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A photograph of a two-story house with a mix of brick and white siding, featuring a large front porch and multiple windows with dark shutters. In the foreground, there is a stylized graphic of a roofline. To the right of the house, a diamond-shaped badge displays the GAF logo and the text 'TRIPLE EXCELLENCE AWARD'. At the bottom, the company name 'SYNERGY EXTERIORS' is written in large, bold, yellow letters with a black outline, set against a black background with a white swoosh. Below the name, the contact information '519-939-6007 | WWW.SYNERGYEXTERIORS.CA' is provided in white text.

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A report to Council by Brenda Wagner, the County's Health and Human Services Director, indicates the primary issue is no longer the immediate financial viability of the shelter provider. Attention should be focused on how

Wagner said there hasn't been such a request.

But, based on the need, she does anticipate such a request.

Continued on Page A14

Making your house *feel* like home since 1990

County looks to recover costs over time for Edelbrock hub

Written By JAMES MATTHEWS

Dufferin County will move toward construction of the Edelbrock Centre Health and Human Services Hub.

The county will cover the upfront capital costs with an eye toward cost recovery by way of tenant lease agreements.

The total anticipated renovation cost for the primary care space is about \$2 million. Dufferin Area Family Health Team (DAFHT) has submitted a request to allocate up to \$499,000 of its primary care funding toward leasehold improvements.

As approval from Ontario Health has not yet been confirmed, there remains a potential requirement for the county to fund the full renovation cost for this component.

Council previously endorsed the development of a Health and Human Services Hub at the Edelbrock Centre to improve access to integrated health, social, and human services. Work has advanced signifi-

cantly, with partners confirmed, services beginning to locate onsite, and renovation planning underway.

The Hub model is intended to provide a coordinated front door to services, with expansion over time through hub, spoke, and mobile delivery.

Since March 2025, Council has endorsed the development of a Health and Human Services Hub at the Edelbrock Centre to improve access to integrated care and reduce barriers for residents.

Subsequent updates confirmed the project has advanced from concept to coordinated implementation. A strong multi-partner structure, supported by a shared partnership vision has established clear alignment, accountability, and a unified approach to service delivery.

The Hub is designed as a one-stop integrated system, with future expansion through spoke locations to improve access across the county, according to a report to

Council by Brenda Wagner, the county's health and human services director.

This approach avoids duplication and future rework by aligning infrastructure and service planning upfront. It reduces disruption to services through coordinated implementation and phased occupancy, and it also improves coordination across interdependent systems, supporting more integrated and responsive care.

“Overall, the Hub is well-positioned to enhance service integration, improve client experience, and strengthen system efficiency,” Wagner said in her report. “The project has reached a stage where construction must proceed to maintain momentum and enable service delivery.”

A key challenge is that some partners do not have the ability to contribute upfront capital. Most notably, recent provincial funding for primary care is restricted to operations and staffing and cannot be used for capital costs.

“As a result, if the county does not fund the capital upfront, there is a significant risk of delays to both construction and service implementation,” she said.

Staff suggest a practical approach that enables construction to proceed immediately, ensures partners can locate and deliver services, and one that recovers costs over time through lease agreements.

This approach is already contemplated within the project, particularly for shared spaces where the county is initially funding costs with recovery through tenant agreements.

“Advancing the work as a single coordinated project will also reduce future disruption and avoid higher costs associated with phased retrofits,” said Wagner in her report. “Approving this approach will allow the county to move forward without delay, fully leverage partner and provincial investments, and establish a sustainable model for cost recovery.”

Retiring UGDSB director reflects on five-year tenure as successor takes over

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

Upper Grand District School Board director of education and CEO Peter Sovran will retire at the end of September after more than 30 years in public education, capping a five-year tenure leading the board.

Associate director and chief operating officer Brent McDonald will succeed him, effective Oct. 1.

Sovran said the change in leadership has been years in the making, pointing to McDonald's role as his second-in-command since Sovran's 2021 appointment.

“I'll say the transition probably started five years ago, because Brent and I have been working together from actually even longer than five years ago,” Sovran said in an interview. “Over the years he's taken on different roles, different titles, and currently associate director and chief operating officer.”

Sovran said that the close working relationship extended beyond meetings. Shortly after starting the job on Sept. 1, 2021, he had an adjoining boardroom space converted into an office for McDonald, so the two could work side by side.

“I am so pleased that he is going to be the next CEO of the organization, because he has been part of every decision and every move that we've made over the last five-plus years,” Sovran said.

Board of trustees chair Ralf Mesenbrink thanked Sovran for his service in a statement announcing the retirement.

“Peter has led with integrity, vision and a

deep commitment to improvement,” Mesenbrink said. “His leadership has helped position the UGDSB for continued success.”

Asked what advice he has passed on to McDonald, Sovran pointed to staying grounded.

“Always, always, always keep being the person that you are,” he said. “Ground your decisions in your core values and your beliefs.”

Sovran credited the board's “let's go” methodology — a framework built around goals and responding quickly when students need support — along with heavy post-pandemic investment in staff and student supports for driving gains in student achievement. He pointed to more than 97 per cent of high school students earning their credits as evidence of that progress.

“We wanted it to be 100 per cent,” he said, adding the board's live performance dashboards now let educators track student progress in real time. “We've established this data-informed culture. We know where students are at any point in time.”

Among the initiatives Sovran said he's proudest of is Project SEARCH, a partnership with the YMCA of Three Rivers, the University of Guelph and the March of Dimes that provides workplace internships for students with significant special needs.

“To go to those graduation ceremonies and hear that these young people now actually have employment coming out of that is just amazing and super gratifying,” he said. “There's really no other important metric than students being successful.”

Sovran said continuing work from the board's independent human rights review, launched in April 2025, will remain a priority under McDonald.

“Each and every student in the district really needs to feel that they belong, that they have an opportunity to be successful,” he said. “That is the critical work.”

The independent review, completed in March this year, documented serious concerns about discrimination and anti-Black racism in UGDSB schools and made 14 recommendations for change, including clearer complaint processes and better accountability.

Sovran said that work will continue to be a priority as McDonald takes over.

He said artificial intelligence will also remain a major focus, with the board framing its approach around an AI literacy framework grounded in strong reading and math skills, along with a sustainability component built into the district's multi-year plan.

“Having a firm grounding in human rights is absolutely essential when it comes to dealing with the disruption — and it will continue to be a disruption — that AI brings to a learning organization like ours,” he said.

For his part, McDonald said he's looking forward to building on that work.

“I look forward to strengthening relationships with all stakeholders across the system, supporting innovation including the responsible use of AI, and continuing to advance our student achievement progress in literacy and numeracy,” McDonald said.

“Most importantly, I am excited to work alongside our students, staff, families, trustees and community partners as we continue to implement recommendations from the independent human rights review and harness the incredible talent and potential that exists throughout the Upper Grand DSB.”

Sovran, whose role oversees schools across Wellington County, Guelph and Dufferin County, said he made a point of spending every Friday at the Grant Evans Education Centre in Orangeville.

“There's nothing like actually being situated in the space and spending time in the space,” he said, adding that the practice helped him watch the district's identity shift over five years.

“I've really started to see that shift from, ‘That's Guelph,’ or ‘That's North Wellington,’ or ‘That's Dufferin,’ to, ‘That's the Upper Grand,’ while at the same time not losing the uniqueness of Dufferin County.”

He said he has completed well over 300 school visits during his time with the board.

“It has been an absolute privilege,” he said.

McDonald, who began his career in 1995 as a teacher at Arthur Public School before serving as a vice-principal, principal and executive superintendent within the board, said he's grateful for the opportunity ahead.

“Having spent over 30 years in a variety of roles across the organization, I am grateful for the opportunity to build on the outstanding achievements of our students, staff and school communities,” McDonald said.

Town of Orangeville

2026 interim property taxes

Taxpayers in the Town of Orangeville are reminded that the first instalment of the 2026 final tax bill is due on **Tuesday, July 28, 2026.**

Please note: failure to receive a tax bill does not relieve the taxpayer of the responsibility for payment and/or late penalty charges. Penalties are charged at a rate of 1.25% on the first day of each month following the due date.

To obtain a copy of your tax bill, contact Finance by:

Phone: 519-941-0440 ext. 7306
Email: propertytaxes@orangeville.ca
In person: Town Hall, 87 Broadway



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Theatre Orangeville jumps back into gear with municipal help

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

A loan approved by the Town of Orangeville represents a bridge to financial stability for Theatre Orangeville rather than a bailout.

The municipality will front the theatre company \$200,000 over five years, with five per cent interest, and another \$100,000 short-term loan to cover interest accumulated from debt.

Many professional theatre companies across Canada have faced such hardship from COVID-19 pandemic-era.

Artistic Director Jennifer Stewart said the theatre has been battling financial challenges that were driven by years of rising operating costs, inflation, and reduced revenues following COVID-19 social shutdowns, leaving a widening gap between expenses and income.

“There was a widening gap over the last three or four years that has been difficult for Theatre Orangeville and theatres all over the country,” she said. “That’s where we were at, and we had this deficit, trying to pay it off, but we couldn’t, but we wanted to keep the doors open.”

Because Theatre Orangeville operates strictly as a not-for-profit professional theatre company, the pandemic was particularly harsh, with no large fund from years of profits to rely upon. Stewart said that this is by design, to keep prices down and to keep the theatre eligible for grants, so the quality is not impacted, either.

“The goal is to be at zero,” she said. “If you have too much money in your savings, then you don’t get access to the arts council grants. It’s that fine balance of knowing how much you need to spend, and then spending it.”

“Take Mirvish, for example, a for-profit theatre company. The decisions they make are because they need to make money where we’re not-for-profit, which is easier from our standpoint because it takes that pressure off of us. We can create things and try things and

bring new things to this community that haven’t been done anywhere else.”

The COVID-19 pandemic and accompanying social shutdowns destabilized that balance and changed that strategy.

After exhausting all its other options, the organization determined municipal assistance was the only remaining option. It was a tough moment and cast a shadow of uncertainty over the team behind Theatre Orangeville.

“We asked for extra sponsorships, donors, but everyone’s feeling the crunch and the pinch of increasing costs, and so there just wasn’t that much available,” Stewart said. “This was sort of a last resort.”

Stewart emphasized the loan was only approved after the organization presented the Town with a balanced operating plan for the 2026-27 season and demonstrated its ability to repay the funds.

“We had to prepare,” she said. “We had to show the town that we were fiscally responsible moving forward with the new operating budget for the ‘26–27 season, and we had to prove to them that we’d be able to have the funds, the revenue to pay it back. We didn’t know if the loan was going to go through.”

Laura Austin, Chairperson of Theatre Orangeville’s Board of Directors, said that prior to the meeting, the theatre had already made significant reductions in spending to pay off outstanding expenses, proving their reliability to repay a loan granted to them.

“Over the last six months, we have demonstrated that reliability, as we’ve paid off \$150,000,” she said. “We met with every department. We really went through a cost containment over the last six months. Where can we make cuts? What is absolutely not necessary right now moving forward because we need to pay off our debt so that we can keep the doors open.”

“I think that’s what convinced the CFO and CAO that we were capable and that we were righting the ship.”

The presentation to Council reached the

right points, as it was supported unanimously.

Rather than viewing the loan as an investment in a single organization, theatre representatives argue it is an investment in a community asset that reaches well beyond the stage.

In addition to producing professional theatre, Theatre Orangeville operates youth camps, educational programming, after-school initiatives, concerts, film screenings and partnerships with local organizations.

Austin described the theatre as a creative outlet for children, seniors and adults alike, providing opportunities not only for performers, but also for those interested in technical theatre, production, carpentry, lighting and sound.

“We fill in the gaps where some kids aren’t athletic and play lacrosse and hockey, for example,” she said. “We have after school programs, and then there’s all different kinds of roles in theatre. You could be into lighting or sound, or we’ve had a lot of interns come through for the production side. They’re building sets and doing carpentry or scene painting. There’s a wide variety of different skills you can build here.”

The theatre also pointed to its economic impact, saying productions draw visitors into Orangeville’s downtown where audiences often dine, shop and support local businesses before or after performances.

Austin said the venue provides professional-calibre productions comparable to those found in larger urban centres while encouraging residents and visitors to experience Orangeville’s restaurants and retail sector.

