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PAULA BROWN PHOTO

FREEZING FOR A REASON: Special Olympics Dufferin coaches and athletes cheer with Polar Plunge banners in front of the Dufferin OPP Detachment in Orangeville. The Polar Plunge for Special Olympics is running from Feb. 14 until March 21. Community members can take part in the event by registering online at www.polarplunge.ca, posting a fun video using #PlungeON, and fundraising with friends and family. All proceed raised go directly to Special Olympics Ontario.

Special Olympics polar plunge kicks off

Written By Paula Brown
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Local law enforcement and leaders experienced a chilly splash this long weekend as they took part in the annual Polar Plunge in support of Special Olympic athletes.

The local Polar Plunge was held on Friday (Feb. 18) at the Dufferin OPP Detachment in Orangeville and saw a small group of seven participants 'freezing for a reason' as Dufferin-Caledon Special Olympic athletes doused them with buckets of water.

"It feels great to be able to have both the athletes as well as some of the important role models within our community here," said Dufferin OPP Const. Jeff McLean, one of the organizers of the plunge. "It's a good first step towards hopefully what we can do bigger and better next year."

The first local polar plunge was held in 2018 and quickly became an annual tradition hosted by the Shelburne Police Service (SPS) alongside the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) for Special Olympics, which was restarted in 2011. After the disbanding of the Shelburne Police Service in 2021, McLean, as the primary organizer of the event, told the Free Press he was in the works of continuing the event with Dufferin OPP.

With McLean and Sarah Dereski, a provincial zone coordinator for the LETR, the 2022 Polar Plunge returned for a fifth year.



PAULA BROWN PHOTO

SUPPORTING A GOOD CAUSE: Special Olympic athletes and coaches from Dufferin-Caledon doused local law enforcement and leaders with buckets of water on Friday (Feb. 18) at the Dufferin OPP Detachment in Orangeville as they took part in the Polar Plunge for Special Olympics.

"It's definitely a good feeling. The number of contacts that I've made not only within Shelburne, but also Dufferin County and now we get to expand on it, on the sponsors and on the fundraising; it's good to be able to continue that," said McLean. "Now that we're bigger than a small town and cover a whole county we can make it bigger and better."

"It's one of my favourite events of the year with law enforcement. You're cold for a couple minutes, but it is worth every second to see the smiles on the athletes faces and the money that we are able to raise through this," said Dereski.

"Just to be able to support them in the community and in their sports means so much."

A provincial wide donation goal of \$350,000 has been set in honour of the 35th anniversary of the Polar Plunge, with over \$35,000 raised at the time of print.

Special Olympics Dufferin coaches and athletes were on hand for the plunge on Friday, with the role of 'plunging' the participants with water.

Kurt Carlson, volunteer coordinator for the local chapter said the Polar Plunge is their main fundraising event of the year.

"As a Special Olympics chapter, if we participate in it, we get a portion of the proceeds and for the last three years we've been one of the top 10 teams in Ontario for fundraising," said Carlson. "It's a great family to belong with."

Ryan Macbean, a medalist in swimming, was one of the local athletes lending a hand at the plunge and said the support from the community means a lot to the athletes.

Jason Scorcia, a medalist in soccer and golf from Caledon added, "I always go to the events, they're a number one support for Special Olympics and I always help back."

The Polar Plunge for Special Olympics is running from Feb. 14 until March 21. Community members can take part in the event by registering online at polarplunge.ca, posting a fun video using #PlungeON, and fundraising with friends and family. All proceed raised go directly to Special Olympics Ontario.

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FEATURED ITEMS

Melanchthon councillor serves mayor with libel notice

Written By Paula Brown
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Tension is bubbling over within Melanchthon Township Council as a councillor takes potential legal actions against the mayor.

During their meeting last Thursday (Feb. 17), Melanchthon Mayor Darren White said himself and the township had been served a notice of libel by Coun. Margaret Mercer. The notice refers to posts made on White's Facebook and letters from residents in council agendas for public question period, stating they have been defamatory and malicious, resulting in Mercer suffering damages.

