Foreman in Kingston, Jamaica.

Frazier was the overall favourite, despite being several inches shorter than Foreman, who also had an 8-inch reach advantage.

We were expecting a long fight.

Then, BAM! Around 1:45 into the first round, Foreman delivered a hard right that dropped Frazier to the canvas.

I still remember legendary sportscaster Howard Cosell yelling, "Down goes Frazier! Down goes Frazier! Down goes Frazier!"

Frazier staggered to the neutral corner to take the mandatory 8-count.

Everyone was shocked that Frazier was hurt so early in the fight.

As boxing matches go, this one is legendary.

Foreman knocked Frazier down two more times in the first round. Frazier was obviously in a lot of trouble.

By today's standards, the ref would have stopped the fight after the second knock-down because clearly Frazier was hurt and not able to defend himself.

Maybe there was too much money involved to worry about a fighter's physical condition after being knocked senseless.

When they came out for the second round, it was brutal to watch.

Foreman knocked Frazier to the canvas again. The second time Frazier hit the canvas, he was so disoriented that he swung, and his own momentum sent him down.

Foreman pinned Frazier on the ropes, and Cosell described the scenario as 'target practice' as Foreman pummelled a defenceless Frazier, until he again hit the canvas.

Finally, the ref waived his arms and stopped the fight.

This era and the several years previous are referred to as the 'Golden Age' of boxing.

It was a time when championship fights and even fights between top boxers were broadcast on prime-time television as special events.

It was a time when names like Joe Frazier, George Foreman, Muhammad Ali, Sonny Liston, Floyd Patterson, Jimmy Ellis, and Jerry Quarry were well known.

Now I couldn't even tell you who the heavyweight champion is.

"I want to be alone," uttered Greta Garbo in her slight Swedish accent in the 1932 film, Grand Hotel.

Garbo is considered by many to be the greatest movie star of all time.

I have a DVD copy of her 1939 film,

Ninotchka, which was famously touted as the film where 'Garbo laughs.' Although she didn't laugh very convincingly.

She had a rather serious persona.

Garbo was on screen during a period called the 'Golden Age of Hollywood,' which ran from around 1930 to 1960. At the time, five major studios ran Hollywood, and stars like Humphrey Bogart, Cary Grant, Grace Kelly, Marilyn Monroe, and Rita Hayworth were the big draws at the box office.

It was a time of Mid-Atlantic accents from actors who were trained on the stage, spoke clearly, and you heard every word they said.

The Golden Age of Hollywood came to a close with a combination of things, including the introduction of television, the blacklisting of communists, and anti-trust legislation that attacked the five main studios.

Films and the star system changed after that era.

However, some of the greatest films of all time were made after the Golden Age, and Hollywood continues to produce great movies.

Typically, a period in history is referred to as a Golden Age when certain events create a special era that defines a culture or series of events.

It could be a time when culture is flourishing, there are breakthroughs in science and

technology, a time of economic prosperity, or political stability and good governance.

By those definitions, the 1950s were probably the last great decade that could be called a Golden Age, where all those things seemed to be in place.

So, what is happening right now that will define this era we are currently living in?

I can't really think of anything that will define this era – but I think an era is usually defined when it's over, not currently happening.

Science, technology, and communications have made great leaps forward over the past two decades. Maybe that will figure into the history books in the future.

I have friends, and I've heard some sports commentators say we are currently living in the Golden Age of NFL football. I don't watch the sport, so I have no idea about that.

I would love to read the history books 100 years from now and see how they reflect on the first few decades of the 21st century.

Maybe we are experiencing the highest level of some achievement right now, and we just don't know it.

Time will tell.



**BRIAN LOCKHART**  
FROM THE SECOND ROW

## Iran: The curious absence of nuclear weapons

Tulsi Gabbard, the recently resigned/retired/fired US Director of National Intelligence, told Congress just two months ago that U.S. intelligence agencies had concluded Iran was not building nuclear weapons. Indeed, she added, experts also determined Iran had not resumed its suspended 2003 nuclear weapons program.

However, Donald Trump said she was "wrong" His claim that "Iran would have had a nuclear weapon within two weeks to four weeks" had been his justification, however improbable, for attacking Iran on 28 February. Gabbard went silent.

When Trump started up again last week, saying that Iran has a "maximum" of two weeks to sign a deal on its nuclear activities or else he restarts his war, Gabbard backed his lies. Iran is "at the point that it can produce a nuclear weapon within weeks to months," she said. She's loyal to the end, but this is so stupid that it's insulting.