“We support the Blues and Jazz Festival, we just did Nashville Takeover, we have the Dufferin Film Festival,” she said. “There’s also the Orangeville Musical Theatre...and while they’re a volunteer-run amateur theatre, they have access to a professional stage, professional lighting, and professional sound. It’s wonderful that we can support that... Alton Public School... they use our ticketing... so

Theatre Orangeville really facilitates programming in the community, which I think is a great service not every town is fortunate enough to have.”

Officials stressed that the theatre’s success depends on continued community support rather than additional public funding.

They said the most effective way residents can help is by purchasing tickets, enrolling children in camps and participating in programs already being offered. Revenue generated through attendance allows the theatre to reduce debt while maintaining affordable programming and continuing to develop new Canadian productions and community partnerships.

Looking ahead, Stewart said that Theatre Orangeville plans to strengthen its financial position through touring productions, co-productions with other theatres and expanded subscription options. The expanded options include the new Flex Subscription, which allows patrons to commit to the five-show or three-show mainstage packages and then reserve their seats for the performances that best fit their schedules.

The new touring plans are at the center of Stewart’s vision for the future.

“I really want to take Theatre Orangeville shows on the road,” she said. “We want to do tours. We are applying for touring grants right now from the OAC and the Canada Council, because there’s a lot of opportunities to do co-productions with similar-sized theatres as ours. If we can do co-productions, it shares the initial cost, and the actors have more work, and we reach a greater audience.”

Theatre Orangeville said that their goal is to repay the loan in full, while continuing to rebuild public awareness of the role the organization plays in Orangeville’s cultural and economic life.

They will also be working to restore confidence in the organization and ensure the theatre remains a lasting community resource for years to come.

OPP release images of suspect vehicles linked to break-in at Orangeville Canadian Tire

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers are seeking the public’s assistance in identifying individuals involved in a break and enter at a business in Orangeville.

On July 18, at approximately 9:49 a.m., police responded to a report of a break and enter at Canadian Tire, located on First Street in Orangeville. Police were advised that multiple storage containers located at the rear of the property had been broken into overnight.

Several items were reported stolen, including portable car shelters, vehicle rims,

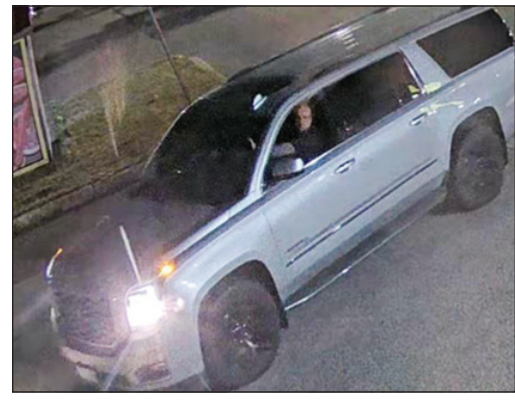
and tires. The total value of the stolen property remains under investigation.

Through the investigation, police obtained surveillance footage showing two suspect vehicles and individuals involved in the theft. The first vehicle is described as an older-model white GMC Savana van, occupied by three males. The second vehicle is described as a newer-model silver GMC Yukon, occupied by two males.

Police are asking anyone who may recognize the vehicles or individuals involved, or anyone with information that may assist

with the investigation, to contact the Dufferin OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

Anyone with information can also contact Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-8477 or submit a tip online at ontariocrimestoppers.ca.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ONGOING INVESTIGATION: Dufferin OPP released surveillance images of two vehicles believed to have been involved in a break and enter at Canadian Tire on First Street in Orangeville.

Public notice

Town of Orangeville Official Plan Review

Location of subject lands: The Official Plan review applies to all lands within the limits of the Town of Orangeville.

The Town of Orangeville is updating its Official Plan in accordance with Section 26 of the Planning Act and will hold a Special Public Meeting of Council to discuss revisions that may be required.

What’s being proposed

An Official Plan is a legal policy document that guides and shapes the future of a community. It directs growth by promoting the efficient use of land and infrastructure, supporting the development of attractive and livable communities with a range of housing options and protecting cultural heritage, natural heritage and agricultural lands. The Official Plan applies to all lands within the Town’s municipal boundary.

The Town of Orangeville is reviewing and updating our Official Plan to align with provincial and Dufferin County planning policies. This review addresses growth targets, intensification requirements and updated natural heritage

mapping, while continuing to implement the Town’s evolving local objectives and community priorities. The updated Official Plan will guide Orangeville’s growth and planning decisions through to the year 2056.

This comprehensive Official Plan review builds on foundational Phase 1 work completed between 2015 and 2021. Since then, additional changes to the provincial planning framework have occurred alongside the recent approval of the County of Dufferin Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (OPA No. 4).

Purpose of the public meeting

This public meeting is the first step in sharing information about the Official Plan review project with council and the public. The Town’s consultant team will present the project and highlight preliminary findings on areas that may require change and outline the project’s community engagement strategy.

A report summarizing the background findings and directions for key updates will be made publicly available after this meeting.

Learn more and share feedback

Public meeting

Date: August 24, 2026
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: Council Chambers, Town Hall, 87 Broadway
Watch online: orangeville.ca/WatchLive
Meeting agenda to be posted by August 19, 2026.

How to participate

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

Submit written comments

Written comments may be submitted prior to the meeting to the contact below. Please address comments to the mayor and members of council and/or relevant staff. All submissions become part of the public record and will be considered as the project moves forward.

Collection of personal information

Personal information, including names, addresses, and comments, is collected by the Town of Orangeville under the authority of the Planning Act, for the purpose of the Official Plan review. Submissions may form part of the public record.

Future notification

If you wish to be notified about the decision of the Orangeville council or receive updates about the Official Plan review, you must make a written request to the contact below.

For more information

For more information on the Official Plan Review, upcoming Public Meetings and online surveys, please visit the project webpage at Orangeville.ca/OfficialPlan. Questions about the Official Plan review can be sent to Larysa Russell, Senior Planner and Brandon Ward, Manager of Planning at planning@orangeville.ca.





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Lawren S. Harris

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County water management strategy moves forward

Written By **JAMES MATTHEWS**

A new well has been identified that may alleviate ground water stress on some Dufferin County municipal supplies.

Behnam Doulatyari, senior manager of watershed plans and source water protection at the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, walked county council through an amendment to Section 34 of the Clean Water Act during council's July 9 meeting.

The amendments to source protection plans and assessment reports incorporate recent technical work completed for Orangeville-Mono water budget update and the addition of New Municipal Supply Well 13 to the Orangeville drinking water system.

A 2011 study identified significant stress on the area's ground water Local Area A was assigned a significant risk level due to impacts of pumping and recharge reductions under both average and drought conditions. Predictions also include reduction in baseflows to cold water streams.

Local Area A includes Orangeville's wells in the western half of Sub 19, Mono's Cardinal Woods Wells, and Amaranth's Pullen Well.

"In the modelling that was done at the time, significant ground water stress was determined under regular conditions and drought conditions," Doulatyari said.

A joint municipal water management plan was put in place between East Garafraxa, Amaranth, Mono, and Orangeville. There was also involvement in the management plan at the upper tier county level.

"It applies to the local area where ground water stress is deemed to be significant," Doulatyari said.

It's hoped the stress from increasing demand and slower recharge of ground water will be decreased.

Consistent with the original study from 2011, Local Area A was again assigned a significant risk level due to impacts of pumping and recharge reductions under average and drought conditions.

The predicted drawdown exceeded the available drawdown at several municipal

wells in Orangeville during the long-term drought, considering future changes in land use and increased pumping.

In Mono, the predicted drawdown exceeded the available drawdown in several scenarios for the Cardinal Woods wells. Reduction in baseflows to cold-water streams like Monora Creek was also identified.

"The risk level does not indicate a problem with municipal wells and current pumping rates," according to a staff report to county council. "Rather, it reflects a need to manage the drinking water as a regional resource shared by the municipalities."

The updated water quality analysis included vulnerability assessment that identified Wells 5 and 5A to be more vulnerable to surface contamination.

Local Area A remains at significant risk due to projected groundwater drawdown exceeding available capacity at several municipal wells in Orangeville and Mono under future pumping and drought scenarios, along with reduced baseflows to cold-water streams. It underscores the need for coordinated regional water management now to meet future needs.

Updated vulnerability mapping shows increased contamination risk for Wells 5 and 5A, with high-vulnerability protection areas now extending into employment lands, highlighting the need for coordinated land-use planning to protect water quality.

Doulatyari said there is a main point of interest to come from the study.

"Given the quality and quantity constraints that have been determined by the study or confirmed by the study additional or new growth in (Local Area A) is not advisable," he said. "The stress on underground water system is significant."

Councillor Fred Nix, Mono's deputy mayor, asked why more new drinking water sources aren't being sought given constraints.

Doulatyari said there isn't a single straightforward answer to that question.

"There is a certain amount of population that doesn't currently exist here but was accounted for in the amount of taking that was included in the study," he said.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NEW TO TOWN: The "Animals at Play: Slide of Life" chainsaw sculpture (left) at Fendley Park celebrates the joy of play and Orangeville's natural wildlife with carvings inspired by the park's playground, splash pad and local animals. The "Celebration of the Arts" chainsaw sculpture (right) at Alexandra Park honours Orangeville's vibrant arts community with a dancer atop a black walnut log and carvings representing a variety of artistic disciplines.

Two new tree sculptures bring art, creativity and playfulness to Orangeville parks

The Town of Orangeville has expanded its public art collection with two new tree sculptures by artist Robbin Wenzoski. Installed in Fendley Park and Alexandra Park, the sculptures celebrate Orangeville's arts, natural spaces and community spirit while adding new landmarks for residents and visitors to enjoy.

Animals at Play: Slide of Life

At Fendley Park, Animals at Play: Slide of Life captures the fun, discovery and adventure of one of Orangeville's favourite family destinations. With its accessible splash pad, multi-level playground, picnic area and scenic trails, the park is a place where families gather to play, explore and connect with nature.

A whimsical rabbit sits atop the sculpture, while a waterslide spirals around the trunk, reflecting the joyful energy of children at play. Inside a carved opening, an owl glides on a rope swing, surrounded by relief carvings of local wildlife, including a beaver, raccoon, squirrel, ducks and fish. Together, these elements celebrate both the spirit of play and the wildlife found throughout Orangeville's parks and natural spaces.

Celebration of the Arts

At Alexandra Park, Celebration of the Arts pays tribute to the creativity and cultural spirit of the community. Located adjacent to the Town Hall in Alexandra Park, the site marks the main stage for the Blues & Jazz Festival each June and has long been a gathering place for artistic expression and community celebration.

Carved from a black walnut log, the sculpture is crowned by a graceful dancer, symbolizing the energy, passion and movement that connect the performing and visual arts. Intricate relief carvings representing a range of artistic disciplines surround the piece, reflecting the ways art inspires creativity, strengthens connections and enriches community life.

"These sculptures showcase two things that make Orangeville unique—our vibrant arts community and our beautiful parks," said Coun. Joe Andrews, chair of the town's Economic Development and Culture Committee. "This artwork invites residents and visitors to experience these spaces in a new way while reflecting the creativity, culture and natural beauty that are central to our community."

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Orangeville Ribfest celebrates community, flavour and friendship

Orangeville Rotary Ribfest welcomed an estimated 20,461 visitors over three days, despite rainy weather on Saturday, while raising a preliminary \$55,000 to \$60,000 for community initiatives.

Organizers said more than 8,300 people attended on Saturday alone, while strong crowds on Friday and Sunday helped make the 2026 festival one of the most successful to date.

This year's competition winners included Fatboys Southern Smokehouse, which earned the Judges' Choice award for Best Ribs; Boss Hog's BBQ, which took home the Judges' Choice award for Best Sauce; and Jack the Ribber, which won the People's Choice award.

Rotary organizers thanked the hundreds of volunteers, sponsors, patrons, rib teams, food

vendors and performers who contributed to the event's success.

Organizer Ingrid Sproxton said the event is about much more than food.

"Ribfest is so much more than great food and entertainment," she said. "It's a celebration of community, friendship, and the remarkable things we can accomplish when people come together."

Sproxton added that "every volunteer, every sponsor, every patron, every ribber, every vendor, and every performer played an important role in making this year's event one of our best yet, despite the weather on Saturday."

Organizers said they are already looking ahead to next year's event, which is scheduled for July 16 to 18, 2027.



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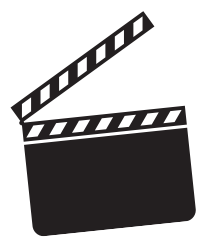
BY THIS GUY!



