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PAULA BROWN PHOTO

BLACK HISTORY: Dufferin County Canadian Black Association (DCCBA) founder and president, Alethia O'Hara Stephenson was joined by local councillors, members of the DEI committee, and Dufferin OPP on Tuesday (Feb. 1) at Shelburne Town Hall to mark the beginning of Black History Month.

Flag raising held for Black History Month

Written By Paula Brown
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The beginning of February signals the start of Black History Month, and municipalities across Dufferin County marked the celebration with the raising of the Pan-African flag.

Dufferin County Canadian Black Association (DCCBA) founder and president Alethia O'Hara Stephenson was joined by Shelburne councillors, members of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee, and Dufferin OPP at Shelburne Town Hall on Tuesday (Feb. 1) for an official flag raising ceremony.

"There's a sense of pride when I look at the [Pan-African] flag. To think when we first moved to Dufferin County, we didn't have flag raising ceremonies," said O'Hara Stephenson. "It's a sense of community, of belonging, and of hope for the future; for our young people and for all the great things that we can accomplish together as a community – not just as a black community, but as a Dufferin County community. When I think of Black History Month and the Pan-African flag it's not just black history, it's Canadian history. So, it's a humbling feeling to have our efforts, contributions, and work recognized as part of the fabric of Canada."

In February of 2019, Shelburne Town Council became the first Council to recognize Black History Month in Dufferin County. The next year County Council approved the proclamation request, officially recognizing Black History Month in Dufferin County for the first-time, subsequently followed with the raising of the first Pan-African flag in Shelburne and Dufferin County.

Established in the 1920s by political activist Marcus Garvey, the Pan-African flag's purpose was to unify the peoples of African descent.

Shelburne Mayor Wade Mills officially proclaimed February in Shelburne, Black History Month for the fourth time during the town's council meeting on Jan. 24.

The Pan-African flag was also raised on Tuesday at the Museum of Dufferin (MOD). In attendance for the flag raising was Shelburne Mayor and Dufferin County Warden Wade Mills, Alethia O'Hara Stephenson, and representatives from the Dufferin OPP.

"This is always a day that I'm filled with pride, but especially today having the opportunity to do this for the first time as Warden of Dufferin County. These symbolic gestures are important, but they're not enough," said Mills. "What's being demonstrated both at the county level

and within the Town of Shelburne is we're moving well beyond just simple symbolic gestures. While those are important to show the community visually that we're committed, we're also putting in the work to backstop that symbology with actual concrete strides towards a more equitable community."

Speaking specifically to the work the Town of Shelburne is doing to back up the symbolic gestures of support, Mills pointed to the Town's development of a DEI Committee, who through a mandate having been looking into ways of removing systemic barriers and promote racial equality in the community.

O'Hara Stephenson added that through the DCCBA they're already seeing tangible changes such as the county taking steps to hire more diverse staff and organizations sharing job postings with a diverse community.

"These are simple things, but they play a huge role in changing the landscape and making sure that there's equality throughout Dufferin County," said O'Hara Stephenson. "Small steps, but there's more to come and I've very proud of the work that we're doing."

The Pan-African flag was raised in other municipalities on Tuesday including Melancthon and Mono, and is scheduled to be raised at the County of Dufferin office on Feb. 3 and Amaranth Town Hall on Feb. 5.

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SUPPORTING TRUCKERS: Residents lined the sidewalks and road of Shelburne's main thruway on Friday (Jan. 28) to show support to the Freedom Convoy, a group protesting a mandate requiring non-vaccinated truckers to quarantine for 14 days before crossing the border.



ROLLING THROUGH: Supporters of the Freedom Convoy protest held signs, waved Canadian flags, and cheered as trucks, part of the Grey Bruce Freedom Fighters, made their way through Shelburne on Friday (Jan. 28) on their way to Ottawa.



YOUNG PROTESTER: Local youth calls for no more mandates while attending the protest in Shelburne.



LITTLE SUPPORTERS: Families stood in frigid temperatures on Friday (Jan. 28) as they held signs proclaiming support to truckers and fighting for freedom as a convoy of trucks, protesting mandates, made their way through Shelburne.

'Freedom Convoy' rolls through Shelburne on the way to Ottawa

Written By **Paula Brown**
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Residents from communities all around northern Dufferin County flocked and lined the path of Shelburne's main thruways on Friday (Jan. 28), as a convoy of truckers against COVID-19 vaccine mandates rolled through town on their way to Ottawa.

The convoy of truckers associated with the Grey Bruce Freedom Fighters, were part of a larger nation-wide protest, known as the Freedom Convoy. On Jan. 23 hundreds of B.C truckers hit the road from Vancouver to Parliament Hill, to protest

the federal vaccine mandate, that went into effect on Jan. 15.

The new mandate requires unvaccinated truckers to quarantine for 14 days before crossing the border. Up to 26,000 or about 20 per cent of the 160,000 American and Canadian cross border truckers are estimated to be impacted.

Supports of the protest seemed barely affected by Friday's frigid temperatures, with music, horns, and cheers giving off an air of a tail-gate or pep-rally as trucks made their way across Hwy. 89. Many held signs reading "no more mandates" and "thank you" while others held up Canadian flags.

Kyle Clemmer standing with his wife and kids stood out amongst the crowd as he held up a sign that reading "I lost my job".

A former wastewater treatment operator for the Town of Minto, Clemmer told the Free Press he lost his job after being denied an exemption from the vaccine.

"At first there was never a termination clause, they were going to make us work alone. I opted to apply for exemption which was denied, and I was placed on a leave of absence," explained Clemmer. "I did talk with some lawyers and was told everybody is going that way so decide where you want to work or make a choice, at which point

they terminated my employment."

Clemmer said he chose to attend the protest because "where do we want our nation to be in the future?" and added "this is only the beginning of the mandates."

Miriam Lo, a local resident who held up a sign thanking the convoy truckers said she was in attendance to support what she describes as "the heroes not noticed".

"People don't really think about what the truckers do for us. Everybody talks about health care workers, but no one really about the truckers," she said.