How can Iran have no active nuclear weapons program in March of 2026, but be within "two to four weeks" of nuclear weapons only a couple of months later? Almost all the 'evidence' about Iranian nuclear weapons is about as reliable as Donald Trump himself.

You will encounter references to this

'nuclear weapons program' literally every day in the media, as though it were a universally acknowledged fact, but it's not a fact at all. It's an allegation that feels like a fact because it has been said so many times, so loudly, by so many people. However, the 'evidence' is purely circumstantial, and quite possibly wrong.

Iran's late Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, published a fatwa (religious ruling) in 2004 forbidding Muslims to use nuclear weapons: "We consider the use of these weapons to be haram (forbidden), and the effort to protect mankind from this great disaster is everyone's duty." This is a lot stricter than declared US military doctrine on the same issue.

We should take supreme religious leaders seriously when they speak on matters of faith and morals, and Khamenei clearly believed in the sinfulness of killing millions of people. However, he was quite vague when he discussed building nuclear weapons for deterrence only. In fact, he made a distinction between "our religious fatwa and our rational fatwa."

The 'rational fatwa' says that Iran must never start a nuclear war because it would not survive it. Israel alone has 300 nuclear warheads and the United States has thou-

sands, whereas Iran has none now and could never match those numbers. Nor, given recent performance, could Iran count on any of its (putative) nuclear-armed missiles getting through to their targets.

But if just one or two of Iran's hypothetical nuclear missiles could strike back at Israel or the US – "revenge from the grave" – the mere knowledge of that capability could deter Iran's enemies from attacking it at all. The 'rational fatwa' can therefore include building a few nuclear weapons for deterrence purposes only (provided Iran never actually uses them.)

This has led Iran to a stop-go pattern of nuclear weapons research, like this:

Iraq invades Iran (1980), old nuclear research from the Shah's time is dusted off.

War ends (1988), research shuts down.

Pakistan tests nuclear weapons near Iran's border (1998), Iranian nuclear research restarts.

Leak of information about the research; operation shut down (2002).

And it stayed shut down well past 2015, when all the great powers signed a deal with Iran. 'Obama's deal', if you like. It guaranteed that for 15 years Iran would not enrich uranium beyond 3.67%, and Iran obeyed it to the letter until Israeli Prime Minister Bin-

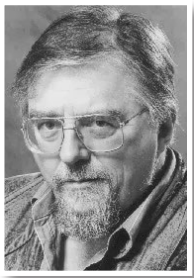
yamin Netanyahu persuaded Trump to tear it up in 2018.

The Iranians did nothing for a couple of years, hoping that the other signatories to the treaty could talk sense into Trump – and then they did something stupid. They started enriching uranium fuel beyond the treaty limit, though very slowly and still far short of weapons grade.

It took them four years to go from 20% to 60 per cent, and they announced every step in advance. They weren't trying to 'break out' of the treaty; they were trying to make the other countries return to it. But it certainly allowed hostile governments to claim that Iran is now actively seeking nuclear weapons.

It isn't. Not even now. Even before the United States and Israel attacked Iran 10 weeks ago, it was at least two years of hard work away from a working nuclear weapon. Indeed, it had not even begun working on it.

One big reason that everybody else stands by and let the U.S. and Israel pound Iran into the ground is that the regime is revolting: murderous, tyrannical and corrupt. But Donald Trump and Binyamin Netanyahu are vigilantes, not policemen, and their war is illegal. They are war criminals.



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## Fore!

The great game of golf, while sometimes maligned by its mockers, has changed in one important aspect over the years. Effectively eliminating the part of golfing that everyone could agree is a virtue – the 18-hole walk, has been unofficially dropped in favour of the waistline – expanding use of golf carts.

My father would have disapproved. He was a great, non-professional golfer, an amateur yet, with a sturdy row of trophies for each of his four or five holes-in-one and for winning tournaments over his years of golfing.

If he were honest, he would have admitted being somewhat disappointed that I, his only child, as it happened, was born a girl and was therefore not really qualified to go out with him and learn to play golf.

I preferred horses anyway.

There were fewer ladies playing then than there are now by a long shot. A theory, to be eventually debunked, that a woman's shape, the curves of the front of her body, would interfere with a successful golf swing that entails the stick and the arms making a wide swoop across the front of the golfer's body. If you see what I mean.