While issues for years have plagued the council process, the specific circumstance Melanchthon Council finds itself in stems back to a meeting in late January and has led to the resignation of the township's planning consultant and a council member.

Jan. 25 Special Meeting

Melanchthon Council scheduled a special meeting for Jan. 25 to discuss a by-law regarding diversified on-farm uses.

Coun. Mercer moved to adjourn and go back to council moments into the meeting as she questioned the version of the by-law as not being what council asked for.

She pointed to changed hours of operation, the distance to a non-participating lot line, and ensuring non-farm businesses have 70 per cent of the workable land as examples.

"In short this bylaw does not reflect the wishes of this Council," she said.

The motion was seconded by then Coun. Wayne Hannon.

White noted that the bylaw would not be the final draft, and could still go back to Council for further discussion and refinement following the meeting. He added that he did not agree with adjourning.

Coun. James McLean said he also had concerns with the bylaw and would be fine with adjourning.

"What is currently being proposed is not something clearly the council is comfortable with," he said. "I'm not sure if there's value in talking about it in its present form."

Deputy Mayor Dave Besley said he had

no comment. During Melanchthon Council's Feb. 3 meeting, Besley declared a pecuniary interest.

Town Planner Resignation and White's Jan. 26 Post

Shortly after the Jan. 25 special meeting the township's planning consultant, Chris Jones, provided his notice of resignation effective immediately.

Speaking with the Free Press, White said he believes the questioning at the Jan. 25 meeting to be directly related to Jones' resignation.

"I think that was sort of the straw that broke the camel's back," he said. "I mean, you can only question integrity of your professional staff so many times before they decide they're just going to leave."

Without a town planner, Melanchthon is not able to accept any planning applications, and building permits are paused as they head into spring; a popular time for applications.

Following the meeting, White took to Facebook on Jan. 26 to provide residents with his comments on the previous night's meeting.

"I believe that the way this was handled by some on council was clearly pre planned and designed to make staff and our planner look like they have done something incorrectly," he wrote in the post. "Nothing could be farther from the truth. I want to be clear here, in my opinion, our staff and contract planner have always worked with the best interests of every resident of this municipality in mind."

White added that the same proposed bylaw was presented in a committee of the whole meeting in October of 2021 and voted on to move to a public meeting on Nov. 4.

"There is no requirement that a new bylaw had to be passed at that meeting and what should have happened is that the public meeting proceed, gather all the input and comments from those attending and then use that data to make educated and informed decision on any proposed changes."

White also said adjourning the meeting was an affront to the council process and an insult to residents.

Frustrated Residents

Melanchthon Council held their next regular council meeting of Feb. 3 where on the agenda a number of residents submitted letters regarding the special meeting. In the letters, residents shared their feelings on the adjournment of the meeting saying they

were "embarrassed", "disgusted", "appalled" and even calling the meeting itself a "waste of everyone's time".

Karren Wallace, a resident of Melanchthon and chair of grassroots organization NDACT, alleged in a letter that Mercer called the OPP to complain about her emails.

"She requested the OPP come to my home to tell me that she did not wish to receive any of my emails," she wrote in the letter.

Wallace also shared on Facebook that the now former Coun. Hannon emailed her workplace on Feb.2 requesting a review of social media posts, specifically in regard to workplace harassment.

Hannon resigned from council on Feb. 15, effective immediately.

In his resignation letter Hannon wrote that while he intended to remain on council until Nov. 30 a "recent opportunity has come forward and I am pursuing it."

New Drama Old News

Discourse within Melanchthon Council had existed for quite some time.

In November of 2020, former council member David Thwaites resigned following accusation of 'hate'.

"I did not sign on to serve where my character and integrity would be attacked when all I have done is serve with character, hard work, and often sacrificing to fulfill my duties and responsibilities," wrote Thwaites in his resignation letter.

Conflict has also been present between Mercer and White in the past.

In 2020, Mercer alleged White breached the code of conduct and submitted a complaint to the integrity commissioner. The integrity commissioner deemed White did not breach the code of conduct, with the investigation costing the township over \$2,000.