Continued on Page 3



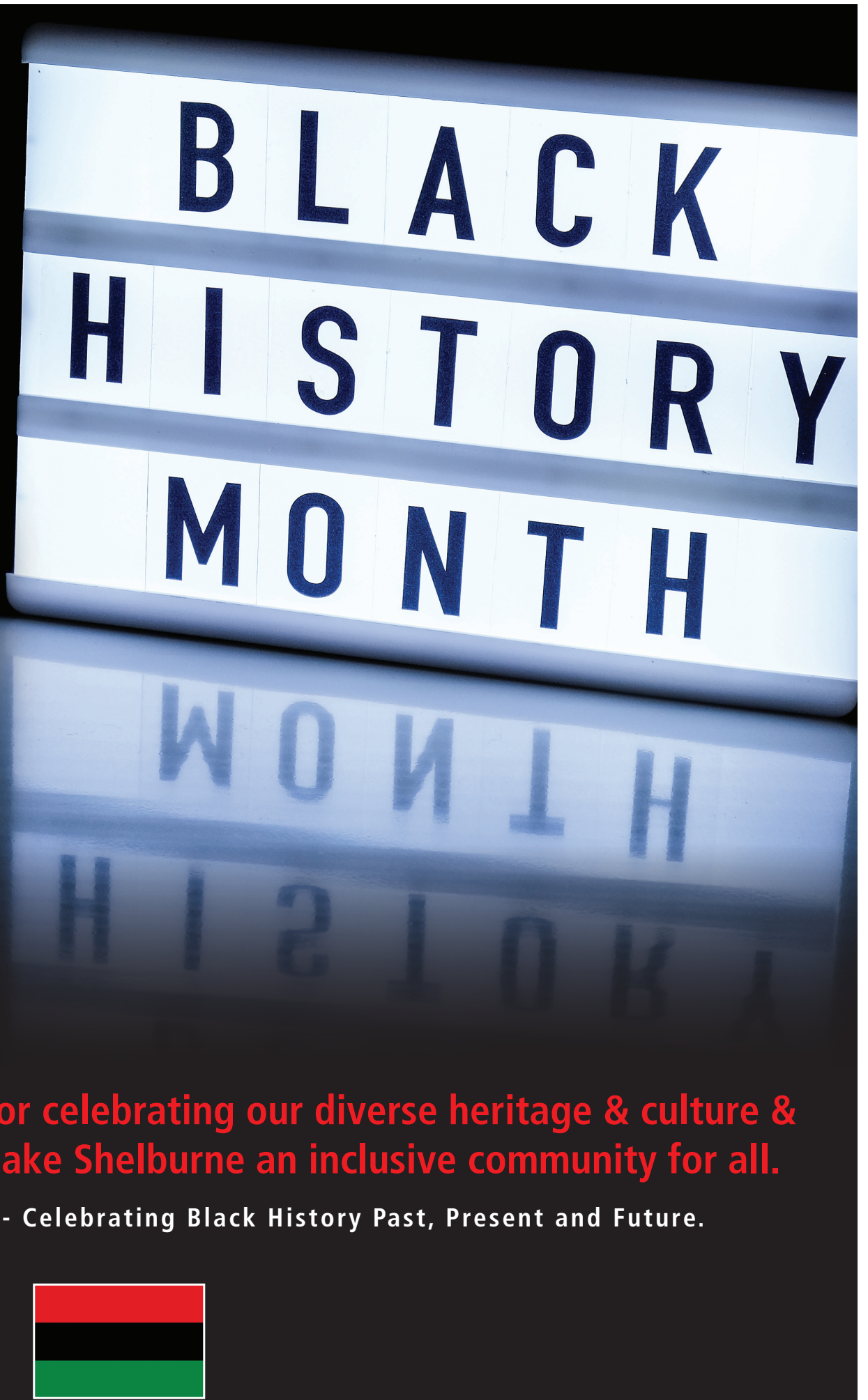
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– February 2022 –

The Town of Shelburne: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee wants to thank its residents as we acknowledge and honour the historical and present contributions of Black Canadians.

We want to thank all residents for celebrating our diverse heritage & culture & for their continued efforts to make Shelburne an inclusive community for all.

Town of Shelburne DEI Committee - Celebrating Black History Past, Present and Future.



Continued from Page 2

'Freedom Convoy' rolls through Shelburne on the way to Ottawa

"While we were staying at home and in the comfort on our homes, they were on the road alone, keeping our supply chain going. I just wanted to come out and show them support for what they've done for us and to thank them."

While some attendees were there to directly support the truckers regarding the quarantine mandate, others took the opportunity to protest other vaccine policies and vaccines on the whole.

Shelburne resident Stephanie Raponi told the Free Press that as a government employee she was "forced to get the vaccine or face unemployment."

"My niece and nephew are not able to play sports or do activities because their parents, who are unvaccinated by personal choice, are not able to go," she said. "They're heartbro-

ken that they're not able to enjoy being a kid with their friends so I'm here to support them and their future."

Another attendee Julie Tibbles, a resident of Mansfield, said "I feel it's important to stand up for our rights and the right to choose what we do with our bodies."

While the convoy of trucks made their way into town, traffic was momentarily blocked by Dufferin OPP in order to safely maneuver the convoy through Dufferin County.

Dufferin OPP community liaison, Jennifer Roach said the OPP did not encounter any issues with people participating in the convoy or observing.

Shelburne Mayor Wade Mills provided a statement to the Free Press regarding Friday's protest:

"I was relieved that Friday's convoy demon-

stration remained peaceful and that it caused only minimal and short-lived disruption within our community. I would like to thank our emergency services, particularly our OPP, for dedicated the extra time and resources that we required to ensure that they were properly prepared for this. Regardless of where one stands on the issue, I think that we can all be thankful that we live in a country

where we enjoy incredible freedoms, including the freedom to peacefully demonstrate."

The convoy of trucks that made their way through town on Friday began their journey in Owen Sound and passed through the communities of Chatsworth, Flesherton, Shelburne, and Orangeville before joining a larger group in Belleville and heading to Ottawa.

Dufferin-Caledon MP Kyle Seeback voices supports for 'Freedom Convoy'

Written By Sam Odrowski

Dufferin-Caledon MP Kyle Seeback recently penned a letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau asking that he reverse the federal government's decision to require cross-border truckers to be vaccinated against COVID-19,

The policy came into effect Jan. 15, and is expected to ground 26,000 of the 160,000 trucker drivers who make regular cross border trips.

"This will inevitably have a devastating impact not only on the livelihoods of thousands of truck drivers, but will also contribute to the existing shortage of drivers. Supply chains are already stretched," wrote Seeback in his letter. "Canadians who are struggling with the increasing costs of goods like produce, will now feel an additional pinch at the checkout, as shipping costs will be forced to rise. Canadians can't afford more price increases or endure anymore empty shelves. Your government must immediately reverse this policy. Canadians and our economy can't afford it."

Seeback told the citizen the policy won't make a difference with the Omicron variant, as it has already travelled widely across the world, and forcing more truckers to get vaccinated won't fix the problem.

While speaking with the newspaper, he also expressed support for the "Freedom Convoy", consisting of tens of thousands of trucks that travelled across Canada, and arrived at Parliament Hill last Saturday (Jan. 29) to protest vaccine mandates and other COVID-19 restrictions.

Seeback attended the protest himself over the weekend and called it an impressive display.

"I think it's a massive movement of people who are frustrated with the last two years, and I think they want an end to the lockdowns and restrictions," said Seeback.

"We're seeing this happening more and more, not just around the world, but certainly across Canada. More and more doctors, and medical officers are saying COVID is now something we have to live with because we will never get to COVID Zero. So, I think these folks are trying to really push that message."

Seeback noted that all the protesters he observed were well behaved and polite, while he was at Parliament Hill.

With respect to hate symbols or protesters disrespecting monuments, Seeback said a small group shouldn't detract from the overall message that was being positively spread through the Freedom Convoy. Those who commit horrible acts should be held accountable on an individual basis

"There were a very tiny number of bad actors, and those people should be condemned, but they are responsible for their actions, not everyone else who was there," said Seeback. "In fact, what we're seeing is that people who are there are trying to make up for the actions of those few despicable people. And that really should be the story, not those few people that came there to do those kinds of things."