Once in a while, but not often for sure, my mother and I would trail along with my father while he played the 18 holes, if he

was not otherwise engaged with fellow golfers. There had been fleeting attempts for my father to teach my mother to golf, but whether her frontal appendages lived up to being predictable obstacles or it was similar to the erstwhile saying about husbands and the perils of trying to teach their wives to drive, I am not sure.

The lessons did quietly end, though, to a whispered sigh of relief on all our parts, I think.

Nevertheless, there are great lessons to be learned on a golf course beyond the skills of a stick connecting successfully with a small ball as few times as possible to sink it into a small flagged hole.

Good manners, this above all. It is hoped that the protocol of silence is still strict, while a shot launches that ball toward a target that might be 100 yards or more away or just a few feet, a careful tap to knock that little ball into that hole.

At one time, good manners mattered at all times, in conversation and commentary, whether praising or commiserating with success or bad luck. As life lessons, even people who have never stood upon the perfectly groomed "green" where finesse is all and the tiniest move, breeze or cough can make or break a moment of intense drama, might

still use the language of golf.

How to deal with and beat frustration is an ongoing lesson to any golfer, for the courses are a life's worth of traps, and they are called that: sand trap, water hazard, trees and wooded areas.

So, inventiveness is learned from how to get around or blast one's way out of the traps with a mighty slash and swing that can follow the golfer into the business world. Indeed, a great deal of business is conducted on golf courses, which makes sense in so many ways.

Golf is played outside, albeit in a somewhat forced place of nature, where there will still be wild animals. Which animals depend on location, but only in indoor, artificial, digital golf replication will there be no animals.

We are better off outside in nature, where the air is cleaner, the greenery is soothing, and the game itself lends an ease that combines with the emotions of playing along with those frustrations and challenges of the traps. Life encapsulated, one might say, an open book for discourse.

Of course, there is a history back to the 15th Century on the East Coast of Scotland, near Edinburgh, when a game of hitting pebbles with bent sticks over sand dunes evolved into what golf is today. So popu-

lar was golf that, even though the country was under attack, men were neglecting their military training to play it. This was such a problem that in 1457, the parliament of King James II banned the sport.

Naturally, people ignored the ban, but not until 1502 did the game gain the royal seal of approval when King James IV of Scotland (1473 -1513) became the world's first golfing monarch.

A litany of how golf spread throughout Europe notes that in the 1600s, Mary Queen of Scots introduced the game to France. The term caddie comes from her French military aides, known as cadets, according to Historic UK.

There was a moment when my father, observing my own slim build, did take me to a golf driving range with the idea I might take up the family passion. All he could do was laugh. I did develop a reasonable swing, being built for it, but there was no way for me to learn that particular shake of one's bottom that did not completely break him up.

He promised he loved me anyway and was sure that he would be able to teach me to drive a car. Golf, thy name is subtlety.



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# COMMUNITY VOICES

## Monthly Message: Dufferin Board of Trade celebrates local business at annual gala

The Dufferin Board of Trade (DBOT) welcomed business and community leaders from across the region for an evening of celebration, connection, and recognition at the 2026 Business Excellence Awards Gala and Annual General Meeting.

Held in front of a packed room of local entrepreneurs, nonprofit leaders, elected officials, and community supporters, the evening celebrated the individuals and organizations helping to make Dufferin County a vibrant and thriving place to live, work, and do business.

The evening began with the Dufferin Board of Trade's Annual General Meeting, where members reflected on the organization's work over the past year, including the continued growth of its social enterprise initiatives through the Dufferin Biz Hub. Through the Biz Hub, DBOT provides flexible workspaces, meeting rooms, business and creative services, and recently expanded into engraving and signage services — all designed to help local businesses and nonprofits access affordable supports, strengthen their operations, and thrive within the community.

MPP Sylvia Jones attended the event and officially swore in the Dufferin Board of Trade's 2026 Board of Directors.

The 2026 Executive includes:

- Lisa Thompson – Chair of the Board
- Doug Harkness – Past Chair
- Rob Koekoek – Secretary-Treasurer

Returning Directors:

- Brandi Neil
- Sarah Sawchyn
- Bill McCutcheon
- Miranda O'Connor
- Paul Janssen
- Gail Little (currently on a temporary leave of absence)

New Directors joining the Board in 2026:

- AJ Cappuccitti
- Carmine Domanico

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the 2026 Business Excellence Awards, recognizing businesses and individuals for their leadership, innovation, community impact, and commitment to excellence.