A stylized handwritten signature in black ink. A thick black arrow points from the signature towards the portrait of Andrew Kohnen.

Andrew Kohnen
Brewmaster





Arts & Entertainment



LOCAL COMMUNITY EVENTS

Anne Laurier Scholarship recipients share their artistic aspirations

Written By CONSTANCE SCRAFIELD

The three winners of Dufferin Arts Council's \$3,000 Anne Laurier Scholarships were announced earlier this month, and the Citizen had the chance to speak with each of them about their future.

Their choices within the broad world of art were quite varied, one from the other.

Kaitlyn Paula, who received the scholarship, began dancing at three years old. Her brother had seen the movie Step Up when he was six, as Paula described it, with a friend, and they decided that dance was for them.

By the time Paula was three, she told the story, "My brother was obsessed with dance and so, when I was three, my mother said she might as well send me to dance studio with him."

That decision has made Paula very happy.

The Citizen's interview with Paula was a chance telephone call, and it was the perfect time, as she was waiting for her turn to perform in a competition at the National Dance Honours.

Paula remarked, "I am competing in every style of dance. I'm competing for a few days as one of the top 40 dancers out of 100, ages 17 to 18."

The dance style list includes tap, hip-hop, ballroom, and contemporary as a modern dance.

"Oh yes and jazz and ballet," she included.

Paula confirmed. "The old pros are an influence still. All the big dances are always an influence."

"I am a dance history buff," she added.

Dance is all. From the time Paula spends making up new choreography, to learning two new dances just before another competition, getting ready for university in Pennsylvania, she is very and happily preoccupied.

She commented that her parents, who are not dancers, are very proud of her and her brother. Her brother is her inspiration.

She said of him, "The way he dances and the way he moves is so beautiful."

Paula's ambition is a career in dance, and the scholarship has made a real difference to her.

"It is very helpful with my confidence," Paula said.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

DANCE SCHOLARSHIP: Kaitlyn Paula received the Anne Laurier Scholarships for her stunning dance portfolio.

Savannah Bourne won her scholarship for her animation, which is her passion and the career she wants to follow. However, her slant for her cartoons is the path of darker stories and even horror.

She talked about how a cartoonist gets ahead, beginning with a good education. Bourne attended Humber College, the animation school there, as she described it.

"My tone is quite dark," she said. "Drawing a little horror, a feeling you can explore that hasn't been done before."

To offer a reason for knowing how dark feels, Bourne explained that three years ago, she lost her grandfather to cancer, saying, "We were really close, and I learned about how the feelings around grief is normal, like the worst part of the world that gets covered up."

Bourne does volunteer work teaching young "kids," but she doesn't want to expose the youngsters to dark pictures.

She explained she has not started stories yet and that she is learning more about drawing in concept.

Taking hints from Stephen King's psychology to the inner workings of what makes us human: "People are complicated; what makes us think," she pondered. "My dad is a horror fan but my mom isn't."

"To define horror, it's what's under people's



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ANIMATION SCHOLARSHIP: Shirley Boxem, Dufferin Arts Council's executive director, presents the Anne Laurie Scholarship to animation artist Savannah Bourne.

skin – those are the psychological thrillers, the stuff that makes you think, think hard," Bourne added.

When a character overcomes the darkness and becomes a better person, being able to grow, "In the end, there is a light in the end. I want to help people come through it."

For her, the scholarship has been the most important award, even though she has won others.

"To be recognized will matter for a long time," said Bourne.

Meanwhile, Audrey Hawkins, who also received the scholarship, has her sights set on the theatre. A long time with Orangeville Music Theatre (OMT) has given her chances to be on the stage and to learn so much from the crew, the people who run the well-known and loved community theatre.

"Last year, I did Alice in Wonderland. I was one of three parts of the Cheshire Cat," she said.

Before OMT, Hawkins was involved with LP Stage Productions in Shelburne, where she and her family were living. It was a great source of enthusiasm, as Hawkins is passionate about theatre and her role in it.

Her live theatre background was her parents taking the family downtown to Toronto to see



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ACTING SCHOLARSHIP: Audrey Hawkins was delighted to win one of the Anne Laurie Scholarships. Acting and the theatre are her focus.

shows performed on the Mirvish stage.

"I was obsessed with people on a stage," she said. "And my mom told me, 'You can do that.'"

Hawkins is looking forward to attending the University of Toronto to become a specialist in theatre and drama studies. The U of T course covers studio training, plus history and analysis.

"I want to be an actor. I always love acting live in the class," she said.

Last summer, she saw Hades Town at Theatre Orangeville's Young Company's production. The show and performance impressed Hawkins deeply, to the point that she commented that she could not believe the performers were not already professionals.

At the moment, Hawkins has not sought an agent.

Hawkins said, "My parents have supported me, meaning in the fall, for me just to have the opportunity to study the performing arts; just to be able to work at it."

Audrey Hawkins was very thrilled to receive the scholarship.

"It meant a lot to me. I have been looking at other grants and scholarships because university is expensive and the program I'm going into is expensive. So, this scholarship is a big boost for me."



David Gauthier
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Maurice McDonald
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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
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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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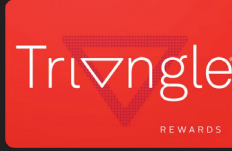
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The Citizen CROSSWORD

Puzzle No. 267410 • Solution on page: CLASSIFIEDS SECTION

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15					16			
17				18					19			
20				21		22			23			
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60								61			62	
64								65			66	
67											69	

CLUES ACROSS

1. Listen to
5. Presents
10. A type of guitar
14. Actor Idris
15. A citizen of Iran
16. Pretentiously artistic
17. Harness
18. Diamond weight measurement
19. "Better Call _"
20. Fervent support
22. Male cat
23. Jewish spiritual leader
24. Disposed to venture or take risks
27. A way to nail
30. Cool!
31. Women's ___ movement
32. "Losing My Religion" rockers
35. Step-shaped recess
37. A princess can detect it
38. Tractor-trailer
39. Leslie and Leon are two
40. Color at the end of the spectrum
41. Lines where fabrics are sewn
42. Dodgers great Hersher
43. Floor covering
44. Traveled aimlessly
45. Rocker Stewart
46. Body art
47. Congressman (abbr.)
48. No seats available
49. Breaks apart
52. Hand gesture
55. Ballplayer's tool
56. Sword
60. Baseball team
61. Upper bract of floret of grass
63. Italian Seaport
64. Mars crater
65. Tube on a shoelace
66. U. of Miami mascot
67. South American nation
68. Video game series
69. Upper body part

CLUES DOWN

1. German courtesy title
2. Ancient Greek personification of mercy
3. Jewish calendar month
4. Family of long-legged frogs
5. Photo
6. Delivered a speech
7. Lute used in Indian music
8. Decorated
9. Cease to stand
10. The bottom layer
11. Member of a Semitic people
12. Part of a ticket
13. Defunct monetary unit
21. Challenges
23. Body part
25. Tell on
26. By way of
27. Shady green alcove
28. Egyptian city
29. ___ and flowed
32. Widens a hole
33. Eurasian wheat
34. Act incorrectly
36. "Be back later"
37. Al Bundy's wife
38. Ocean
40. Large root eaten as a vegetable
41. Units of subjective loudness
43. Music genre
44. A way to drench
46. Popular hot beverage
47. Silk-like cotton fabric
49. Rumanian city
50. Come back
51. Vaccine developer
52. Canadian law enforcers
53. Wings
54. Observational comedian Bill
57. Small fry
58. ___ Clapton, musician
59. Take a chance
61. Semi-liquid food for babies
62. Consumed food

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



English: Missing
Spanish: Perdido
Italian: Perso
French: Manquant
German: Verlorengegangen

What's the Difference?

Find the four differences between the two pictures.



Answers: 1. Dog is wearing a bandana 2. Biscuit on the table 3. Missing stethoscope 4. Sign on floor is larger



Pet owners can use items like collars, microchips, leashes, and fences to help prevent lost pets.





REUNITE
come together again after a period of separation

Lights, Camera, Orangeville: Dufferin Film Festival returns for year three

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Dufferin Film Festival will return to Orangeville this summer for its third annual celebration of independent Canadian cinema, bringing filmmakers from across the country together for a weekend of screenings, networking, and community events.

Running Aug. 14 to 16, the volunteer-run festival will once again be centred at the Orangeville Opera House, while expanding this year to include new programming at the Orangeville Public Library.

Festival Director Kelly McDowell said that the festival showcases Canadian short films from emerging and independent filmmakers, offering audiences the chance not only to watch films, but also to meet the creators during question and answer sessions.

“They kind of become a part of our community for the weekend,” she said.

The festival’s mission is to provide a platform for independent Canadian filmmakers

whose work may not otherwise reach wide audiences while demonstrating the strength and diversity of Canada’s film industry.

Organizers have also worked to create an event that welcomes casual moviegoers alongside dedicated film enthusiasts, making the festival accessible to anyone interested in discovering new Canadian stories.

Several additions are planned for this year’s festival.

A new family-friendly screening on Saturday afternoon will feature youth-oriented programming.

“It’s family friendly in terms of most of the content is child or youth oriented,” McDowell said. “We have cartoons on some of them. We have a documentary that’s actually local about bees, so it’s all appropriate for every age group. We also made it a shorter runtime, so you know if there are young ones there, they won’t have to sit through a lot of films. We lowered the ticket price so it’s more affordable to families.”

Another major addition is an open-

ing-night social event at the Orangeville Public Library.

The library will host live entertainment, interactive art experiences, refreshments, and opportunities for attendees to meet filmmakers in a relaxed setting. The new venue also makes the entire festival fully accessible while showcasing one of the community’s cultural spaces in a new way.

What continues to set the Dufferin Film Festival apart is its community focused atmosphere. Rather than simply attending screenings, audiences have the opportunity to interact directly with filmmakers throughout the weekend, discuss the creative process and build connections within Canada’s independent film community.

“I think that what makes Dufferin Film Festival different is that it’s really intimate,

and that’s something that both the filmmakers have said and the audience have said,” McDowell said. “People can come down and actually not just ask questions on stage, but then hang out with filmmakers and share what they thought.”

Organizers say that sense of accessibility has become one of the festival’s defining features as it continues to grow nationally while remaining rooted in Orangeville.

The festival also recreates many elements of a major film festival experience, including a red carpet, networking events and awards presentations, while maintaining a strong community focus.

With ticket sales already ahead of last year’s pace, organizers are expecting another successful weekend celebrating Canadian filmmaking in Dufferin County.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

READY TO SHINE: Now in its third year, the Dufferin Film Festival is a grassroots, Orangeville based short film festival that seeks to highlight and promote independent Canadian filmmakers. The three day festival with feature screenings from many different genres of film, ranging from family friendly animation to dramas and documentaries. The festival also makes filmmakers accessible, and will feature plenty of opportunities for guests to engage directly with Canadian filmmakers.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY: Members of the Dufferin OPP Auxiliary Unit and the detachment’s Youth in Policing Initiative students attended Orangeville Rotary RibFest KidsFest on July 19, where they met with families and shared information about policing and community safety.

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MAYBERRY HILL
Grand Valley

Baker takes technique to a whole new level on Parisian baking trip

Written By **KATHRYN FRASER**
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

While some may try to improve their skills by researching online, others go to the next level and travel to a different country.

This is what 21-year-old Caledon local Stefano Galati has done to evolve his baking skills and bring new techniques to his baking process.

What started as a hobby two years ago has now not only become a job for Galati but has also given him a possible glimpse of opportunities for the future.

Galati currently works at Rock Garden Farms in Caledon and is the first ever baker that the store has had.

Starting off by creating loaves at home to slowly making them in the store after a while, Galati decided that it was time to learn more.

Traveling all the way to Paris, France, Galati attended classes at Ferrandi where he learned new techniques and even new pastries to try out.

"I was looking at going somewhere and learning more. It just happened to be a course that I found through research and saw other people do it," said Galati. "It fit what I wanted to learn in the same timeline, and so I decided it would be a good experience and I'll learn a lot."

The duration of his stay lasted about three-and-a-half months, and Galati spent most of his time learning in the kitchen.

"It was a lot; we were in the kitchen every day. We'd go in and make all these different recipes, roughly two or three a day, and then the teacher would explain as we go, and we take notes, and it was very hands-on."