Seeback noted that with every negative incident, there was an overwhelming response from good, peaceful people, trying to offset those actions with positivity and acts of kindness. This was seen with protesters feeding the homeless after an incident at an Ottawa soup kitchen, stand-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SUPPORTING CANADA'S TRUCKERS: Dufferin-Caledon MP Kyle Seeback recently wrote a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau asking that the vaccine mandate for truckers be dropped. He also shared his support for the "Freedom Convoy" rally in Ottawa.

ing on guard over the Terry Fox after it was tampered with, and laying countless bouquets of flowers at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier statue after a lone woman danced on it.

With respect to the "no jab, no job" vaccine mandates, Seeback noted that he and his party have always supported a rapid antigen testing and were never in favour of people being fired over their COVID-19 vaccination status. He said it's now becoming increasingly apparent that those policies are unnecessary and ineffective.

"I think the vaccine mandates are turning out to be less and less useful," he told the Citizen. "Someone with two shots, I think, is 20 per cent protected against Omicron. Sure, maybe you could get a third shot, but there's already a new variant that's coming in. And we don't know how effective two shots or three shotAs would be with that."

Seeback also noted the endemic nature of the COVID-19 virus.

"I think we're in the never-ending cycle where you can never get 100 per cent ahead of it, which is why I think we do have to get to the point where we will live with COVID, and people are going to have to manage their risk."



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Look in your own backyard

During the current time, there's a lot of people lamenting the fact that they can't travel.

That is understandable. For many people, travel is a way of life and something they really enjoy.

However, it seems many people in Ontario always need to travel outside of the province to get away.

I'm sure there are a lot of Ontarians who don't realize exactly how big this province is. In fact, I'll bet that most of the population of Toronto doesn't even realize towns and cities exist past Highway 7.

At 1,076,395 square kilometres, Ontario is larger than Venezuela, Germany, France, and a whole lot of other countries.

Much of it, however, is uninhabited. Just do a search on Google Earth and go north of Sudbury.

Trees, thousands and thousands of lakes, and a lot of granite, is pretty much all you're going to see. But you'll never see it if you don't go there.

There is plenty to see and do in this province. Even if you like to play only in populated areas, the drive in the most heavily

populated area in the province, between Windsor and Ottawa, is an 800 kilometre stretch that will take though several major centres as well as small towns.

I have been fortunate enough to have visited more towns in Ontario than anyone I know. This is due to a combination of compassless road trips, and a couple of jobs that I've had that routinely sent me to many towns I had never even heard of.

There is always something different to see. Along the north shoreline of Lake Erie there is a lot to see and do. From water sports, camping, and discovering strange new places, it and the nearby towns are one of my favourite regions.

Traveling north up along the shore of Lake Huron, the water is beautiful and so are the towns.

In the east end of the province there are plenty of places to visit. Ottawa is a terrific city with lots of museums, galleries, and points of interest.

I was lucky enough to be on a film crew that travelling in an old steam train from Ottawa up through the Gatineau hills.

In between these points are a huge number of small towns, each with their history and quirks.

I've been in some hamlets that were so small I think I met the entire town in one afternoon, but every place has something different and interesting if you look for it.

If I'm on a road trip and see a sign for the 'world's largest ball of twine' or some local history museum, more often than not I'll pull over to take a look. You meet some very interesting people at those type of places.

Heading north, to most people in southern Ontario, means going to Muskoka or the Kawarthas.

Being 'in the north' at your cottage means you have barely even entered Northern Ontario. There's still another 900 kilometres to go before you hit the northern border, and that's a place almost no Ontarians will ever see.

A trip to Thunder Bay will be almost as long as a drive as heading south to Florida. Once you're there, you've entered a whole different world.

You can take a detour and visit Ouimet Canyon – a huge gorge with 100 metre sheer cliffs

and spectacular views. Ask anyone in Southern Ontario, and most people have never even heard of this outstanding provincial park.

While you're in the area you can explore the wild and untamed north shore of Lake Superior.

One trip on my bucket list is to visit Moosonee on the shores of James Bay. It isn't even accessible by road. You have to take the train or fly in to get to the town.

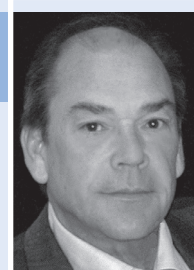
If you visit Moosonee, don't expect to be staying at the Ritz or eating at a five-star restaurant. It's not the kind of trip for people who insist on luxury all the time.

However, you will be visiting a place that few people have experienced on the only salt water port in the province, that is pretty close to being in in Arctic territory.

If the travel bug is biting you and you feel the need to break away from the pandemic and do some exploring, it's all here in your own backyard.

You can explore, play, and find some fascinating places that will take days to drive to, without even leaving your own province.

BRIAN LOCKHART FROM THE SECOND ROW



Shrinking Asia

In the politics of population, the magic number is 2.1. That is 'replacement level': if a country's fertility rate (the average number of children a woman has in her lifetime) is 2.1, then the country's population will remain level. Above that number, it starts to grow; below 2.1, it eventually falls. And something really significant is happening in Asia.

The big news is that India's fertility rate has now dropped below replacement level: it is 2.0 per woman.

That doesn't mean that India's population will start falling right away. India will still overtake China and become the world's most populous country later this decade, with around 1.45 billion people, but in due course it will stop growing and start shrinking.

The delay is because human beings are not salmon: they do not spawn and die. Instead, they live on another thirty or forty or even fifty years after their children are born, so there is still a little bit of growth left in most Asian countries.

Let me explain, using the Dyer clan. I was the eldest of five children, which was a

middle-sized family in Newfoundland at the time. We all lived to grow up, and on average we had exactly 2.0 children each – just below replacement level.

Those children all lived to grow up too, and it looks like they're also going to end up with an average of 2.0 children each – but I and my brothers and sisters are all STILL alive.

Three generations of us, and where there were ten people in my generation (counting spouses), there are now thirty.

The baby boom stops there, because when my generation dies off, we will be replaced by the great-grandchildren. At that point the Dyer clan will finally have reached equilibrium – or even started to shrink a bit, if some of the grandchildren cut back on the child-bearing. It takes a very long time to stabilise if you stay at 2.0.

However, Asian populations are not stopping at 2.0. The phenomenon is most extreme in East Asia, where every country's population is already in steep decline.

In South Korea, where the fertility rate is an astonishing 0.86 (less than one child per

woman, on average), the population is going into free fall. At this rate, it will drop by half by the end of the century.

Same for China, where official statistics predict that the average woman will have only 1.3 children in her lifetime. At that rate, China will be down from 1.41 billion people now to 700 million by 2100, less than twice the population of United States at that time.

Even that may be too optimistic. Fertility expert Fuxian Yi, senior scientist in the obstetrics and gynecology department at the University of Wisconsin, recently estimated that China's 2020 population was actually 1.28 billion, not the 1.41 billion recorded on the census, and that China's real fertility rate is a lot less than 1.3.

The discrepancy arises, he says, because many of the children counted don't exist. Local governments overstate their population to get more subsidies, especially education fees, from the central government, and some families buy extra birth certificates online on the black market because there are over 20 social benefits linked to a birth registration.