Election

The conflict within Melanchthon Council has come to a head as the township prepares for a municipal election in October. The current council members were all acclaimed to the council positions aside from the deputy mayor role, which was put to a vote.

White said he believes the issues council currently have will impact the election.

"It's going to make a lot more people take notice and as a result we'll have a lot more people putting their name in to run for Council," he said.

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Family Day Skate cancelled due to melted ice, skating track closed

Written By Paula Brown
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter



Melting ice put a freeze on the Family Day outdoor skate organized by the Town of Shelburne this past Monday (Feb.21).

The Town of Shelburne was scheduled to host the outdoor community skate event at the new Hyland Skating Track located at Natasha Paterson Memorial Park, but announced its cancellation on Feb. 17 due to weather and the tracks condition.

Although the event was cancelled a number of local residents showed up at the new track prepared to skate only to find the park empty.

Local resident, Jessica Weatherall planned to attend the Family Day event with her husband and young daughter, who they wanted to teach to skate.

Weatherall said that while the cancellation was initially disappointing, it was also understandable.

"It's kind of mild outside, but that happens. Can't control the weather," she said.

Speaking with the Free Press about the opening of the new Hyland Skating Track, Weatherall said, "It's great. It makes it available and open for everybody to skate, especially with the current vaccination climate out there. It's nice to have something to bring the community together."

The Hyland Skating Track officially opened to the community in early February, after colder weather and maintenance from Town staff had the ice in good enough shape to skate. The track, which is located at Natasha Paterson Memorial Park is around 400 metres long and runs a path around the outside of the park.

While the skating loop opened to the public only three short weeks ago, the Town said it will now be closed for the season.

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Invoking Emergencies Act sets 'dangerous precedent': Seeback

Written By Sam Odrowski

Canada will remain in a state of emergency up to mid-March at the latest.

A 185-151 vote in the House of Commons on Monday evening approved the Emergencies Act for an additional 30 days, despite the three-week "Freedom Convoy" protest in Ottawa being fully dismantled over the weekend, and border blockades being cleared over a week ago.

The Conservatives and Bloc Québécois opposed the motion to approve the act, while the NDP, Green Party, and Liberal Party supported it.

Dufferin—Caledon Conservative MP Kyle Seeback, who voted against the motion, said he's most disappointed that it was made into a confidence vote by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, so if it failed an election would be triggered.

"I think the reason why this passed is because the Prime Minister threatened to have an election over it, and I think on something as serious as choosing to invoke the Emergencies Act – he did a disservice to the country by doing that."

Seeback says since the Emergencies Act was invoked on Feb. 14, he's firmly stood against it. He told the Free Press when it comes to there being an emergency, national in scope – he doesn't see it.

"I don't think the emergencies Act should ever have been invoked. The only argument I could see would be the border crossings, but the border crossings, most of them were cleared before the Emergencies Act was invoked, and the last one was on its way to being taken care of," he remarked.

"Extending it for up to 30 days when there are no border closings, when everything's been dealt with in Ottawa, to me is really irresponsible, and it sets a very dangerous and authoritarian precedent."

As a former lawyer, Seeback said precedent isn't just important for case law but also parliamentary procedure for the government.

"When you set the precedent to invoke the emergencies act so low, that is, I think, a dangerous precedent that other governments can look at to potentially justify other actions, which is why I was against this being done in the first place," he noted. "The last time we invoked measures like this, were during wars, or during an actual terrorism crisis with the FLQ."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Dufferin—Caledon MP Kyle Seeback voted against the Emergencies Act with the rest of the Conservative Party on Monday.

Seeback also noted that many legal and constitutional experts agree with his position, including the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, who has launched a lawsuit over the Emergencies Act being invoked.

With respect to how the Emergencies Act is being used to seize bank accounts of people who donated to the Freedom Convoy, Seeback expressed concerns.

Chilliwack-Hope MP Mark Strahl said a single mom from his riding who works a minimum wage job had her bank account frozen for donating \$50 to the convoy when it was 100 per cent legal.

"These powers should absolutely not be used to target individual Canadians who decided to support a protest," said Seeback. "Imagine the precedent that sets – that if you support a protest in this country, you could risk having your bank account seized by a future government."