Galati was introduced to a hands-on experience in technique, creation, and the importance of ingredients.

“Techniques like the process of fermentation of the dough, knowing when the dough is ready for mixing and when the dough is ready after being mixed, and baguette shaping to get the best product I could, are areas that have increased since taking this class.”

Stefano Galati

“We learned all the basics of baking bread and pastries, and we learned about how to make all these different kinds of bread from different regions of France, some international bread, then we also learned a little bit about why certain ingredients affect the dough” said Galati.

Now that he is back from his journey, Galati is taking his experience and evolving his baking back home.

“Techniques like the process of fermentation of the dough, knowing when the dough is ready for mixing and when the dough is ready after being mixed, and baguette shaping to get the best product I could, are areas that have increased since taking this class,” he said.

Reflecting, Galati says he is appreciative of his journey and how it has impacted his baking and is now looking to the future for what future items he will be able to make.

"I'm appreciative of the experience I have had. Being around others that are passionate about making bread it was nice for me to see, and I will continue to strengthen my skills and try new pastries and breads in the future."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

FRESH PERSPECTIVE: Caledon baker Stefano Galati holds a freshly baked loaf during his studies at the prestigious Ferrandi culinary school in Paris, France. Galati spent three-and-a-half months learning traditional French baking techniques and pastry-making, skills he has since brought back to his work at Rock Garden Farms in Caledon.

Rhythm and Reason hosts debut Mystical Magical Music Day this Saturday

Written By **KATHRYN FRASER**
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Rhythm and Reason will host its very first event “Mystical Magical Music Day” on July 25, connecting local artists and charities.

The event will take place from 1 – 5 p.m. at 33 Queen Street North Bolton and will have a large variety of activities for all to try out.

Activities such as bracelet making, cookie decorating, face painting, games, live music and even more will be available to those in attendance.

Fifty per cent of proceeds will go to support local artists while the remaining 50 per

cent will go to Caledon Community Services, who are partnering with Rhythm and Reason for this event.

Lula Shaw, the founder of Rhythm and Reason, hopes that this is the start of events to help connect local artists and charities together to help support one another.

"I built Rhythm and Reason on the belief that local artists can power local charity," says Shaw, "Giving artists the platform while giving back is the main thing I want people to really feel and see during this event".

The cost of the event is \$10 and will cover all the activities, as well as some light refreshments.

A multitude of local artists will perform starting at 1.p.m. before headliner Selena Villa performs her hour-long set between 4 – 5 p.m.

In addition to the performances and activities, there will be a silent auction with many prizes from generous donors that all attendees will have the chance to bid for.

“We have quite a few generous donors that have donated some wonderful prizes like four weeks of private music lessons, gift baskets, ciders and other prizes” says Shaw.

Attendees will also have the chance to win an acoustic guitar, purchase of an entrance ticket will automatically enter guests

into a draw for the grand prize which will be announced at 3:30 pm.

Shaw noted how important this event is for her to connect and to have the community come out and see local artists and support the charity.

"I couldn't be happier and thankful for everybody that's supporting my vision and this event and the people involved. It's honestly a dream come true" she says.

Looking to the future, Shaw says she is hopeful to be able to hold more events for Rhythm and Reason to bring together communities, charities and local artists.

More information about the event can be found at: rhythmandreason.net/event-list.

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Junor appointed to Federal committee on anti-Black racism

Written By **KATHRYN FRASER**
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Caledon's very own Kevin Junor is among eight Canadians appointed to the Federal Government's External Ministerial Advisory Committee on Anti-Black Racism.

The creation of this new committee is in response to the National Apology Advisory Committee report that provided recommendations on how the Government of Canada could apologize to the descendants of the No.2 Construction Battalion in a meaningful way.

Junor first joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 1980 through their summer program and continued to serve Queen, King, Country and Community until 2023 when he retired after over 40 years of service.

"As a member of the Canadian Armed Forces that experienced racism, spoke about racism, identified systemic barriers while in uniform, the Government of Can-

ada has now identified me as an individual that can come back after retirement – and providing advice to them with regards to addressing these issues," says Junor.

Towards the end of June, Junor received a call from the Committee that he had been recommended by the Minister's office and was offered the opportunity to become a part of the group.

Junor accepted the position and traveled to Pictou, NS, where he and eight other members were formally appointed.

In joining this Committee, Junor will have the opportunity to advise and provide strategies to promote change in the organization surrounding Anti-Black Racism.

"There are a number of reports that've been written, indicating racism to different communities within the military," says Junor. "I'm at the point now where I'm able to be appointed to go back into that institution, to assist them in providing strategic advice regarding systemic barriers, in particular,

systemic barriers that are impacting members of the black community."

Now that it has been a few weeks since the appointment, Junor and the rest of the committee are starting to begin work on an action plan.

"Right now, there are a number of things that we are working on as a united team to develop a strategic action plan for the next two years and identify metrics to bring to the general public and the Minister" says Junor.

Implementing these changes into the chain of command is another area that Junor says the Committee plans to target.

"It's important that the chain of command accept this Committee as being vital to change in some of the challenges that they face in regard to Anti-Black racism and to educate the chain of command to be able to implement best practices, as it relates to anti-black racism, and to know that leadership is about knowing your followers and promoting their welfare," says Junor.

Even though this is only the beginning for the Committee, Junor says he is hopeful that this group will be able to bring change to the Canadian Armed Forces in both the long term and the short term.

"Short term success for me is the acceptance of this Committee, and it's not just to say that the committee exists, but to make sure that the organization really accepts the Committee as being vital to the transformation of the committee in addressing anti-black racism within the forces. In the long term, it will be to see policies, practices, and behaviours being changed, and it's not just to have the policy change, but to actually see that people are held accountable for their behaviour that is not aligned with the policies. practices, and the programs that are accepted. And to see that...everyone in the military, or Department of National Defence, are accepted for who they are and what they bring to the table, and they're not segregated because of the colour of their skin."



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Staff report calls for more focus on county housing, homelessness efforts

Continued from Front

“Emergency shelter serves as a point of entry into the housing system rather than a destination in itself,” said Wagner in the report. “Although service delivery models vary, a common trend is evident. Communities are increasingly investing in interventions that sit between emergency shelter and permanent housing.”

These programs reduce the amount of time individuals remain in shelter while improving housing outcomes and overall system efficiency, according to the report. “When compared to these municipalities, Dufferin County appears appropriately resourced from an emergency shelter perspective,” she wrote. “Existing shelter capacity is proportionate to population size and current levels of homelessness, and the

review did not identify a need for significant expansion of emergency shelter beds.” Where Dufferin differs from many comparator municipalities, she said, is within the broader housing continuum. Historically, the county has had fewer bridge housing, rapid re-housing, transitional housing, and supportive housing options available after individuals access shelter services. “As a result, emergency shelter has often

been used to meet needs that would more appropriately be addressed through housing-focused interventions, contributing to longer shelter stays and increased pressure on providers,” she wrote. “Based on the review completed by staff, future system development should focus on strengthening these components of the housing continuum rather than increasing emergency shelter capacity.”

OPP respond to fatal collision, impaired driving and theft incidents throughout Dufferin

Two-vehicle Mulmur collision claims life of 71-year-old motorcyclist from Hamilton

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers, along with Dufferin County Paramedic Services and local fire departments, responded to a fatal two-vehicle collision in Mulmur on July 17.

At approximately 8:43 p.m., emergency crews were dispatched to County Road 18 (Airport Road), just north of Mansfield, for a collision involving a motorcycle and a passenger vehicle. The driver of the passenger vehicle was not injured.

As a result of the collision, the motorcyclist, a 71-year-old male from Hamilton, was pronounced deceased.

Members of the OPP Technical Collision Investigation (TCI) unit attended to assist with the investigation.

The investigation remains ongoing.

Anyone with information or dashcam footage related to the collision is asked to contact the Dufferin OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

To remain anonymous, contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or submit a tip online at: ontariocrimestoppers.ca

Four people charged with impaired driving in Dufferin County

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers have charged four individuals with impaired driving-related offences as a result of traffic complaints, Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (RIDE) programs, and proactive traffic enforcement.

On July 15, at approximately 11:42 a.m., officers responded to a traffic complaint regarding a possible impaired driver in the area of Highway 10 and Fourth Avenue in Orangeville.

A short time later, officers located the vehicle at a fast-food restaurant on Broadway and spoke with the driver. During the interaction, officers observed signs of impairment, and an impaired driving investigation was initiated.

Nathan Bowman, 51, of Stouffville, was

charged with operation while impaired – alcohol and operation while impaired – blood alcohol concentration (80 plus).

On July 18 at about 5:56 p.m., officers responded to a traffic complaint about a possible impaired driver on Airport Road in Mulmur Township.

Police located the vehicle a short time later and conducted a traffic stop. After observing signs of impairment, officers began an impaired driving investigation.

Abhineet Dhillon, 27, of Mississauga, was charged with operation while impaired – alcohol, failure or refusal to comply with a demand, and driving a motor vehicle with an open container of liquor.

On July 19 at about 3:06 a.m., officers were on patrol on Barnett Drive in Shelburne when they conducted a traffic stop after observing a vehicle that drew their attention.

After observing signs of impairment, officers began an impaired driving investigation.

Samantha Bacchus, 47, of Dundalk, was charged with operation while impaired – blood alcohol concentration (80 plus).

Later that day, at about 11:50 p.m., officers were conducting a RIDE spot check at Townline and Dawson Road in Orangeville when a vehicle entered the checkpoint.

Following a brief conversation with the driver, officers began an impaired driving investigation.

Debra Mugridge, 24, of Orangeville, was charged with operation while impaired – blood alcohol concentration (80 plus).

All four accused are scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Orangeville at a later date. Their driver's licences were suspended and the vehicles involved were impounded.

None of the listed charges have been proven in court.

Dufferin OPP seeking public assistance following thefts

Members of the Dufferin Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) are seeking the public's assistance in identifying two

individuals involved in a series of thefts from motor vehicles in Shelburne and Orangeville.

During the early morning hours of July 21, 2026, police received reports of vehicles being entered in the Emerald Crossing community specifically Black Cherry Crescent in the Town of Shelburne. The suspects gained entry by smashing the windows of the vehicles and stole personal items, including credit cards.

The stolen credit cards were later used at a variety store in the Town of Orangeville. Similar incidents were also reported in the area of Buena Vista Drive in Orangeville.

The suspects are described as two south asian males.

One suspect is described as approximately 30 years old, 6' tall, with a heavy build, short black hair, a scruffy, extended goatee, and large black-framed glasses. At the time of the incident, he was wearing a black and grey checkered dress shirt, blue jeans, and black shoes.

The second suspect is described as approximately 5'10" tall and was wearing a black, long-sleeved Reebok hoodie with a white logo on the chest and black pants.

The suspect vehicle is described as a newer-model white Volkswagen SUV, possibly a Volkswagen Tiguan.

Police are urging residents to remain vigilant, secure their vehicles, remove valuables, and report any suspicious vehicles, individuals, or activity in their neighbourhoods.

Anyone who may recognize either of the individuals or the suspect vehicle, or who has information that may assist with the investigation, is asked to contact the Dufferin OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

Anyone with information can also contact Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-8477 or submit a tip online at: ontariocrimestoppers.ca

OPP urges drivers to buckle up after 32 seatbelt-related deaths

Thirty-two people have died on Ontario roads so far this year in collisions where failing to wear a seat belt or properly restrain a

child was a contributing factor, says the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP).

In an effort to reduce preventable deaths from motor vehicle collisions, the OPP issued a statement urging drivers to buckle up.

“Wearing a seat belt remains one of the simplest and most effective ways to prevent death and serious injury in a collision,” reads the statement.

“These fatalities serve as a tragic reminder that failing to wear a seat belt can have irreversible consequences.”

Closer to home, Dufferin OPP investigated six fatal collisions between January and June, resulting in the deaths of seven people. Police said investigators determined a lack of seatbelt use was a contributing factor in one of those collisions.

Dufferin OPP has also laid 166 seatbelt-related charges so far this year, an increase of about 27 per cent compared with the same period in 2025.

Ontario government statistics show people who were not wearing a seatbelt were 36 times more likely to be killed in a collision than those who were buckled up.

“Despite ongoing awareness campaigns and enforcement efforts, some drivers and passengers continue to take unnecessary risks by not buckling up,” said the OPP. “Seat belts are designed to keep vehicle occupants securely positioned during a collision, significantly reducing the likelihood of being ejected from the vehicle or sustaining fatal injuries.”