If Dr. Yi is right, then the United States, despite a fairly low growth rate (443 million in the year 2100), may have about the same population as China by the end of the century. Japan's fertility rate is 1.35, but that still means its population will fall from 125

million now to 75 million by century's end.

Most of South and Southeast Asia is already below replacement level (Vietnam 2.0, Bangladesh 1.9, Thailand 1.5). The rest are almost there (Indonesia 2.2, Myanmar 2.15, Sri Lanka 2.15). Apart from the Muslim countries of the Greater Middle East (Pakistan to Syria), the only big Asian country still growing fast is the Philippines (2.5).

Populations in Europe are stable or gently falling, and in the Americas almost every country has a growth rate of less than 1%. The only world regions still growing fast are the Middle East and Africa, where population growth rates are between 1.5% and 3%.

Project those numbers forward to 2100, even allowing for a gradual decline in Middle Eastern and African fertility rates (which is not currently happening at all), and just these two regions will contain half the population of the planet at the end of the century: more than four billion people.

Except for the Arab oil states and a couple of middle-income countries like South Africa and Iran, unfortunately, none of these countries has a per capita GDP of more than \$5,000 a year, and their incomes are barely keeping up with population growth. It will be a very divided world.

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Serious traffic collision under investigation: Dufferin OPP

Members of the Dufferin Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) are investigating a serious motor vehicle collision between a car and a Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV) in the Town of Mono.

On February 1, 2022, at approximately 10:45 a.m., the Dufferin OPP along with Dufferin County EMS, Simcoe County

EMS and Rosemont Fire Department responded to a serious two vehicle collision at the intersection of Highway 89 and Airport Road (County Road 18) in the Town of Mono.

As a result of the collision, the lone occupant of the car sustained life-threatening injuries and was airlifted by ORNGE Air

Ambulance to a Toronto area trauma centre. Both occupants of the SUV sustained serious, but non-life-threatening injuries and were transported by ambulance to a local hospital.

The OPP Traffic Collision Investigation (TCI) team is investigating alongside Dufferin OPP. The investigation is ongoing

and road closures can be expected for several hours. Anyone who may have witnessed the collision is asked to contact the Dufferin OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

If you witnessed the collision and wish to speak to victim services, Caledon/Dufferin Victim Services can be reached at 905-951-3838.

Dufferin man recently charged with alcohol related offence

Members of the Dufferin Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) charged a driver with an alcohol related offence as a result of a traffic complaint.

On January 26, 2022, at approximately 11:30 p.m., Dufferin OPP responded to a traffic complaint for a possible impaired driver, in the area of Townline and Century Drive in the Town of Orangeville. A

Dufferin OPP officer located the vehicle and was led into an impaired operation investigation.

As a result of the investigation, Jordan PENNEY, 32-year-old, from Orangeville has been charged with:

- Failure or refusal to comply with demand
- The accused's driver's licence was suspended for 90 days and their vehicle

impounded for 7 days. These charges have not been proven in court.

"Thank you to the concerned citizen who called police. If you suspect an impaired driver, call 9-1-1," says a recent press release from Dufferin OPP.

The press release continues, "Dufferin OPP is committed to public safety, delivering proactive and innovative polic-

ing in partnership with our communities. Officers value your contribution to building safe communities. If you have information about suspected unlawful activity, please contact the OPP at 1-888-310-1122 or Crime Stoppers to remain anonymous at 1-800-822-8477 (TIPS) or www.ontariocrimestoppers.ca."

Arrest made in Shelburne for impaired driving

Members of the Dufferin Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) charged a driver with impaired driving following a traffic stop in the Town of Shelburne.

On February 1, 2022, at approximately 7:55 p.m., a Dufferin OPP officer initiated a traffic stop on Main Street East, in the Town of Shelburne. The Dufferin OPP officer was led into an impaired operation investigation after speaking to the driver.

As a result of the investigation, Harjit GHAG, 38-year-old, from Melancthon Township has been charged with:

- Operation while impaired - blood alcohol concentration (80 plus)

The accused is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Orangeville, in April of 2022, to answer to the charge. The accused's driver's licence was suspended for 90 days and their vehicle impounded for seven days. These charges have not been proven in court.

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PUZZLE 415

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ACROSS

1. Skinny one
6. Junk e-mail
10. Ratite bird
14. South American raccoon
15. Daze
17. Fender flaw
18. Promo producers
19. Danger
20. And
21. Corded fabric
22. Spout
24. "___ Is Your Life"
26. Unit of length
27. Cat's call
28. Feudal lord
29. "Home Again" addition
30. Mix thoroughly
32. Young fish
33. Shopper's bag
35. Hurl

36. Barnyard sound
37. Roster
39. Maui feast
40. Maidenhair
41. Angry
44. Coffee container
45. Shuttle's domain
47. Bro, to Sis
49. Creel
51. Little bit
52. Harmony
53. Acquaintances
54. Big Band, e.g.
55. "Beetle Bailey" superior
56. Prudish
58. Pismire
59. African animal, shortly
60. Take legal action
61. Suit
64. Old stringed instrument
65. Gridiron org.

66. Skunk's defense
67. Ballerina's short skirt
68. Jabber
71. Off yonder
73. Stringed instrument
75. Loomed up
77. New York ___
78. Intertwine
79. Fortress
80. Patella location
81. Beginner
82. Elaborate display

DOWN

1. Blemish
2. Secret language
3. Sloped surface
4. Enjoyed brunch
5. Oriental root
6. Brood
7. Play on words

8. Disinterest
9. Cafe order
10. Diet letters: abbr.
11. Biker's headgear
12. Store, as fodder
13. Lagoon's boundary
15. Merganser's kin
16. Bridle strap
23. Group of whales
25. Seat for two
27. List of activities
28. Passing
30. Ad copy
31. Woody vine
32. Card game
34. Bumpkin
35. Winter ailment
36. Shelflike bed
37. Gaucho's tool
38. Humpback's kin
40. Shoe fillers
42. Employ wrongfully
43. Peculiar jargon
45. With hands on hips
46. Left, nautically
48. Busy one
50. Snow slat
52. Recording
55. Place
56. Sea parrot
57. Describe
58. Jauntily
59. Shanty
60. Nibble
62. On ___ (tense)
63. Spring of water
64. Temptation
67. Cantina meal
68. Wail
69. Befuddled
70. Bouncy
72. Kind of bread
74. Roofer's caulking material
76. Legendary bird



MASSIVE TURNOUT IN OTTAWA: Tens of thousands of people gathered at Parliament Hill in Ottawa to support the "Freedom Convoy" on Saturday (Jan. 29), which is a trucker led movement intended to end cross-border vaccine mandates and a variety of other restrictions.

MATT BO PHOTOGRAPHY



MANDATE FREEDOM: Protestors held up signs asking the government to respect their rights and give them freedom, following two years of COVID-19 restrictions and mandates that many felt infringed upon their Charter of Rights and Freedom. Former Newfoundland Premier Brian Peckford, the last living signatory and drafter of the Charter, is suing the federal government over its travel ban for unvaccinated Canadians for violating the document.

SAM ODROWSKI PHOTO



PROTESTING MAINSTREAM MEDIA: Many protestors had signs claiming that the mainstream media is using propaganda or misleading the public. This protestor's sign says "The Media is the Virus, with spikes reading Global News, Toronto Star, Fox, CTV, NBC, CBC, and CNN."