A House of Commons committee heard on Tuesday that donations as small as \$20, made after Feb. 15 could result in donor's bank accounts being frozen.

Parliament will reconvene on Monday (Feb. 28), and at that time, Seeback said the Conservatives will be introducing a motion to revoke the Emergencies Act.

Justin Trudeau has said the act won't be used a day longer than it is necessary.

He also noted that the measures are geographically targeted as well as reasonable and proportionate to the threats it sets out to address.

County terminating emergency declaration

Written By Paula Brown
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The County of Dufferin will terminate its emergency declaration on March 1 after being in effect for almost two years.

"We're thankful for Dufferin County residents' diligence and continued commitment to the fight against COVID-19. As key public health and health system indicators continue to improve, we feel confident about terminating our Emergency Declaration," said Warden Wade Mills. "We continue to encourage everyone to get vaccinated and follow public health guidance so we can preserve and protect the positive progress we've achieved thus far."

In a press release issued on Tuesday (Feb. 22), the County said the termination of the emergency declaration comes following consultation with Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph (WDG) Public Health.

"Dufferin County has been a vital partner in the fight against COVID-19 since 2020. Without a doubt, the contributions of County leaders and staff have protected Dufferin residents and positioned the County and our region to exit the pandemic on the strongest possible footing," said Dr. Nicola Mercer, CEO and Medical Officer of Health for

WDG Public Health. "I have been grateful for the support and wisdom of the County. The County has prioritized ensuring residents had access to vaccines and timely information to protect them against this virus."

"As we look to the future, WDG Public Health will continue to work hand in hand with Dufferin County and all local municipalities to keep our region safe, healthy, and prosperous," she said.

Dufferin County first declared an emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic on March 26 of 2020. The emergency declaration, in accordance with the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, provided the Warden of Dufferin County with authority to take actions and make orders they considered necessary to protect property and the health, safety, and welfare of residents.

The City of Guelph and Wellington County, both of whom fall under the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health service delivery area, will join Dufferin County in the termination of their emergency declarations as of March 1.

According to WDG Public Health, over 80 per cent of eligible Dufferin County residents (ages 5 and up) are fully vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine, and over 45 per cent are fully vaccinated with a booster dose.



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Where's the emergency?

SAM ODROWSKI
FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR



Our government is out of control. The borders have been cleared of blockades for over a week and the "Freedom Convoy" protestors were cleared from the area surrounding Parliament Hill over the weekend, yet Prime Minister Justin Trudeau still thinks there's a national emergency.

A 185-151 vote in the House of Commons on Monday (Feb. 21) allowed the Emergency Act to be extended until mid-March, giving extraordinary power to the federal government to bypass typical democratic processes.

This is the first time the act has been invoked since it was created in 1988, and its predecessor the War Time Measures Act, was only used during the World Wars and FLQ crisis – instances that posed an actual threat to national security.

Trudeau also made the Emergency Act vote a matter of confidence, so if it failed an election would be triggered. This forced some Liberal MPs who publicly opposed the extension of the Emergency Act to vote for it, and undoubtedly had an overall impact on the vote.

Among many things, the act allows the government to freeze people's bank accounts on a whim, if they are suspected to support or be involved with the Ottawa protest.

Even donations as small as \$20 to the Freedom Convoy have resulted in bank accounts being frozen.

"If you are involved in this protest, we will actively look to identify you and follow up with financial sanctions and criminal charges," Ottawa police tweeted Sunday.

Interim Ottawa Police Chief Steve Bell said the investigation around those who attended the Freedom Convoy will continue for months to come. Noting, "we will hold people accountable for taking our streets over".

This type of overriding of due process would perhaps have some ground to stand on if Freedom Convoy protestors were causing death and destruction of property, but they weren't. They were simply parked in the wrong place for too long, making noise, and causing a disruption.

It's incredibly short-sighted for the government to claim a national emergency when, if asked, 99 per cent of Canadians would say their daily life hasn't been impacted one bit. Most people wouldn't even know that it's happening if they didn't watch the news. National security isn't at risk.