Proper restraint use is especially important for young passengers. Child car seats and booster seats are designed to provide protection at different stages of a child's development and can reduce the risk of serious injury in a collision.

“Parents and caregivers have the responsibility to ensure child restraints are appropriate for the child's age, height and weight, correctly installed, and used on every trip,” the OPP said.

The OPP said officers will continue to educate motorists and enforce Ontario's seatbelt laws throughout the year, including identifying seatbelt violations as part of efforts to reduce fatalities on the province's roads.

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Orangeville Otters close the season with Summer Splash Invitational

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

The Orangeville Otters Swim Club closed out the 2025/26 season with an outstanding week at the Summer Splash Invitational, hosted by the Otters at the Alder Street Recreation Centre from June 26 to 28.

In addition to the Otters, the three-day meet welcomed Markham Aquatic Club, Barrie Trojan Swim Club, Etobicoke Swim Club, Oakville Swim Club, and New Stars Swimming Club.

A highlight of the meet was the Super Finals, where the fastest swimmers from the senior session, ages 13 and older, returned to race against one another regardless of age group. Qualifiers were determined by time, creating exciting head-to-head races among the meet's top senior athletes.

Otter swimmers set more than 30 club records over the course of the weekend. New records were made with individuals and lap and relay events across multiple age groups.

The girls led the way with standout performances across the younger age groups.

Hannah Herzog set a lap record in the 100-metre breaststroke. Gracie Chapman set a lap record in the 100-metre butterfly.

In the 11–12 girls' category, Qyona Egbert broke club records in the 1,500-metre freestyle and 400-metre freestyle and set lap records in the 100-metre freestyle and 100-metre breaststroke.

Jemma Harrison broke the 200-metre individual medley record and set a lap record in the 100-metre butterfly.

The 11–12 girls also set new 4 x 100 metre freestyle and medley relay records.

For the 13–14 girls, Dia Manota set a lap record in the 100-metre breaststroke, while the team established a new 4 x 200-metre freestyle relay record.

Marissa Staniscia set both the 15–17 and open lap records in the 100-metre breaststroke.

The boys added another strong collection of record-setting performances.

Lawson Noronha set a 10-and-under club record in the 200-metre butterfly. Rowan Young established new club records in the 1,500-metre freestyle and, with his 800-metre split during the race, the 800-metre freestyle.

The 10-and-under boys also established a new 4 x 100-metre freestyle relay record.

Kaiden Norris broke the 13–14 boys' record in the 200-metre butterfly and set lap records in the 100-metre butterfly and 200-metre freestyle. The 13–14 boys also set new records in the 4 x 100-metre medley relay and 4 x 200-metre freestyle relay.

In the 15–17 boys' category, Maurizio Rugieri set a lap record in the 100-metre breaststroke and Curran Brindley set a lap record in the 100-metre butterfly. Both swimmers also set the corresponding open lap records in their events.

The 15–17 boys and open boys set new 4 x 200-metre freestyle relay records.

“Summer Splash was an amazing final meet of the season for so many of our swimmers,” said Sam Kuntz, head coach of the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SEASON ENDING SWIM: The Orangeville Otters Swim Club hosted the Summer Splash Invitational at the Alder Street Recreation Centre on June 26-28. In addition to the Otters, five other swim clubs competed at the event.

Orangeville Otters Swim Club.

“It was great to see athletes of all ages step up, race hard and support one another throughout the weekend. The records are an exciting reflection of the work our swimmers have put in, but just as importantly, the meet showed the energy, growth and team spirit that make this club so special.”

The Orangeville Otters thank the visiting clubs, coaches, officials, volunteers, families and swimmers who helped make the Summer Splash Invitational a successful celebration of the season.

The club looks forward to welcoming swimmers back for another exciting year in the fall.

Orangeville Junior A Northmen advance in playoffs after overtime win against Six Nations

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

The Orangeville Junior Northmen have advanced to the second round of the Ontario Junior A Lacrosse League playoffs after an overtime win in game six of their best-of-seven series against the Six Nations Arrows.

It was a gruelling schedule for both teams as the six playoff games were played over eight days.

Game 1 of the series got underway on July 12 on the Six Nations Arrows' home floor. The Northmen came out on top with an 8-5 win to start the series.

The series was tied when the Arrows responded with an 8-7 win at Tony Rose Arena on July 13.

Six Nations took the lead with a 14-9 win on July 15.

It was again a tied series when the Orangeville team won 15-13 in front of a hometown crowd on July 16.

Game 5 got underway on July 18 at Six Nations. The Northmen were back in front after a 12-10 win.

Returning to Tony Rose on July 19, for Game 6, the Arrows needed a win to keep the series alive, while the Northmen hit the floor determined to end the series with a win.

The Northmen blasted onto the floor and were leading 5-1 with six minutes remaining in the first period.

Six Nations had a huge late period, scoring four goals in just over three minutes to tie the game 5-5 heading into the second period.

First period Northmen goals came from Max Kruger, Sean Costigan, Guérin Jennings, and Dylan Sanderson.

Orangeville got the edge in the second period, outscoring the Arrows 3-1.

Orangeville's goals came from Ayden Matthews and Jennings, who got his second and third goals of the night.

Leading by two goals going into the final frame, the Northmen were tasked with keeping the Arrows from scoring.

Six nations scored early in the third period.

Orangeville responded with two.

The Arrows kept up the pressure and scored four more, including a final goal with just 10 seconds left on the clock to tie the game 11-11, and force an overtime period.

Third period Orangeville goals came from Evan Miller and two from Dylan Sanderson. The teams returned for overtime.

Orangeville's Max Kruger got the winning goal with 6:53 left on the clock to give the Northmen a 21-11 win.

The Junior A Northmen will now advance to the second round of playoffs.

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The Junior A Northmen will now advance to the second round of playoffs.



BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

MOVING ON: The Orangeville Junior A Northmen host the Six Nations Arrows during Game 4 of their best-of-seven playoffs at Tony Rose Arena in Orangeville on Thursday, July 16. The Northmen won this game 15-13 and went on to win the series with an overtime win in Game 6. The Orangeville team will now advance to the next round of playoffs.

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BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

WILD ONE: It was a wild, high-pitched, successful catch, but a split second too late for the tag at third base during an Orangeville Men's Slo-pitch game between the Olar Mechanical Wingmen and Speirs Farm at Rotary Park in Orangeville on Thursday, July 16. Slo-pitch is in full swing around the region.

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OPINION

Fretting at corners under an eerie orange sky

When the sky changes, people and birds and every other animal become wary that something’s happening. Portents in the sky have been referenced in works from Homer to medieval legends, folklore across time and geography, Shakespeare, instances in various books in the Bible, to modern literature and music and film.

Red sky at night, a sailor’s delight.
Red sky at morning, sailors take warning.
The orange weirdness over Ontario last week wasn’t without precedent.

Atmospheric smoke caused by forest fires along the Canada-U.S. border in May 1780 plunged North America into an unnatural darkness. Similar to 1816, when Mount Tambora in Indonesia erupted and wrought dark day-fog and famine. People rioted and crops failed.

In 536 AD, a volcanic catastrophe plunged Europe, Asia, and the Middle East into perpetual night for more than a year. The dust veil darkened the sun and decimated crops, animals, and people. World temperatures plummeted.

The sky turned an eerie orange last week

as smoke from wildfires obscured the sun. Smoke was smelled and tasted. Warnings of smoke and unhealthy high temperatures were the order through much of the week. Conditions rendered simple tasks arduous and imposed upon one’s will and one’s mind.

I did a walk-through of my friend’s house and lugged his recycling to the curb one night last week. He and his missus are in Ireland, so I’m minding their house. Outside, somebody said something about the evening humidity, and it was as if I’d heard my grandmother gripe about how it felt right mauzy.

“Tis right mauzy, it is,” my Newfoundland grandmother would’ve said. “I allows the sopping heaviness around you and in the clothes on your back will drop the black flies right to the ground.”

A man and a woman shared a cigarette under the eaves along the side of the house. One of them was who must’ve spoken about the night’s heat.

“Was there somebody home yesterday evening? I walked through your house and

put the bin to the curb.”

He texted back that they’d gone to the airport in the afternoon.

Huh.

“Could be the squatters,” I texted.

Huh?

“Yeah,” I said. “Squatters. Things are getting weird here. Weatherwise. The sky is making us all weird. Looked off and everybody was wary at corners, fretted about what could come around.”

HUH? Capitalized like that.

I texted: “Can’t blame them, really. The heat is hellish. The sky is spooky.”

“Squatters. We left only yesterday.”

“That’s right,” I texted. “I see your point. It didn’t take long. I’ll leave sandwich fixings for them.” Only I texted sammich fixins. Full bellies will soften their dispositions. “I’ll make sure there are clean towels, too.”

“JAMES.”

“Enjoy Ireland. If you see Garron, tell him I’ll send money for the Jamesons. Don’t worry about anything. And ttyl.”
Happy squatters are less likely to dam-

JAMES MATTHEWS
THE BUSTLE IN THE HEDGEROW



age a property. He’d hearted that last text. Added one of those smiley faces that have replaced the King’s English for many people.

From what I can tell, they’re a skittish couple, I told him. This was two days later and followed a string of question-mark texts from him and his wife. I assured them that the safety and integrity of their house, belongings, and plants were my foremost concern. And squatters are people too, I said.

Threats in all-cap texts feel very much like threats shouted in person. Bristling verbiage of uppercase descriptors. Perhaps it was whatever the sky had done. I’m as much a climatologist as my grandmother was, so I don’t know.

But they’ve moved on, the squatters. Didn’t say thanks or goodbye. The sammich fixins are gone, the driveway is littered with butts I have to push a broom though. I haven’t smoked in years but my throat feels as if I do.

Courts are the last defence against tyranny

India and the United States are the world’s two biggest democracies, and both of them seem to be in danger. In each of them populist federal governments are deliberately polarizing the population, radicalizing the politics, and seeking to undermine the impartial rule of law. In other places, such an approach has often ended in tyranny or civil war.

India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a classic populist leader, although he prefers a austere and religious style to the more florid approach favoured by Donald Trump. Both men control their political parties with an iron hand, both flaunt their religions in public (although only Modi really has one), and both try to eliminate or coopt all rival centres of power.

Both men also have a complete disregard for the truth. Their rhetoric about helping the poor while actually serving the purposes of the rich is the same. Above all, their scapegoating of minorities is the same. (For Modi it’s Muslims, for Trump it’s practically anybody non-white.) Yet neither man is really preparing to stage a violent takeover.

Muslims, Modi’s target minority in India, account for about one-seventh of Indian’s 1.4 billion people. They are not immigrants.

For the most part they are the locally born descendants of families who converted from Hinduism to Islam during the long centuries when most Indian states had Muslim rulers. But Modi treats them as alien and even hostile.

He leaves the real gutter talk to the street-level troopers of his Bharatiya Janata Party while he takes the higher road – but not all that high. In the last federal election (2024), speaking to a Hindu audience, he referred to India’s Muslims as “infiltrators” and “those who have more children.” (He meant that the wicked Muslims are trying to outbreed the innocent Hindus.)

Nasty stuff, but it doesn’t always work. Take cows, for example, which are seen as a potential food source by most non-Hindu Indians but are ‘sacred cows’ for devout Hindus. So Muslim merchants moving cattle around the country work mostly by night, while Hindu fanatics try to hunt them down.

Four years ago, a truck transporting cattle was stopped in Madhya Pradesh by fourteen ‘cow vigilantes.’ Three Muslim men were dragged out of the vehicle by the Hindu mob and severely beaten. One of them, Nazir Ahmed, was killed.

Justice moves slowly in India, but last

month the case ended up in the court of District and Sessions judge Tabassum Khan, who happens to be Muslim. She saw it as a clear case of mob lynching and found the fourteen men guilty of murder. She was immediately buried under an avalanche of media and online threats and hatred, but India’s judges stuck by her.

She now has police protection, but the murderers are serving life sentences. Narendra Modi has not come to her defence (perhaps he was too busy), but her legal colleagues in courts all over the country spoke up, noting that she had acted as an impartial judge, not as a sectarian activist for one religion or another.

Many of India’s politicians have defected to the populists, but enough of the lawyers are still faithful to their oaths. Indian democracy survived Indira Gandhi’s 21-month ‘Emergency’ in 1975-77, when she suspended most civil rights and arrested thousands. It can probably survive Modi too.