This year's award recipients included:

- Business of the Year – Shelburne Home Hardware Building Centre
- Small Business of the Year – DSE Automotive
- Businessperson of the Year – Stephanie Lavoie
- New Business of the Year – Make it Sweet
- Nonprofit of the Year – Choices Shelter & Support Services



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**BUSINESS LEADERS RECOGNIZED:** The Dufferin Board of Trade held its 2026 Business Excellence Awards Gala and Annual General Meeting on May 21 at Best Western Plus Orangeville Inn & Suites. The award winners, from left, were Tony Fenech, Sandy Brown, Jaime Edge, Jenny Jelen, Stephanie Lavoie, Jessica Stirik, and Amanda McCallum.

- Local Impact Award – Fenech Designs
- Chair's Award – Sandy Brown

"We were honoured to celebrate the incredible businesses, organizations, and individuals who help make Dufferin County such a strong and resilient community," said Diana Morris, Executive Director of the Dufferin Board of Trade. "The energy in the room was a reminder of the passion, innovation, and community spirit that exists throughout our local business sector."

The Dufferin Board of Trade also extended congratulations to all nominees, noting that being recognized by peers and the community is an achievement in itself.

The organization thanked the many sponsors and partners whose support helped make the evening possible, including award sponsors Carters Law Firm, The Chambers Plan Insurance, The Town of Orangeville, RLB, Shelburne Golf & Country Club, and JDC Custom Homes / Janssen Design.

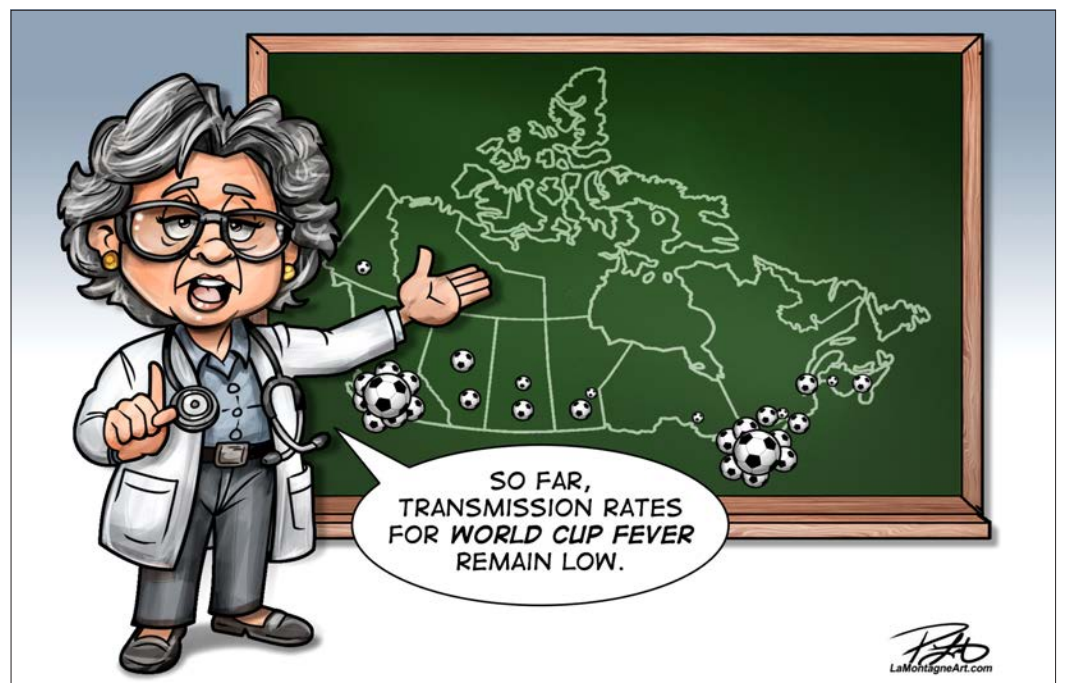
Additional support was provided by community partner Dufferin Community Foundation; casino table sponsors Dufferin Federation of Agriculture, Hill N Dale Landscaping, Indie FM 101, Country 105, and Orangeville Precast Concrete; event supporters Georgian College, MNP LLP, FloorPlus,

and Wightman; and catering partner Gourmandissimo Catering.

Photos from this year's event are available online at: [bookevrafter.lightfolio.com/gallery/business-excellence-awards-2026](http://bookevrafter.lightfolio.com/gallery/business-excellence-awards-2026)

The Dufferin Board of Trade is a nonprofit

chamber of commerce serving businesses and organizations across Dufferin County through advocacy, connections, and innovative social enterprise initiatives that help strengthen and support the local business community.