SAM ODROWSKI PHOTO



SUPPORTING TERRY FOX: Left photo, Jeremiah Jost, who travelled to Ottawa from Southern Alberta, decided to camp out by Terry Fox to ensure no one disrespected the monument on Jan. 31, following reports of the statue being desecrated with an upside-down Canadian flag around its back, holding a sign that says "mandate freedom". After seeing reports of this, Jost brought over a bouquet of flowers and polished Terry off. He said he wanted to show the world that the "Freedom Convoy" protestors have nothing but love for Terry Fox. Right photo, a protestor thanks truckers for bringing Canada back together.

SAM ODROWSKI PHOTO



STAND UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS: Protestors were packed in tight quarters along Wellington Street, directly in front of Parliament Hill. The road was closed as truckers parked along the street and camped out there over the weekend, with some still remaining in place.

SAM ODROWSKI PHOTO



SUPPORTING SOLDIERS: Following reports of a lone protestor dancing on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, during the "Freedom Convoy" rally at Parliament Hill, protestors visited the monument to adorn it with flowers, showing their respect for the hallowed ground.

SAM ODROWSKI PHOTO

'Freedom Convoy' arrives in Ottawa, demanding change

Written By Sam Odrowski

Impact of mandates/restrictions on local protestor

Thousands of protestors united against COVID-19 mandates gathered at the Nation's Capital over the weekend to protest against vaccine mandates for truckers and all industries, along with other COVID-19 restrictions.

"For us, the reason why we're here, it's simple. Just end the mandates," said a Dufferin woman on Saturday (Jan. 29) at Parliament Hill. "I'm in possession of my body, you are with yours. What's right for you is not right for me."

Tens of thousands came via the "Freedom Convoy", which travelled over 4,000 km from British Columbia to the west and around 1,500 km from Nova Scotia to the east, led by thousands of big rig truckers. Many of which are off work due to federal government's new border restrictions for truck drivers, and came to Ottawa to protest it. The result of the restrictions is up to 26,000 of the 160,000 American and Canadian cross border truckers being taken off the roads, estimates the Canadian Trucker Alliance (CTA).

Along the Freedom Convoys journey, thousands of Canadians lined overpasses and roads near their community to cheer on the truckers as they rolled through their area.

At Parliament Hill, where the masses gathered, many attendees held signs calling for an end to any future lockdowns, restrictions in schools, as well as the proof-of-vaccine system in public spaces, which is being dropped later this month in Saskatchewan.

The province's Premiere Scott Moe released a statement during the height of the "Freedom Rally" last Saturday, saying he's against the vaccine mandates for truckers, citing that they don't stop transmission. He added that this is the reason why his government will soon be ending the proof-of-vaccination system for Saskatchewan.

The Free Press spoke with an Orangeville woman at Parliament Hill, who travelled to Ottawa to support the Freedom Convoy. She said one of her key motivations for travelling almost 500 km is to support the right to choose what goes into your body, without losing the ability to work.

"I think the narrative has been really stressful when it comes to people thinking that it is a selfish choice to either be unvaccinated or choose to be vaccine free, when in reality it's just exercising the choices we've always made since we live in a democratic society."

The stress of talking about being unvaccinated with family or friends has led to issues for her husband, who's a first responder, as well.

"You've been revered as someone who is at the frontline, and helping, and then in a matter of a few weeks, when the vaccine is available, you're either demonized or applauded based on your choice, because the choice has become so incredibly public," the Orangeville women said. "First responders, healthcare workers that have been let go for a private medical choice. One where there's a lot of data that shows it isn't necessarily helping now in the grand scheme of things [with transmission] – they just feel disposable."

Another motivator for the Orangeville women to attend the protest on Parliament Hill last weekend was for her eldest son, who's in Junior Kindergarten, and struggles with speech issues.

The kindergartener had a mask exemption since September but in January it was revoked. The Orangeville women's family doctor said her child should be exempt, but he's under legal pressure to not write an exemption, which she finds appalling.

"The reason for not writing the exemption is political, but the reason for the need of the

exemption is medical and for the well-being of the child, which should trump everything," said the Orangeville women.

With respect to the Freedom Convoy rally itself, she said she saw nothing but great things with her husband and group of friends she went with.

"The crowd was overwhelmingly positive. At one point, it was very tight quarters, like people trying to get through the crowd, and it was probably the most Canadian thing I've ever seen. Everyone was saying 'sorry, excuse me, pardon me, thank you' like it was a chant," the Orangeville women noted.

"We saw multiple protestors with garbage bags, picking up garbage and cleaning up because they understand it's all of our responsibility. We're here because we're standing up for a cause that's for everyone, the well-being of everyone. So for the protestors to ensure that the message is the main focus and not the uncleanliness of the protest area was great."

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who refuses to meet with members of the Freedom Convoy, called it an "insult to truth" during a press conference on Monday. Prior to the convoy's arrival to Ottawa, he called protestors a "small fringe minority" who hold "unacceptable views", lacking respect for their country. He also said a few protestors are being led by misinformation and wearing tin-foil hats. Last fall he categorized "anti-vaxxers" as racist and misogynists.

However, from actually attending the protest, the Orangeville women said she met a ton of reasonable people and the Prime Minister's comments couldn't be further from the truth.

"There was a man experiencing homelessness on the side of the street and protestors giving him coffee, food and blankets. And I mean, it was a really good feeling to be there," she said. "I think also because we have been lacking so much connection, like real in per-

son connection over the past two years, people were so willing to strike up a conversation with their neighbour and talk to them. They'd hear stories of how they've been impacted or hear stories of where they came from, or how far they came. People were making connections in the crowd because humans are hard-wired for connection."

Terry Fox Monument and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

Trudeau noted the Terry Fox statue was "desecrated", when a Canada flag ball cap was put on its head, an upside-down Canadian flag around his back, and sign that read "mandate freedom" in his hands.

Following the incident, a protestor from Southern Alberta, Jeremiah Jost polished the Terry Fox statue, laid down a bouquet of flowers at its feet, and held up a sign that read "We Love You Terry."

"I've been here this whole rally and it's been amazingly peaceful; people are coming early to pick up garbage, and I got home last night [Jan. 29] and I saw Erin O'Toole post that this rally was defacing our monuments, specifically Terry Fox," said Jost.

He noted that he's tired of seeing the mainstream media try to use guilt by association for those who attended the Freedom Convoy protest on Parliament Hill.

"They're trying to absolutely shame anyone who wants to affiliate with this rally, so I came out here and I created a little bit of my own news to give to them. Hopefully this goes all over the place – that the convoy respects Terry Fox."

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was covered in flowers on Sunday, following reports of a lone protestor dancing on it, and another allegedly urinated in the area.

Continued on Page 7

Continued from Page 6

'Freedom Convoy' arrives in Ottawa, demanding change

Jost said a few bad actors shouldn't tarnish the entire Freedom Convoy movement, and its heartwarming to see protestors come together to try to offset the negative actions of a select few.

Protestors share motivations to support the Freedom Convoy

In speaking with countless protestors at the rally, the most common reason for people attending was to unify with fellow Canadians and fight back against "no job, no job" policies.