And the same logic applies to the United States. Those who have watched the US Supreme Court’s six conservatives outvote the three liberals on one issue after another may despair, but they don’t realize that Supreme Court justices may follow their political loyalties on domestic or

culture war questions while taking a different stance on constitutional matters.

That actually happens in the higher courts of both countries, not always but often enough to make a difference. The courts still have the final say in both countries, and it would take a political upheaval of great violence to set them aside.

Add to this the obvious fact that the populist governments in both countries can already have almost everything they want without resorting to extreme violence or flagrant oppression, and it’s hard to see why either regime would choose that route so long as its hold on power is secure,

It could be very different if there was a serious threat to either government’s survival, as witness the half-hearted and abortive coup attempt in Washington after Trump’s first defeat in the 2020 election. But that one fizzled out almost harmlessly and so might another one. The rule of law is still deeply entrenched in both countries, and the courts are still (mostly) independent.

It’s not the best of times, but it’s not the worst of times either. Not yet, and maybe never.

GWYNNE DYER
OUR WORLD TODAY



The sun always comes up in the morning

Optimism is a funny thing – it keeps us sane and lets us face any troubles we may have with a steadier hand. There are signs all around us to encourage optimism, universal truths to reassure us, like the trusty sun that comes up every morning – you can set your watch to it.

Although the other day, when the air was orange and a bit thick with the smell of smoke, I happened to look up and saw what must have been the sun, and I wonder if any of you saw it too; it was so peculiar. It was an absolutely round ball in the sky of a solid, unchanging, dull orange.

It took me a moment to really realize – “that’s the sun,” I told myself, but I was ready to argue.

We all know you can’t look directly at the sun without doing some harm to your vision. Yet there I was, looking right at it, and it was in such a funk that it didn’t seem to care. Of course, there were reasons, but no point calling it a “rational explanation.”

There was so much ash and smoke in the air, even for only a couple of days here, that solar colours were blotted by what the wind and fire were delivering.

It made me wonder what animals were

making of it. I didn’t see any birds flying. I wasn’t walking through the woods around on Island Lake to listen for animal noises to make a note of on other walks.

It is likely we are in for many other unexpected occurrences, as there appear to be changes to the natural order of things. Patricia and I have lost two of our annual Scottish festivals due to extraordinary weather.

We were chased out of Embro at barely the end. There were still the Mass Bands to come. Together at any Scottish festival, all the bands that attend the event gather together on the main field to play Amazing Grace and other traditional tunes, being played as the same moving ceremony every year for decades here in Canada and centuries in the British Isles, especially Scotland itself.

Back to Embro. Along with the music, there are awards to hand out for the best band, best something else and the other. As the young man, Simon, assisting me that day, and I were well into packing up our site, the winds around us started to boil, so it seemed that the announcer in the main field began to try and hurry up his part until he finally released the company with a “quick march.”

The pipers, notwithstanding the seemingly oncoming storm, managed a few more notes on their pipes in clear defiance of the wind that had just ripped our tent from Simon’s hands after I shouted to him, “Let it go!”

The following weekend, the same sort of Scottish festival was due in Orillia, and the organizers simply cancelled it, once other tornado warnings were serious.

We have yet to come to the Glengarry Scottish Festival and Highland Games and the one in Fergus (hope to see you all there) to attend, and we are keeping our hopes up, sending messages to the weather gods and crossing our fingers, I can tell you.

Yet, it is good to be optimistic. There have been times when everyone with even a basic basement stocked it with canned goods, water and other essentials, lest the catch and toss that governments on either side of the ocean were playing led to something really sour.

People still lived in optimism. They still travelled and played golf on the weekends or maybe on the men’s night at the club once a week – a round of golf – dinner at the club restaurant, a drink and gossip about their slice of the world.

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So far, that bad news has not really happened, but for whatever sake, sabres continue to rattle and some basements, no doubt, are well stocked.

There has been way too much talk lately, in my opinion, about how very different one generation is from the others, establishing catalogues of us all by slicing up the years or decades, naming the crowds born and labelled by which is their decade. I fight it off, sure that I can have a conversation of more than small talk – a chat and just as importantly or maybe more hopefully – a laugh - with anyone.

It is a very weird way of dividing us. Perhaps, we should bother ourselves about how and why these broad and useless divisions began to actually matter. As long as there is respect between any number of people, be it two or many, what matters is that we do keep talking to each other, remembering that basic needs remain the same: nutrition, shelter, a sense of safety, of being useful and needed.
And loved.



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COMMUNITY VOICES

Healing begins with being heard: FTP’s services foster recovery and hope

When people think of Family Transition Place (FTP), many immediately think of an emergency shelter and crisis support. While these services remain a vital part of our work, they represent just one piece of the comprehensive care available to individuals and families throughout Dufferin County and Caledon.

At the heart of FTP is a team of compassionate, trauma-informed counsellors who help individuals navigate some of life’s most difficult experiences. Whether someone is living with the impacts of gender-based violence, sexual violence, trauma, addiction, mental health concerns or family challenges, FTP offers free, confidential counselling services designed to meet people where they are and support them on their path toward healing.

Every person’s story is unique, which is why our counselling programs are flexible, accessible and tailored to individual needs. Services are available in person, virtually or by telephone, helping reduce barriers to accessing support.

**Crisis counselling:
Support when it matters most**

Reaching out for help can be one of the hardest steps to take. FTP’s Crisis Counselling services are available to anyone experiencing abuse, violence, trauma or an immediate crisis.

Our trained crisis counsellors provide compassionate, non-judgmental support, helping individuals understand their options, develop safety plans, access emergency shelter if needed and connect with additional community resources. Whether someone needs immediate intervention or simply someone to listen, every call is met with respect, empathy and understanding.

No referral is required, and support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Clinical counselling supports
ongoing healing**

Healing doesn’t happen overnight. For many survivors, recovery is a journey that takes time, patience and ongoing support.

FTP’s Clinical Counselling program offers trauma-informed therapeutic support for individuals who have experienced gender-based violence, intimate partner violence, family violence, sexual violence or other traumatic



life experiences. Counsellors work collaboratively with clients to help them process their experiences, develop healthy coping strategies, strengthen resilience and move toward their personal goals.

Sessions are individualized and client-centred, recognizing that healing looks different for everyone. Counselling is offered in a safe, confidential environment where clients can explore their experiences without fear of judgment.

**Rural Response program brings
support closer to home**

Living in a rural community can sometimes make accessing services more challenging. Transportation barriers, isolation and limited local resources can leave individuals feeling alone.

FTP’s Rural Response Program was created specifically to address these challenges by bringing counselling, advocacy and outreach services to women living in North Dufferin and surrounding rural communities.

This program offers crisis intervention, counselling, safety planning, emotional support, system navigation and connections to community resources, ensuring geography is never a barrier to receiving help.

By meeting clients within their own communities whenever possible, Rural Response helps increase access to vital supports while reducing the isolation many survivors experience.

**Addictions Counselling: Compassionate
support without judgment**

Substance use is often closely connected with experiences of trauma and violence. FTP recognizes that many individuals may be coping with these experiences while also navigating challenges related to alcohol or

drug use.

Our Addictions Counselling program provides specialized support for women through a trauma-informed, harm reduction approach. Rather than focusing solely on substance use, counsellors work alongside clients to understand the underlying factors contributing to addiction while supporting healthier coping strategies and personal wellness goals.

Whether someone is seeking recovery, reducing harm or simply exploring their relationship with substance use, FTP provides compassionate, individualized care in a supportive environment.

**Parent and Child Counselling helps
families heal together**

Children are deeply affected by conflict, abuse and trauma, even when they are not the direct target. Early intervention can make a meaningful difference in helping young people process their experiences and build healthy emotional skills.

FTP’s Parent & Child Counselling program supports both children and caregivers by providing age-appropriate therapeutic interventions that strengthen relationships, improve communication and foster resilience.

Through counselling, children are given opportunities to safely express emotions, better understand their experiences and develop healthy coping strategies while caregivers receive support in strengthening family relationships and promoting healing within the home.

**Mobile Crisis:
Meeting people where they are**

Sometimes support cannot wait for an office appointment.

FTP’s Mobile Crisis Counsellor works alongside community partners, such as the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Dufferin Child and Family Services (DCAFS), Services and Housing in the Province (SHIP), Headwaters Health Care Centre, Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), Peel Addiction Assessment and Referral Centre (PAARC) and EveryMind, to respond directly to individuals experiencing domestic and sexual violence crisis. Support is available throughout Dufferin County and Caledon.

By providing immediate assessment, crisis intervention, emotional support, safety plan-

ning and referrals, the Mobile Crisis program helps ensure individuals receive timely assistance while connecting them to longer-term supports when needed.

This collaborative approach strengthens community response and helps individuals access care during some of their most vulnerable moments.

**Sexual Violence Community
Engagement: Prevention
through education**

Supporting survivors is only one part of creating safer communities. Preventing violence through education is equally important.

FTP’s Sexual Violence Community Engagement program works throughout Dufferin County and Caledon to increase awareness, reduce stigma and promote conversations around consent, healthy relationships, boundaries and bystander intervention.

Through presentations, workshops and community partnerships with schools, sports organizations, businesses and community groups, the program empowers individuals with knowledge while helping challenge the myths and misconceptions that contribute to sexual violence.

Education creates opportunities for prevention, understanding and positive changes.

At FTP, healing happens every day. Counselling is more than providing therapy—it is about creating a safe space where individuals feel heard, believed, respected and supported. Whether someone is reaching out during a crisis or beginning a longer healing journey, our counsellors walk alongside clients every step of the way.

All counselling services at FTP are confidential and provided free of charge. No one should have to face abuse, violence, trauma or life’s challenges alone.

If you or someone you know could benefit from counselling or support, our caring staff are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

This week’s Community Voice submission was written by FTP. To access the organization’s 24-Hour Support & Information Line, call 519-941-HELP (4357), 905-584-HELP (4357) or 1-800-265-9178. Anyone in need of support from FTP can also email support@familytransitionplace.ca or text 519-278-5410.



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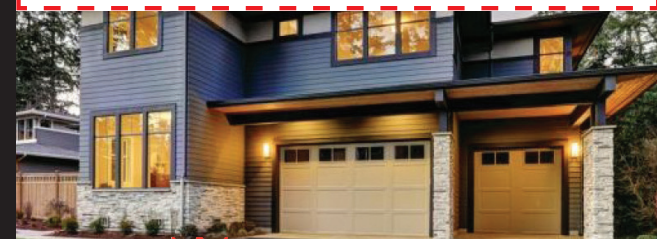


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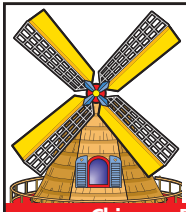


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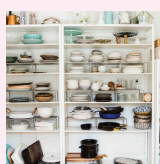
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Op-ed: Canada Post and the shuttering of community newspapers

The shuttering of Winnipeg's Community Review means 200,000 households will no longer get the benefit of a free community newspaper delivered to their door. It also means that more than 800 people who deliver the paper and their families will be affected.

This is an unforced error that never should have happened. How did we get here? The answer is complex.

First, there is a high degree of concentration in the flyer printing market in Canada. Montreal-based TC Transcontinental enjoys the dominant position in the marketplace thanks, in part, to a 2012 Competition Bureau-approved asset swap.

Second, municipal and provincial politicians have passed environmental regulations, however well-intentioned, have unintended consequences. Former Montreal Mayor Valérie Plante passed a municipal bylaw that led to the end of distribution of Publisac (a plastic bag with flyers and a community newspaper). Several provinces, including Manitoba, have imposed extended producer responsibility levies on printed newspapers. Ontario's Premier Doug Ford made the wise decision to exempt newspapers from this kind of stealthy journalism job-killing tax in his province.

Third, Canada Post is the biggest culprit. TC Transcontinental, which had distributed Publisac door-to-door in Quebec, formed a strategic partnership with Canada Post, which as a Crown corporation was not beholden to municipal bylaws. They bypassed Mayor Plante's new regulation by distributing a curated bundle of flyers called Raddar through the national postal service. Unlike Publisac, Raddar did not include a community newspaper. On the sidelines of this saga, news publisher Métro Média and its more than 30 hyperlocal publications — including 17 print newspapers — shut down.