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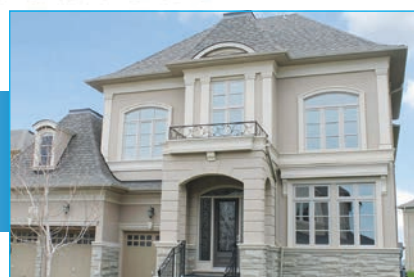
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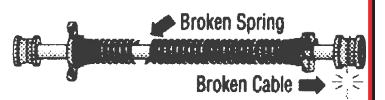
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# Dufferin OPP lay 375 charges during Canada Road Safety Week

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers participated in this year's Canada Road Safety Week campaign, resulting in a total of 375 charges being laid across Dufferin County.

Canada Road Safety Week, which ran from May 12 to May 18, focused on promoting safe driving behaviours and increasing compliance with traffic laws to help save lives.

The campaign targeted behaviours that place drivers, passengers, pedestrians, and other vulnerable road users at risk, including the "Big Four" contributing factors in serious collisions and fatalities on Ontario roads.

These factors are impaired driving, distracted driving, speeding and aggressive driving, and lack of seatbelt use

During the campaign, Dufferin OPP officers

laid the following charges:

- Speeding: 215
- Stunt driving/racing: 5
- Seatbelt violations: 16
- Distracted driving: 1
- Impaired driving: 8
- Other charges: 130

The number of charges laid during the campaign is over 24 per cent higher than last year.



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# Stray calf assisted by police after falling out of moving trailer in Mono

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers showed that policing the community can sometimes include a little “herd control” after assisting in an unexpected livestock incident on Highway 10 in Mono.

Dufferin OPP officers observed the rear door of a livestock trailer become dislodged while on general patrol earlier this month. The dislodged door caused a young Charolais calf to fall from the moving trailer and roll safely to the side of the roadway, suffering minor cuts and scrapes in the process.

“The calf quickly moved itself out of traffic and sought shelter nearby. Thankfully, officers were already in the area and, with the help of several caring community members, were able to keep the calf calm and safe while coordinating with the driver of the trailer,” reads a Dufferin OPP press release.

Officers radioed ahead and the farmer promptly returned to retrieve the young calf, which fortunately suffered only minor injuries before being reunited with the rest of the herd.

“No two calls are ever the same in policing, which is what makes the profession such a diverse and unique career. From emergency response calls to assisting stranded live-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**HERD CONTROL:** A Dufferin OPP officer and member of the public assist a calf that fell off a moving trailer on Highway 10 in Mono a couple weeks ago. The calf suffered minor cuts and scrapes in the process and was returned to its owner.

stock, officers never know what a shift may bring,” reads a Dufferin OPP press release.

“Dufferin OPP would like to thank the members of the public who stopped to assist, as well as the dedicated officers who helped ensure the situation had a safe and positive outcome for everyone involved.”

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IN MEMORY OF MY BELOVED

*Sue Bradley Sheehan*

JUNE 27, 1953 - MAY 29, 2007



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- This is a full-time position, based on 88 hours of work per 2-week cycle, with occasional overtime. At this time, we are only looking for individuals who can work a 12-hour rotating continental shift, including nights and weekends.
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- Youth applicants are welcome to apply.

To view a comprehensive overview of the position, please go to <https://jobs.dayforcehcm.com/en-US/irrs/CANDIDATEPORTAL/jobs/4103>  
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The **LORD DUFFERIN CHAPTER IOOE** holds their meetings at the Lord Dufferin Centre on the 4th Tuesday of every month. We are looking for women who would like to help in the Community. Call 519-941-1865.

**IF YOU WANT** to keep drinking, that's your business. **IF YOU WANT** to stop drinking, that's our business. Call Alcoholics Anonymous Hot Line, 1-866-715-0005. [www.aanorthaltonein.org](http://www.aanorthaltonein.org).