"I think the biggest thing is probably unity. I think there's been enough of this us versus them, demonizing the unvaccinated, and I'll be the first one to encourage anybody to get vaccinated. I'm vaccinated," said Nick Besner, Ottawa resident. "But coercing people to take some medicine that they don't want to take — making people choose between livelihoods and getting the shot, it should be their choice."

With over 90 per cent of people 12 and up in Ontario with a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, Besner noted that there's no need to fire the unvaccinated. He also shared that Canada should be able to respond to the pandemic more effectively than it is currently.

"You'd think that any G7 competent government would be able to find ways to deal with this [pandemic] without people keeping them in their frigging homes," Besner remarked.

A Kanata resident, who drove down to Parliament Hill to protest on Saturday (Jan. 29), said he came to stand up against COVID-19 policies.

"I've seen a lot of things happening in the past 24 months, I've lost a lot of friends, none to COVID," he said. "Even my little cousin who has special needs, I've seen her mental health decline with all of this, her not being able to socialize, go to school."

The Kanata man said he's seen many tragedies unfold in the last two years, friends losing their businesses, losing employment due to mandates.

He stressed that "enough is enough." "Everything that's been taken, has not improved our health whatsoever. It was all for health, but everything they've done has been the unhealthiest solutions, not even solutions. It's terrible, what they've done, and we've ended up no further ahead, no matter how far they brought us," said the Kanata man.

He told the Free Press his father died in the



SAM ODROWSKI PHOTO

TRUCKS EVERYWHERE: Hundreds if not thousands of long haul trucks filled the streets surrounding Parliament Hill on Saturday (Jan. 29). The sound of horns could be heard as protestors would walk by the trucks, waving their flags or holding up their signs supporting the "Freedom Convoy".

early months of COVID-19 due to influenza but as a result of strict lockdown policies, he couldn't visit his father for the final 25 days of his life.

"I really truly think that if we were able to be there with him, he would have pulled through," said the Kanata man.

With respect to the truckers, he thanked the ones still out making deliveries as well as the ones who convoyed to Ottawa to "fight for freedom".

Speeches delivered by organizers and an Alberta MP

Peace River—Westlock MP Arnold Viersen from northern Alberta shared a few words with the truckers and rally supporters.

"I want to thank the truck rally for bringing us all together. I've seen the images from across Canada, the folks lined up in -30 on the side roads to welcome you across Canada. And I want to thank the truckers for bringing us all together to work together," he enthused.

Tamara Litch, co-organizer of the "Freedom Convoy 2022" GoFundMe which has now raised over \$10 million, spoke to a group of a few thousand protestors on Jan. 30. She shared a message with a theme of unity.

"To see all of you here as one, refusing to be divided by race, or culture, or geography, or faith anymore," she remarked. "We are all Canadian citizen and I've never been more

proud to be Canadian than I am right now."

Litch said Canadians have regained the hope and pride that so many had lost through the pandemic.

"I said yesterday, if you have your flag turned upside down, please put it back right

side up, and be proud of what you've done and be proud of these guys [the truckers]," she said, sparking cheers from the crowd and honks from trucks parked nearby.

"I am not a hero. These are the heroes. These are the people that stood up. Your blue-collar men and women who bring your products, bring your food, and bring your medical supplies. I'm just here to support them and help them."

Litch's main message was that the truckers and protestors aren't leaving until their demands are met.

"We're not leaving until you can open up your businesses. We're not leaving until you can hug your best friend. We're not leaving until you can go and see your parents in a long-term care facility. And for your children to have a birthday party," she said with resounding applause from the crowd.

"This ends now and we're going to do it peacefully and we're going to do it with compassion and we're going to get through this together, everybody. I implore you to love one another, stretch your hands out to one another and help each other because we've all lost so much — but no more. Hold your hands up high Canada, we love you."

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Work-from-home order recently rescinded by WDG Public Health

Written By Paula Brown
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter



Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph (WDG) Public Health has ended its order requiring work-from-home for employees, as of Monday (Jan. 31), aligning with the province's first step in easing COVID-19 restrictions.

"In conjunction with the Province's loosening of COVID-19 [restrictions], my letter of instruction requiring remote work will be rescinded on Monday, January 31," said Dr. Nicola Mercer, medical officer of health and CEO for WDG Public Health, in statement on Jan. 28. "While remote work is no longer required, I still urge individuals, organizations and businesses to make working from home an option wherever possible."

Mercer, initially issued the notice on Dec. 16, 2021, which directed those responsible for businesses and organization to allow employees to work remotely, unless the nature of their work required

them to be on-site.

The order was a direct response to the growing number of Omicron variant cases in the region following the first reported case of the variant on Dec. 10.

The provincial government announced a three-step plan last month to begin easing COVID-19 restriction by the end of January.

The first-step in easing COVID-19 restrictions went into effect on Monday (Jan.31) seeing social gather limits increasing indoors to 10 people and outdoors to 25 people as well as a capacity limit of 50 per cent for restaurants, gyms, retailers, bingo halls, and cinemas.

Dufferin County Community Grants Program Sharing Recipient Stories

2021 Community
Grant Recipient
\$3,000
Cultural Enhancement

Rotary
Shelburne



The funds received were used to host a COVID friendly drive-in concert at the Fiddle Park in Shelburne as provide for residents and an opportunity to gather safely and enjoy live music.

Applications are being accepted now until February 4, 2022

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Streams Hub awarded \$18,000 through charitable fund

Written By Sam Odrowski

Streams Community Hub, a local youth-focused arts charity, has been awarded \$18,000 through the first-ever Greenwood Family Fund.

Streams co-founders Juli-Anne and Andrew James were presented with a cheque on Monday (Jan. 31) from Dufferin Community Foundation president Gord Gallagher and executive director Michele Fisher.

"This is extremely significant," said Juli-Anne James. "We're a small, relatively young grassroots charity and we're in a period of growth so this funding is going to go a really long way in terms of helping us to deliver on our mission to ignite learning, inspire youth, and enrich the community."

Launched in the summer of 2017, Streams Community Hub has been running seasonal programs for youth across Dufferin County focused on a variety of art disciplines that span music, theatre performance, filming and photography, visual arts, cooking and more.

After years of running on a seasonal bases, the organization announced in July of 2021 that they would be opening their first permanent location, a 3,600 square foot facility located at 305 Col. Phillips Dr. in Shelburne., meaning they would be able to provide art programs year-round.

Speaking with the Free Press, Juli-Anne said the new funding will go towards supporting the move to year-round programming, specifically the costs for class facilitators and supplies.

With the move to a permanent home, Streams will be opening more programs



PAULA BROWN PHOTO

STREAMS HUB GETS BOOST: Streams Community Hub was awarded with a cheque for \$18,000 as part of the first-ever Greenwood Family Fund. Co-founders Juli-Anne and Andrew James accepted the cheque from Dufferin Community Foundation president, Gord Gallagher, and executive director Michele Fisher in a small presentation on Monday (Jan. 31) at Streams' soon-to-be permanent facility, located at 305 Col. Phillips Dr, in Shelburne. Youth attendees and volunteers of the local art-centered charity were also in attendance to mark the milestone. (Pictured left to right: Jenna Hann, Akeylah James, Terrence Hall, Tristian Whyte, and Brody Ireton)

for youth in the community. One new aspect will be a social enterprise called Town Tees, which will teach youth about graphic design, product creation, and merchandising.