In partnership with Canada Post, TC Transcontinental recently expanded its Raddar offering across Canada. It is understood that Canada Post — which has a mandate to "charge postage rates that are fair and reasonable" — is offering TC Transcon-

tinental rates below what it is offering to community newspapers. To its own benefit, the Crown corporation has effectively shut community newspapers — their private sector rivals — out of flyer distribution, lessening competition substantially in that market.

This is not the first time community newspaper publishers have felt the squeeze of Canada Post in the flyer distribution market. As of January 2024, community newspapers with commercial inserts were no longer exempt from Canada Post's Consumers' Choice program, which allows Canadians to opt out of receiving 'junk mail'. Canada Post made that decision without stakeholder consultation or economic/social impact analysis and failed to recognize that community newspapers — with or without an insert — are not 'junk mail'; they are a social good.

The juxtaposition of the shuttering of Winnipeg's Community Review at the same time as the revelation of \$30.8 million in bonuses at Canada Post has not been lost on community newspaper publishers across Canada.

What should Ottawa do about it? First, Joël Lightbound, the Minister responsible for Canada Post, should ensure the Crown corporation is treating community newspapers fairly and offering them comparable pricing to what it offers to TC Transcontinental.

Second, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage should conduct hearings into the role Canada Post can play in the sustainability of community newspapers — ensuring the relationship is one of partnership, rather than predatory and parasitic.

When a community loses a newspaper, like Winnipeg's Community Review or Métro Média's publications in Quebec, the information vacuum can lead to people getting their news from less than reliable sources — like AI and social media — which can create division that drives people apart. Without a check on local government, corruption, mismanagement, and wasteful spending often flourish,



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which can result in higher municipal taxes and borrowing costs.

It was not foreign Big Tech monopolists like Google and Meta that caused Manitoba's largest community newspaper to shutter. It was Canada Post.

And it's not like we weren't warned...

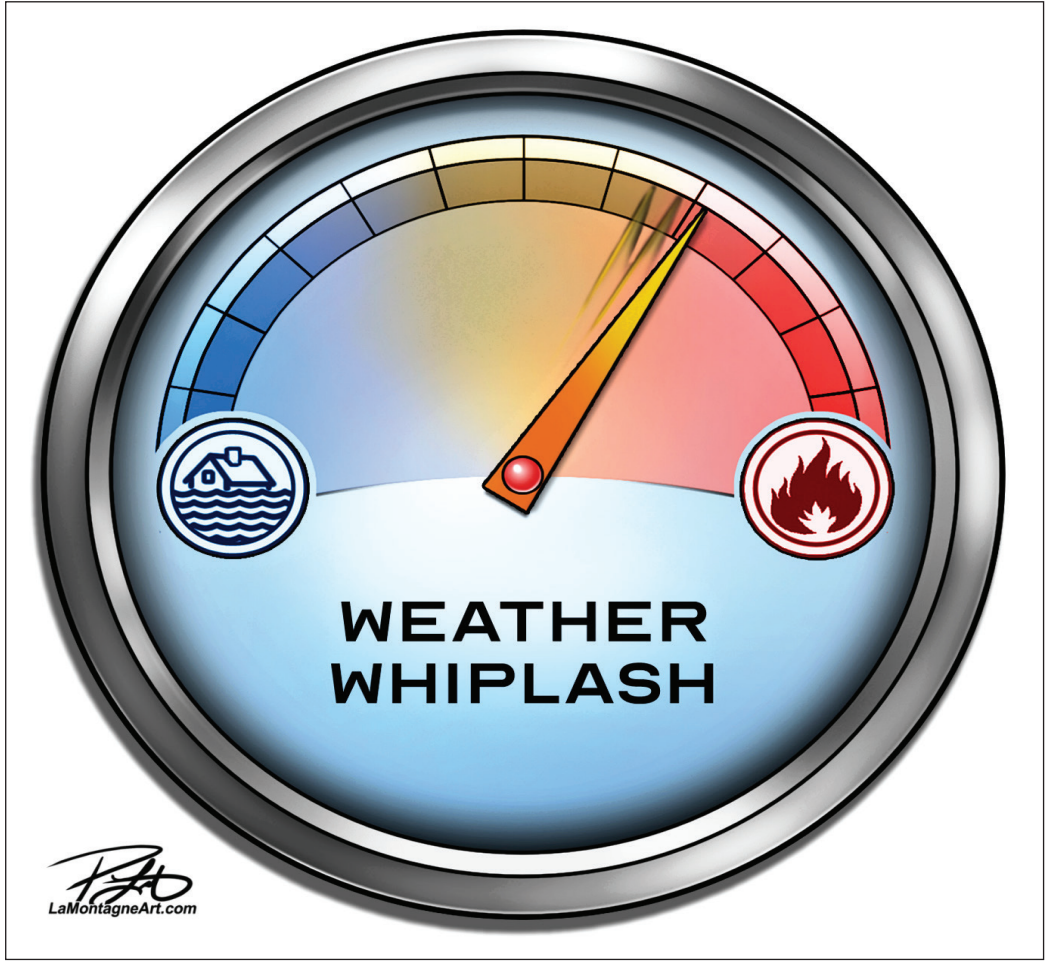
Thirty years ago, in his review of Canada Post's mandate, George Radwanski recommended that postal service get out of delivering unaddressed junk mail (i.e., flyers), concluding that the Crown corporation en-

gaged in inappropriate practices that created unfair competition for private businesses like community newspapers.

As a former Toronto Star editor-in-chief, Radwanski knew the news business. He noted that Canada Post was actively siphoning advertising revenue away from the news industry and adroitly cautioned that the state-granted mail delivery monopoly should not be in the business of crippling the financial health of newspapers.

A healthy democracy demands a healthy community news media ecosystem. Let's level the playing field and restore competition in the flyer distribution market before more community newspapers shutter.

Paul Deegan, who wrote this op-ed, is president and CEO of News Media Canada.



OBITUARIES - FOREVER IN OUR Hearts

STEPHEN FREDERICK OVERLAND

Peacefully at Headwaters Health Care Centre on Monday, July 20th, 2026 at the age of 67. Beloved Son of Fred and the late Florence (2022). Dear brother of Kathleen (John De Wit). Cherished uncle of Jeffrey (Alicia) and Vanessa (Patrick). Stephen will also be greatly missed by other relatives and many friends. Graveside service will be held at Huxley Cemetery 5982 Wellington Road 24, Erin, ON on Monday July 27, 2026 at 11:30 am followed by a memorial reception at Dods & McNair Funeral Home, Chapel & Reception Centre, 21 First St., Orangeville from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Memorial donations to the Alzheimer Society of Dufferin County would be appreciated by the family. A tree will be planted in memory of Stephen in the Dods & McNair Memorial Forest at the Island Lake Conservation Area, Orangeville. Condolences may be offered to the family at www.dodsandmcnair.com



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Op-ed: Orangeville’s Pollinator Protection Plan is about more than gardens

Our trees, wetlands, and parks are not just background scenery in Orangeville. They are part of what makes this town feel like home. Residents care deeply about protecting our environment, and that commitment shows up every time a volunteer plants a tree, advocates for our natural spaces, or pays attention to the health of the watershed around us.

This work did not begin with a single plan. The Sustainable Orangeville Committee has long developed and promoted local green initiatives. In 2020, Orangeville became a Bee City, committing to habitat creation, native plantings, and reduced pesticide use. The Orangeville Horticultural Society laid the groundwork with our earlier community planting projects and now the Sustainable Orangeville Committee partners with Credit Valley Conservation; a reliable partner whose expertise helps us roll out community education and ecological initiatives. Community partners are essential as we build a network of pollinator spaces and work toward a local Butterflyway corridor, and many Orangeville residents are interested in finding ways to support sustainable actions like this.

Earlier this year, I brought forward a motion with two main components.

First, we are creating a municipal pollinator demonstration garden at the Town of Orangeville Community Garden, at 30 Centre Street (just north of the County of Dufferin Community Services building). This garden will serve as an educational hub, providing a model for native gardening that residents can visit, learn from, and replicate in their own yards, boulevards, schools, and business spaces. Second, the motion directs a review of Town policies to ensure we are incorporating common-sense environmental knowledge into daily municipal operations, from plant selection and public space maintenance to the way we apply existing bylaws.

This initiative to promote pollinator gardens is focused on restoring native biodiversity and promoting climate change resilience, while also supporting water conservation and reducing costly lawn maintenance. Sustainable action often means taking what we already know and making tangible steps to include it into everyday decisions that benefit our community. We know we need to create spaces that absorb water, support biodiversity, and hold up better against drought and flooding. These are practical choices that often have little to no obvious fiscal impact but benefit through what contemporary economists and scientists call ecosystem services.

Pollinators like bees, butterflies, moths, and beetles are not only intrinsically valuable, but they also provide billions of dollars in value in Canada through pollination we require for food production. The decline that is occurring in insect populations triggers a domino effect that impacts our food systems, local biodiversity, and the health of our environment.

Choosing native plants is one practical way you can help. Suited to local conditions, native plants require less watering and maintenance and organizations like Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) can provide recommendations for species that best suit wet or dry areas, or spaces with full sun or part-sun. Furthermore, unlike short turf grass, native plants have deep root systems that hold soil in place and allow rainwater to soak into the ground rather than running off and flooding our neighbourhoods. Low-impact development and rain-ready landscapes filter and return water to the earth, reducing stress on our shared stormwater infrastructure.

In a changing climate, heavier rains and hotter summers are already putting pressure on municipal infrastructure. A small change in how we plant a boulevard or public space may seem simple, but across our town, those choices add up.

We are all learning together. Many residents want to support pollinators but don't know where to start, what maintenance looks like, or how to begin without feeling overwhelmed. That is why education matters. If you ask any educator, you will be told that to teach something effectively, you need to model it first. The demonstration garden at 30 Centre Street creates that practical entry point for residents by offering real examples and clear information that make pollinator planting feel manageable.

This initiative also proves that environmental stewardship is not only compatible with fiscal responsibility, but is being promoted through grants and other funding opportunities both locally and through large organizations. Supported by a TD Friends of the Environment Foundation grant and installed by volunteers, the pollinator demonstration garden shows that meaningful climate action doesn't require a large municipal budget. It requires a good plan, strong partnerships, and people willing to get their hands in the soil.

We are aware of aesthetic worries that pollinator-friendly practices might lead to messy, overgrown properties. The plan to promote pollinator gardens will provide practical guidelines and guidance for a functional approach, while considering opinions on beauty aesthetics. A thoughtful pollinator plan gives residents clearer information and gives by-law officers better tools. Effective pollinator gardens are intentional. They feature specific plants that bloom across seasons to provide food and shelter without creating safety or nuisance concerns.

With better education, residents and staff can tell the difference between neglect and a purposeful, naturalized space. A formal staff report will be brought to Council on August 10, 2026, regarding bylaw amendments related to pollinator-friendly practices. Following that report, the Town's focus will shift to community engagement, rolling out local education sessions and community giveaways of plants and seeds to give residents the tools to build their own spaces at no or low cost.

Mosquito fogging and broad pesticide use is also part of this conversation. Pesticide use does not just target mosquitoes. It harms bees, butterflies, and other important insects essential to healthy ecosystems. Often, nuisance insects or a fear of ticks drives the urge to spray, but chemical fogging ends up killing virtually all living things on a lawn while failing to address the root of the problem.

Furthermore, fogging does not stay in one yard. Chemical sprays travel into water sources and drift across property lines, carrying risks into shared or private spaces. We know everything in an ecosystem is related, and we must remember that even when tempted to spray for 'pests.'

We can achieve safer pest control through natural alternatives and smart landscaping with native plants. Simple actions, like keeping major footpaths trimmed, clearing away damp leaf litter, and creating gravel or wood-chip borders between lawns and wooded areas, disrupt tick habitats entirely. For backyard protection, homeowners can use botanical yard sprays derived from natural garlic, cedar oils, or a fungus-activated mosquito dunk bucket. These options repel biting pests more effectively than broad pesticide use while leaving vital pollinator and bird populations unharmed.

On a personal note, I think this work matters because it is one way we can make a difference locally. There are times when the problems around us feel too large, too far away, or out of our hands. We hope the people making these decisions are working with the best information available, because sometimes that is the only way those decisions can make sense. At the local level, we can see the choices in front of us more clearly. We can learn, adjust, and do the best we can with the information we have. That is what this plan is about: taking practical steps close to home and doing what we can to support the growing call for solutions to climate change and biodiversity loss while making our community healthier and more resilient.