Of course, I have sympathy for residents in Ottawa who live near Parliament Hill and had their lives disrupted by the protest, but no one's being held hostage. It's not a national emergency.

The freezing of financial assets has been criticized by many worldwide, including Edward Snowden, famous for blowing the whistle on the National Security Agency's (NSA) massive surveillance programs on American citizens.

He tweeted, "Governments claiming the authority to 'freeze people's bank accounts' because they want to crush a protest movement is tyrannical and obscene. If you would oppose China or Russia doing it, you must oppose Canada doing it."

Snowden's tweet also thanked the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA), who recently announced they're pursuing litigation against the federal government for invoking the Emergency Act.

The not-for-profit association acknowledged the difficult, disruptive and complex situation in Ottawa, and that marginalized communities have experienced racial or homophobic intimidation by some members of the convoy, but the government did not meet the high burden necessary

to invoke the Emergencies Act.

"Governments already have the legal authority to address difficult situations and do so all the time. This use of the Emergencies Act is unnecessary, unjustifiable and unconstitutional," said the CCLA in a statement.

"Our society needs peaceful assembly – a critical democratic tool – even though not every person agrees with the content of every movement."

The CCLA noted that some protests are disruptive, and it's possible for a gathering to be both disruptive and also peaceful, and nonviolent.

While many might not agree with the protests aims, which are to drop all COVID-19 restrictions and vaccine mandates, or the conduct of certain members of the protest, we should all respect freedom of association and freedom to protest. We must protect this right, regardless of our opinions on what people are protesting, so long as they're not calling for violence.

It sets a dangerous precedent when the government gets to decide what type of protests are appropriate.

The coverage of the Freedom Convoy here in Canada, which has been categorized as a "siege", "occupation", and "insurrection" by some within the mainstream media, is in stark contrast to how arguably more disruptive protests were handled and labelled in the United States.

While the U.S is a totally different country, mainstream media at large provided positive coverage of the Capitol Hill Occupied protest in Seattle, otherwise known as CHOP or CHAZ, which created an autonomous zone or "Cop Free Co-op" as it was called, over six city blocks for three weeks (June 8 to July 1, 2020). This was in protest of police brutality after the murder of George Floyd.

There were five shootings over the three weeks that CHOP existed, of which a 19-year-old and 16-year-old were killed, and a 14-year-old was in critical condition from gunshot wounds.

Dozens of apartment buildings and businesses within the autonomous zone were vandalized, and some were even taken over. But during all of this, GoFundMe allowed money to flow to the protest and even promoted CHOP on Twitter, after the multiple shootings and two deaths.

This is in stark contrast to the \$10 million of funds that were frozen by GoFundMe for the Freedom Convoy, and the millions more in funds our government is now trying to freeze from GiveSendGo, another crowdfunding platform.

Canada's Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland announced new regulations for crowdfunding platforms, forcing them to register with FINTRAC, so nothing like this can happen again.

Now, only government approved protests can receive crowdfunding.

It's also concerning to see the list of individuals who donated to GiveSendGo being doxed online, which has resulted in many people losing their jobs.

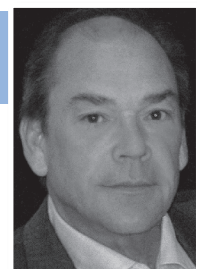
A senior staffer for MPP Sylvia Jones was on the list of donors and has since been terminated. Police who donated to it are also being investigated and will face repercussions.

It's shocking to think someone who opposes COVID-19 mandates and was motivated to privately donate to the protest, could now be faced with trouble securing future employment, as well as have their bank account frozen.

It's a scary time to be Canadian.

A picture doesn't always have 1000 words

BRIAN LOCKHART
FROM THE SECOND ROW



There is a rather famous painting by American artist, Andrew Wyeth, titled Christina's World, that now hangs in the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

At first glance, you might see a young girl in a 1940's style dress, reclining in a field, her head turned away from the viewer as she looks up to her house located on a hill some distance away.

It's a visually interesting piece, and you may wonder what the girl is thinking and why she is in the middle of the field?

If you leave it at that, and move on to the next painting, you won't know the whole story based on what you have just seen.