"Our goal with [Town Tees] is to give kids the opportunity for first job experience," explained Andrew.

Other new programs Streams is looking

to implement include after school programming, day-time programming to support remote learners and homeschooled children, and weekend programming to open the hub space up for community activities.

"Particularly in rural areas art curriculum is very basic and not necessarily led by the creativity of the kids. For us the significance of this facility is having a creative place where kids can come and feel free to explore different facets of the arts, and discover themselves. We want to aim to make this a very child led, youth led creative process, place, and community," said Juli-Anne.

While the funding is a significant boost

for Streams Community Hub, the grant also marks an important milestone for Dufferin Community Foundation as it is the first-ever grant awarded through the Greenwood Family Fund.

"Our purpose is to build permanently invested funds, so they earn money that we can then give away to charities. For us this is a big day because we were able to do what we've set out to do," said Gord Gallagher, president of DCF.

The Greenwood Family Fund was established in 2020 by the Greenwood family as part of Dufferin Community Foundation's donor-advised fund program. The grant was created with a focus on learning enrichment for children and youth, especially for families living in poverty.

Working together, the Greenwood family and Dufferin Community Foundation reviewed program offerings from local youth-serving organizations, with Streams Community Hub standing out amongst the others.

"One of the things that we care about as a family is helping young people learn and experience new things that will shape their futures," said Greenwood family member Amie Zukowski. "Streams Community Hub is a place where kids from every walk of life can pick up an instrument or a camera or paint brush and get really creative."

Dufferin Community Foundation by 2023 will have three donor-advised funds that will be able to provide local organizations with funding.

"Having worked in many charities during my time, I can say that it's very tough to find funding and to get funding for all of the programs you want to do," said Michele Fisher, executive director of DCF. "Each of these funds as they come to maturity and we have grants, we're going to be able to fund many more programs across Dufferin County; it's going to be a real boost for our non-profits."

Construction is well underway at the Streams Community Hub facility with a tentative opening date set for March 7.

Dufferin-Caledon receives \$425,000 in provincial funding

Written By Paula Brown
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Communities in Dufferin-Caledon are among the recipients receiving funding from the provincial government to help find more efficient ways to deliver local services to residents and businesses.

Announced on Jan. 27, Dufferin-Caledon has been allocated almost \$425,000 in funding through the Municipal Modernization program.

Communities receiving funding for projects include: the Town of Shelburne (\$81,408) and the Town of Mono (\$76,320) for service delivery and organizational review, the Township of Amaranth (\$19,080) for digital modernization, the County of Dufferin (\$49,608) for fleet management program solution, and the Town of Caledon (\$198,432) for records management.

"I am pleased that projects in these municipalities and the county have received this provincial funding," said Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones. "This money will be used to upgrade and improve processes and delivery of services that we rely on everyday."

Municipalities will be able use the funding to conduct reviews of local services and administrative operations to find efficiencies, including accelerating the creation of new housing through streamlined development approvals and working with neighboring municipalities to share services.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones

"COVID-19 has highlighted the need for municipalities to be as efficient and nimble as possible, while ensuring services remain financially sustainable today and in the future," said Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. "Through the Municipal Modernization Program, our government continues to support our municipal partners to operate more efficiently and streamline processes to deliver high-quality, sustainable services for residents and businesses, when and where they need them."

The province, through the Municipal Modernization Program, is providing over \$28 million to 322 small and rural municipalities.

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Photo Credit: Anthony Oragunye

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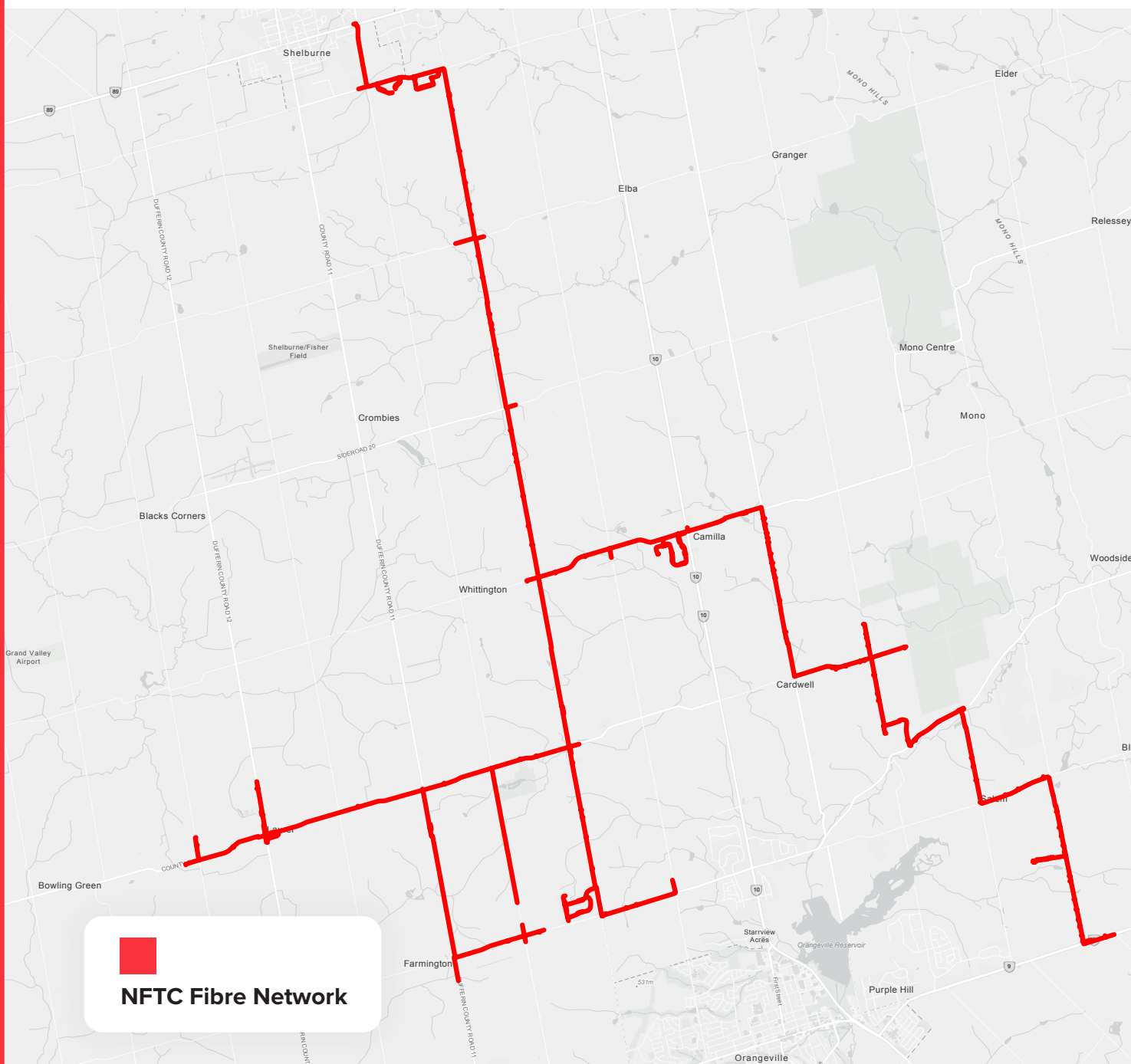
Our Feral Cat Rescue Thrift Store in Shelburne is one of the main ways we are able to raise funds to help support the cats living and medical expenses. Our organization is based solely off of volunteerism, and we are looking for more individuals to volunteer their time at the store. We are open Tuesday to Saturday 10am -4 pm, and are looking for singles, or pairs who would like to volunteer their time for a shift (or however many they are able). If you are interested, please give Irene a shout at 519.925.5805 or come visit us!