Thank you to the Orangeville Citizen for continuing to cover this issue and bringing public attention to the conversation. Civic discussion is important and residents deserve clear information about what is being proposed and why it matters. The Pollinator Protection Plan is about simple, practical steps that help our town adapt for the future while staying true to the community values we share.

This op-ed was written by Tess Prendergast, an educator and elected town councillor for Orangeville, with the assistance of local scientists Jodi Elchyshyn and Joshua Pickering. Elchyshyn provides a voice for native plant advocacy in Orangeville and beyond, while maintaining a strong dependence on science for effective decision-making with direct community benefit in mind. Pickering is an advocate for sustainable action in Orangeville, currently completing a PhD at the University of Waterloo in Biology, and passionate about educating people on nature, for which we are all a part of. Prendergast, Elchyshyn and Pickering are all members of Sustainable Orangeville.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: Thank you Headwaters

Dear Editor,

I am lucky to not have to visit doctors too often. Still, once in a while it happens. It happened this last weekend, when I ended up asking for help at the ER of Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC). I was treated with professionalism and empathy. While still in treatment, I can feel the improvement in my condition. I am lucky!

However, while talking to a nurse, I was taken aback by a statement she made that some patients are rude, aggressive, and violent. I pointed out that I came there in need of help, and she and her colleagues are providing help, so why would this be the case?

“You'd be surprised” was her answer, adding that most are later ashamed of how they behaved. Still... pain is pain, frustration is frustration, but lashing out at other people is not going to better anything, that much I would think we all know.

If anything, these healthcare professionals deserve our gratitude: they chose an occupation in which they are helping fellow people, and they sacrifice a lot of their lives for it. They are lifelong learners who stay abreast of what's happening in their field, work long shifts, late shifts, and face the personal risk of getting a new contagious disease from one of their patients. I think the rest of us can at least be nice.

I want to say just this: HHCC team, Thank you. You are awesome!

Sorin Schwimmer
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REMEMBER TO
SHOP LOCAL!

Trillium Ford Shelburne hosts Drive 4UR Community in support of Shelburne Legion

Written By **BRIAN LOCKHART**

Trillium Ford Shelburne invited local residents to come out to the Highway 89 dealership just east of Shelburne for a Drive 4UR Community event on Saturday, July 18.

The day-long event allowed people to test-drive one of several brand-new Ford vehicles while raising money for a good cause.

Funds raised were in support of Shelburne Legion Branch 220.

For every eligible test drive completed during the event, Ford of Canada pledged to donate \$30, up to a maximum of \$6,000, to the local Legion.

Funds raised will help support the installation of an accessible walkway at the Legion's main entrance, improving accessibility for veterans, Legion members and visitors.

For some drivers, it was a chance to experience a vehicle they may be interested in, while others were just curious about the new line-up of Ford vehicles.

"Our dealership has always believed in supporting the communities we serve," said Len Rice, owner and managing partner of Trillium Ford Shelburne. "Drive 4UR Community is a simple way for residents to make a meaningful impact. A quick test drive can help create a more accessible and welcoming space at our local Legion."

Visitors had the opportunity to take a ve-



BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

DRIVING TO DONATE: Trillium Ford in Shelburne hosted a Drive 4UR Community test drive event at their Highway 89 dealership on Saturday, July 18. Members of the public could sign up to take a new Ford vehicle out for a test drive. For every test drive, Ford of Canada is donating \$30, up to a maximum of \$6,000, to the Shelburne Legion Branch 220. Trillium Ford staff and members of the Shelburne Legion greet visitors during the event.

Trillium Ford hosted more than just the chance to test drive a vehicle and turned it into a day-long fun event. In addition to the test drives, there was a charity barbecue, a family-friendly atmosphere, and live music.

It was a chance for local residents to support a meaningful community project while experiencing driving a new vehicle and maybe deciding on what vehicle may be in their future plans.

Rotary Club donates to Fiddle Park Commissary Kitchen with funds from recent golf tournament

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

The Shelburne Rotary Club donated \$9,400 to the Fiddle Park Commissary Kitchen to help purchase a commercial dishwasher for the facility.

The donation was presented on July 16 and was made possible through proceeds from the 2026 Shelburne Rotary and Economic Development Golf Tournament.

It marks the latest contribution from the Rotary Club toward the commissary kitchen project, which has benefited from previous tournament fundraising efforts.

Bobbi Ferguson, representing the Rotary Club, said that the kitchen will serve an important role in community development.

"This tournament has always been about giving back to our community, and we're proud to continue supporting a project that helps local food entrepreneurs get their start," she said. "The commissary kitchen is a great example of what community partnership can build."

Located at Fiddle Park, the commissary kitchen provides affordable, fully equipped commercial kitchen space for local food entrepreneurs looking to launch or expand

their businesses. The facility fills a longstanding gap in Dufferin County by offering access to commercial-grade equipment, shared resources and business development support for food-based enterprises.

The new commercial dishwasher will improve the kitchen's day-to-day operations and further equip the facility to serve the growing number of entrepreneurs using the space.

The project is designed to create opportunities for small food businesses by providing access to infrastructure that would otherwise be difficult or costly to obtain independently.

In addition to providing affordable commercial kitchen space, the commissary kitchen connects entrepreneurs with local resources and operates on a sustainable rental model intended to support its long-term success.

Carol Maitland, economic development officer for Shelburne, said the initiative is part of the town's broader efforts to encourage economic growth and foster small-business development.

"The Shelburne Rotary Club's continued investment reflects the strength of this community partnership," she said. "This new dishwasher will make a real difference in the

day-to-day operation of the kitchen, and it reinforces the role our local service clubs play in building economic infrastructure right here in Shelburne."

The annual Shelburne Rotary and Economic Development Golf Tournament has raised approximately \$300,000 since it began,

supporting a variety of community and economic development initiatives.

The commissary kitchen remains one of the tournament's key beneficiaries as the Rotary Club continues investing in projects aimed at strengthening Shelburne's local economy.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

KITCHEN UPGRADE: Members of the Shelburne Rotary Club met with Town of Shelburne dignitaries on Thursday, July 16, at the Commissary Kitchen in Fiddle Park to celebrate a donation of \$9,400. The Rotary Club's donation will be used towards a dishwasher in the kitchen space of the Commissary Kitchen.

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^{‡‡}Limited-time lease offer provided to eligible clients through Mazda Financial Services, on approved credit. Representative lease offer based on a new and previously unregistered 2026 CX-70 GT Plug-In Hybrid (YXTP86) with a cash purchase price of \$65,067, leased at 1.69% (for non-Mazda owners)/0.69% (for qualifying Mazda owners, includes a 1% loyalty rate reduction) for 36 months. Bi-weekly payment is \$418.39/399.28, which includes \$2,195 freight and PDI; \$100 A/C charge; Retailer administration fee (up to \$795); lien registration fees (up to \$58.85, including lien registering agent fee); \$400 paint charge (Rhodium White); as well as all other applicable fees, levies and duties (all of which may vary by region and Retailer). 78 bi-weekly payments required. Licence, insurance, registration, the specific duty on new tires and applicable taxes are extra and due at signing. \$0 down payment or equivalent trade-in and \$0 security deposit due at signing. Retailer may sell for less. Retailer order/trade may be necessary (but may not be available in all cases). Conditions apply. Offer ends July 31, 2026, and is subject to change or cancellation without notice. Visit [mazda.ca](https://tc.canada.ca/en/road-transportation/innovative-technologies/zero-emission-vehicles/electric-vehicle-affordability-program-evap) or your Mazda Retailer for more information. [‡]Offer is only available to qualifying retail customers who are current owners/lessees of a Mazda vehicle. Proof of current ownership/lease will be required. Offer consists of a choice between: (i) up to a 1% lease or finance rate reduction (on approved credit) on a new, in stock 2026 CX-70, CX-90, CX-5, CX-30, Mazda3, Mazda3 Sport, MX-5 or MX-5 RF model. [Rate reduction is off current rates. Under no circumstances can rates be reduced below 0% APR. Rate reduction varies on select model.]; or (ii) an Owner Loyalty Rebate of up to \$1,000 off the purchase or lease of select new Mazda models [\$500/\$1,000 is currently available to qualifying retail customers who purchase/finance/lease a select new, in-stock 2026 CX-5, CX-30, Mazda3, Mazda3 Sport/2026 CX-70, CX-90, MX-5, MX-5 RF model. Rebate will be deducted from the negotiated price after taxes, has no cash surrender value and can be combined with lease/finance rates or any other offer.] Offers available only at authorized Mazda Retailers in Canada until July 31, 2026. Offers and qualifying models are subject to change. Conditions apply. Offer is subject to change or cancellation without notice. Contact your participating Mazda Retailer for details. ^{◆◆}Up to \$2,500 Electric Vehicle Affordability Program (EVAP) incentive available only to eligible Canadian residents for qualifying cash purchase, lease and finance transactions (that meet the EVAP program eligibility criteria) of a 2026 CX-70 PHEV GS-SC model and 2026 CX-90 PHEV GS model with a final transaction value not exceeding \$50,000 (calculated in accordance with the EVAP program terms), from a participating Mazda dealer in Canada between February 16, 2026 and December 31, 2026 (or until available funds are exhausted – whichever occurs first). The EVAP incentive: (1) is available on the cash purchase, lease or finance of an eligible vehicle; (ii) will be deducted from the vehicle's negotiated selling price after taxes; (iii) is provided on a first-come, first-served basis or until available funds are exhausted; and (iv) cannot be applied to past transactions. Limit of one (1) EVAP incentive per person during the lifetime of the program. Incentive amount varies depending on (amongst other things) the length of the lease period and purchase/lease dates, and will be deducted from the eligible vehicle's negotiated selling price after taxes. Maximum rebate amount is only available on lease terms of 48 months or longer. Advertised amount of \$1,875 is based on a 36-month lease. To learn more about the EVAP's terms, eligibility requirements and restrictions, visit: <https://tc.canada.ca/en/road-transportation/innovative-technologies/zero-emission-vehicles/electric-vehicle-affordability-program-evap>, or your local Mazda dealer. Mazda Canada makes no representations about the actual amount of or eligibility for the EVAP incentive, and is not responsible for the incentive (which is administered exclusively by the Government of Canada, and subject to change/termination at any time). EVAP information is provided for informational purposes only. [▲]\$500/\$1,500/\$2,000/\$2,000/\$3,000/\$1,000 Event Bonus ("Bonus") is available on new and previously unregistered 2026 Mazda3, Mazda3 Sport, CX-30/2026 CX-70 MHEV, CX-90 MHEV/2026 CX-70 PHEV GS-L SC, GT, Signature/CX-90 PHEV GS-L, GT, Signature/2026 MX-5/2026 CX-70 GS-SC, CX-90 PHEV GS models that are purchased or financed/leased (on approved credit) and delivered between July 1–31, 2026, from an authorized Mazda Retailer in Canada. Bonus will be applied to the negotiated selling price of the eligible vehicle before taxes, and (i) has no cash surrender or other value; (ii) does not apply to fleet sales; and (iii) cannot be applied to past transactions. Conditions apply. See mazda.ca or your local Mazda Retailer for details. [†]NOTE: Weekly lease offers shown above are for informational purposes only. Lease payments cannot actually be made on a weekly basis and are made on a bi-weekly basis. Offer available on retail leases of new 2026 CX-30 GX AWD (ZXXL86AA00)/2026 CX-5 GX (NXXL86AA00)/2026 CX-70 PHEV GS-L SC (YXHP86AA00) with a lease APR of 3.49%/3.99%/1.69% and 104/104/78 bi-weekly payments of \$184/\$225/\$325 for 48/48/36 months; the total lease obligation is \$19,998/\$24,779/\$26,886, including down payment (or equivalent trade-in) of \$850/\$1,425/\$1,500. First monthly payment is due at lease inception. 20,000 km per year mileage allowance applies; if exceeded, additional 10¢/15¢ per km applies for CX-30, CX-5/CX-70. Offered leasing available to retail customers only. Licence, insurance, taxes and down payment (where applicable) are extra and may be required at the time of purchase. Retailer order/trade may be necessary on certain vehicles. Offers valid July 1–31, 2026, while supplies last. Lease and finance on approved credit for qualified customers only. Offers subject to change without notice. Visit mazda.ca or see your Mazda Retailer for complete details.