If you take a further look and hear the backstory, Christina's World becomes an entirely different work of art.

The sky is dark, the field brown, and the weather-beaten house is isolated and lonely.

The model, the real Christina, is not a young girl. She's a woman who was in her 50's at the time it was painted in 1948.

She's not just relaxing in the field on a nice warm summer day. She's disabled, and can't walk. For some reason she was firmly against using a wheelchair and she crawled everywhere she went.

The artist was inspired after looking out a window of his home one day and seeing Christina crawling across an open field.

That painting takes on a whole different meaning when you know the whole story.

The entire trucker's protest that clogged Ottawa streets and caused chaos at some border crossings seems to have been painted in the light of a very narrow point of view based on assumptions and in some cases, outright fabrications.

At first, I was with truckers when this all started, based on their concern over mandates and quarantines regarding truckers

returning to the country.

After all, the truckers are working and bringing in supplies and keeping commerce moving, while I have had friends fly to Caribbean Islands and return without any concern for spreading viruses, and little interest by the federal government to control travel – as long as it's done by air.

Admittedly, by the time the Ottawa protest was a couple of weeks old, I wasn't sure exactly what was still being protested. I thought they had made the point and it was time to go home.

When it was decided the police were going to end the protest by physically removing them, I didn't have a lot of sympathy for the protesters. The police had issued warnings several days in an advance and that should have been enough for most protesters to realize they had accomplished something and it was time to go home.

If you were arrested after that point, well, you're going to have to blame yourself.

However, it is the apparent follow up by police that will certainly need some scrutiny.

Protesting in itself is not a crime. In in a democratic society, it is your right to have 'freedom of peaceful assembly' and 'freedom of association.' You also have 'freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression.' This is all part of the Fundamental Freedoms in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The Ottawa police stated, "If you are involved in this protest, we will actively look to identify you and follow up with financial sanctions and criminal charges."

That is a scary statement. Since when does just being part of a protest constitute 'criminal behaviour'?

Why are police threatening 'financial sanctions'?

It is the job of the police to enforce laws, not meddle with people's bank accounts and punish them without trial.

Why is anyone's bank accounts being frozen in the first place?

Even people charged and convicted of the most serious crimes in this country do not have their bank accounts frozen. If a murderer is not subject to financial hardship, why would a protester whose only crime was to be seen on a police video tape standing on a sidewalk and holding sign be punished without a court date or conviction and be denied being able to buy groceries or pay their rent or mortgage?

When asked if they would go after protesters who had already gone home, the police

responded in the affirmative that they would.

If you happen to be walking down a sidewalk in Ottawa and show up on police video, you may be receiving a visit sometime in the next few months.

The protest is over. Unless police have knowledge and evidence of an actual crime taking place, there is no justification for going after people who exercised their rights.

Just like Christina's World, a simple glance at the situation does not tell the whole story.

Our Readers Write

Taking away Canadian pride

I have been thinking a lot about something I noticed driving along Main Street. Last year, there was a walk through town for "Black Lives Matter", and I noticed someone has been hired to encourage all types of people. In that light, I am writing my first-ever Letter to the Editor.

Obviously, the Town believes all lives matter, and that everyone deserves respect, as do I. There is a sign on Main Street with Trudeau's name and an obscene gesture. Mr.

Trudeau is not my favourite person, but he deserves respect as much as anyone, especially as he is the head of our country.

I don't know the person who put that sign on his porch but, if I put up a sign stating "I hate _____" and filled in a racial slur about his ethnicity, I would expect the community and Town would rise up and demand that I take it down.

Continued on Page 5

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License plate sticker and renewal fees being eliminated

Written By PAULA BROWN
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Ontario drivers of passenger vehicles, light duty trucks, motorcycles and mopeds will no longer face licence plate renewal fees and plate sticker requirements.

Premier Doug Ford announced at a news conference in Richmond Hill on Tuesday (Feb. 22) that the Ontario government would be eliminating licence plate renewal fees and stickers effective March 13.