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SERVICES

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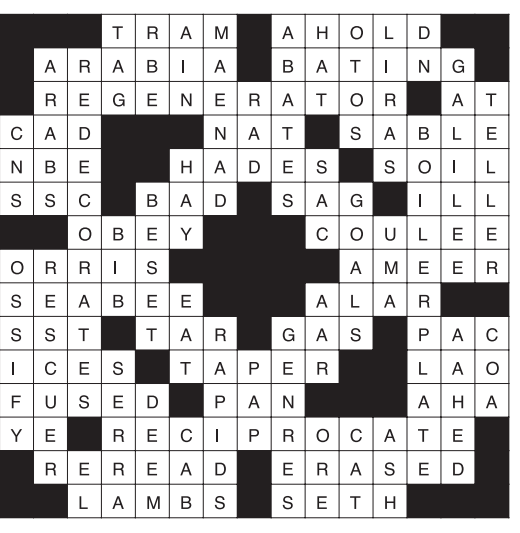


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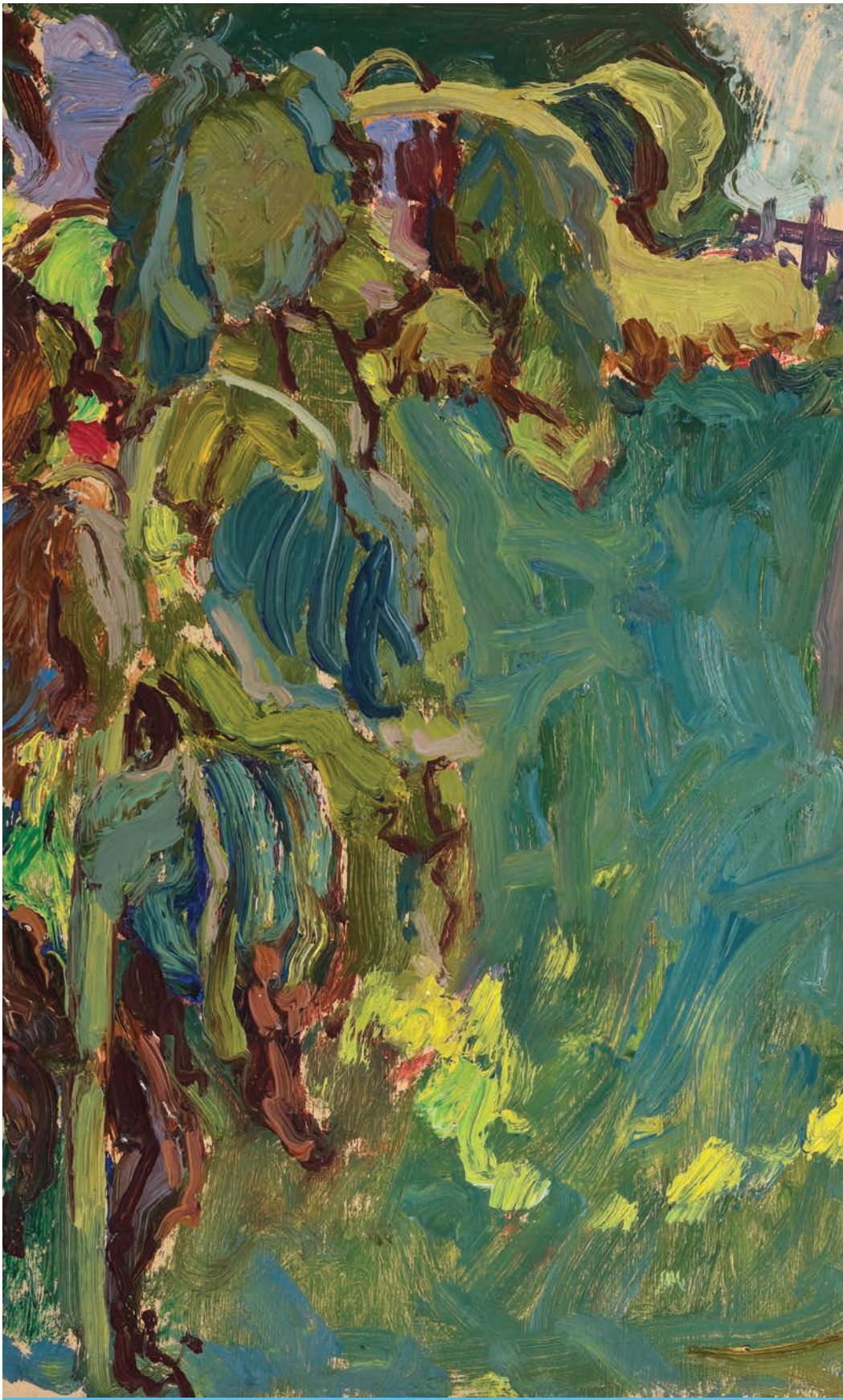
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