Check our facebook page to see the other kitties looking for their forever home. Donations always needed to help care for the cats as we are not funded at all, and rely on donations and fundraisers. If you would like to volunteer as well we are always appreciative.

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SHELBURNE SPORTS

Ice fishing tournament features winter fun and big prizes

Written By Brian Lockhart

While some people prefer to stay indoors during the winter months, other relish this time of year and enjoy the winter sports that are only available for a couple of months.

Snowmobiling, skiing, and outdoor skating, have a short window of opportunity every season that allows people to take advantage of freshly fallen snow and frozen lakes.

When lakes freeze over, it is time for those who are really into winter activities to head out on the ice and enjoy a day of ice fishing.

While some anglers like to come fully prepared with a portable hut, heater, auger, and a cooler full of snacks, others prefer the open air approach with a lawn chair and a warm coat and gloves.

It is a sport that takes patience. There's no guarantee you'll bring in a fish, but half the fun is just being out there on the ice.

The Island Lake Conservation Area currently has 11 inches of ice making it safe for people to venture out.

Many local residents enjoy spending time on the frozen lake and the park also attracts many visitors from out of town.

The Conservation Area hosts two fishing derbies each year.

In July it hosts the annual bass derby with prizes for the biggest catch in several categories.

Coming up on February 12, the Park will host its annual ice fishing derby.

You can register to participate and drop your fishing line in a bid to win some great cash prizes.

First prize for the largest Northern Pike is \$2,500.

Second and third prize for Northern Pike is \$500 and \$250.

If you bring in the largest Yellow Perch, you can win \$375.

The largest Black Crappie also brings in a prize of \$375.

The derby will get underway at 8:00 a.m., and wrap up at 5:00 p.m.

You must have a valid Ontario Fishing License to participate in the derby.



BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

GONE FISHIN': Anglers brave the elements and drop their lines through the ice on the lake at the Island Lake Conservation area on Saturday, January 29. The Conservation Area will be hosting its annual ice fishing derby on February 12, with cash prizes for the largest catch.

Shelburne Minor Hockey returning back to on ice play

Written By Brian Lockhart

After a 'pause' of just over three weeks, hockey clubs around the province are getting back out on the ice.

Minor hockey was forced to postpone all games, practices, and hockey activities as of January 5, when restrictions were put into place by the provincial government.

As a result, arenas have been closed, leagues postponed schedules, and hockey players had to miss several regular season games.

Due to games being missed some

leagues are extending the regular season to complete all games before heading into the playoffs. This means hockey will be played later in the year as leagues complete the schedule.

Other leagues will be picking up where they left off and completing the schedule as it is. For those leagues it means they will have a short season and the final standings will be determined by games played in that time frame.

That could benefit some teams while others will be disappointed as it will not allow

them to move up in the standings if they were starting to win.

At the Junior level, most leagues have adjusted the schedule to at least make up for some of the missing games.

The Provincial Junior Hockey League that runs Junior C hockey in the province has released a new schedule that takes the regular season to March 6. In the Carruthers division that means each team will complete a 30 game schedule, down 12 games from a normal pre-COVID 42 game schedule.

Once division championships are com-

plete and Leagues start the provincial playoffs, the Schmalz Cup championship will likely be played in June this year.

Shelburne Minor Hockey announced on January 22, that they would be returning to the ice as of January 31.

That means practices can get underway and games will be scheduled for February.

In keeping with current restrictions, the Centre Dufferin Recreation complex will be operating at 50 per cent capacity and new vaccine passports will be required for entry into the facility.

New reverend now serving Shelburne and Primrose United Churches

Written By Paula Brown
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

When Reverend Valerie Vande Wiele moved to Shelburne late last year, she felt a calling to the community despite having never visited. It's the same calling she says she felt more than 20 years ago when she made the decision to move to Canada.

"Shelburne was a great discovery," said Rev. Valerie. "I didn't know the community at all when I came here, but that's the way I answer God's call. I trust that I'm being sent to the best place I can at that time."

Rev. Valerie has served as a minister in the United Church of Canada for 15 years and in September of 2021 she took up pastoral charge of the Shelburne and Primrose United Churches.

"It has been fantastic," Rev. Valerie tells the Free Press. "It would be even better without COVID because I could meet people in person, but I have started getting involved in the community, hearing voices of where there would be a need, and where the church could get more involved."

Born in the "south, French part" of Bel-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NEW REVEREND: Reverend Valerie Vande Wiele took over pastoral charge of the Shelburne and Primrose United Churches in September of 2021

gium, Rev. Valerie made the decision to immigrate to Canada in 1996 and settled in Quebec City. Moving to Canada was an important, life-changing decision for her, one that she said allowed her to discover who she was.

Prior to moving to Canada, she worked for several years in a bank as a debt collector.

"It was very hard for me because I was constantly fighting who I was, and what I wanted to do. But it also opened my eyes to the real-

ity of the world around me and exposed me to socio-economic realities that I heard about but didn't experience first hand," said Rev. Valerie. "I discovered by doing that work the compassion for dealing with people and wanting to be there, it was very important for me and that is at the core of who I am as a minister still."

After working for years as an administrative assistant in Quebec City, Rev. Valerie took a leap of faith and began studying to become a minister. She began earning her bachelor of theology from McGill University in 2004 and completed her masters of divinity in 2008 at the United Theological College in Montreal.

In her 15 years of ministry, Rev. Valerie has served in a number of churches including those in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, Richmond, Que., and in Iroquois Ont.

She notes that she's always served communities on a "multiple point situation", meaning she's always served two or more churches at a time, as she current does with the Shelburne and Primrose United Churches.

Speaking with the Free Press about what had drawn her to the local congregation Rev. Valerie said, "It was their energy, their will-

ingness to move forward and explore church beyond the walls of the church. I want to keep working with them to not just have church behind closed door, but a church that is active in the community, supporting community initiative, and offering what we can to help."

She added that continuing that work is one of her main goals as minister at the two churches.

"I want to continue the work that the previous minister did, opening the congregation and making the church a hub for the community."

Community involvement, she specifically notes, includes working with the Shepherd's Cupboard Meals on Wheels, and visiting the local long-term care homes as well as future programs such as an after-school program for children geared towards help with homework.

When asked what she hopes to give the congregations over her time as a minister she concludes, "I want to help them realize how fantastic and generous they are, the potential they have to shine brightly in the community and to be a joyful congregation. They have that gift in themselves."

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