“As the cost of living continues to go up, our government is cutting costs for families to make life more affordable,” said Ford. “Eliminating the fee to renew your licence plate and refunding the cost of doing so for



the past two years is a concrete way we can put and keep more money in the pockets of hard-working Ontarians.”

Ford said the government will be refunding all licence plate sticker fees that drivers bought from March 2020 and onward.

“This means over 7.5 million vehicle owners can expect the refund,” he said.

To receive a refund, drivers who have recently moved will need to make sure the address on their driver’s licence or vehi-

cle permit is up-to-date online or by phone with Service Ontario at 1-888-333-0049 by March 7.

Drivers will also need to pay any outstanding fees, fines or tolls.

Ontarian drivers will receive a cheque in the mail starting at the end of March and throughout the month of April, said Ford.

While individuals with passenger vehicles, light duty trucks, motorcycles and mopeds are eligible for the refund, companies or business that own these types of vehicles are not eligible for refunds between the period of March 2020 and March 2022. Renewal fees will be eliminated for companies and businesses.

Currently, renewing a licence plate costs \$120 a year for passenger vehicles

in southern Ontario and \$60 per year in northern Ontario.

Ford said moving forward drivers will still need to renew their licence plates every one or two years to confirm insurance is valid and any outstanding tolls or municipal fines are paid, but that no sticker will be required.

Scraping the licence plate renewal fee and sticker program will cost the province over a \$1 billion in revenue each year.

“We’re just putting that back into your pocket, and it’s about affordability,” said Ford.

Ahead of Tuesday’s news conference, Ford announced on Feb. 18 that the provincial government would be removing tolls on Highways 412 and 418 effective April 5.

MP Kyle Seeback named Shadow Minister for Environment and Climate Change

Dufferin-Caledon MP Kyle Seeback has been named the Shadow Minister for Environment and Climate Change, as part of the Conservative Shadow Cabinet for the first session of the 44th Parliament on February 22.

The 44th Parliament will resume sitting on February 28.

“I’m both humbled and honoured to be accepting this new role,” said Seeback. “I want to thank our interim leader, Candice Bergen, for putting her faith and trust in me to hold the current Trudeau government accountable for their failed leadership on the environment and climate change. Canadians want to see a real plan of action, not more rhetoric. We can tackle climate change while protecting jobs and growing the economy.”

In speaking with the Citizen, Seeback noted that fighting against the carbon tax will be his focus as Shadow Minister. He said the tax has been a difficult added cost for many people across Canada, including some of his constituents here in Dufferin-Caledon.

“We get calls and emails from people who are really struggling because there has been a significant increase in, for example, the

cost to heat your home,” he said. “We had an email from an elderly lady who said I have to keep my home near freezing, in order to be able to afford my heating bill, and the carbon tax is not helping.”

A Shadow Minister is a member of the Opposition chosen by the Leader of the Opposition and has the responsibility of scrutinizing and keeping a close eye on the work of a specific department of the government and the individual minister of that department. The Shadow Minister also puts forward and explains opposition policies.

The top-level shadow ministers then form a Shadow Cabinet, which meets regularly to develop these policies. As Shadow Minister for Environmental and Climate Change, Seeback will be scrutinizing Environmental and Climate Change Minister Steven Guilbeault.

Seeback previously served as Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. He also served as Deputy Shadow Minister for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, as part of the Conservative Shadow Cabinet for the first session of the 43rd Parliament under then-leader Andrew Scheer.

“We need to be working with the provinces to identify technological solutions to address climate change while investing in Canadians,” said Seeback.

“The Trudeau government’s approach isn’t working. Canada needs an environmental plan that not only works for Canadians, but also respects the jurisdiction of the provinces to ensure provincial governments can stand behind it that will allow us to actually meet our climate change goals. I’m eager to tackle the difficult work that lies ahead in leading our country towards a greener, more prosperous future.”

Continued from Page 4

Taking away Canadian pride

I would expect the same action about a hate sign about our Prime Minister (or anyone). This kind of thing is taking away a lot of my pride about being a Canadian.

Susan Spires
Shelburne

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4. Commander in David's army
5. Dignify
6. Cordwood measure
7. Bath item
8. Score for Pele
9. Each and every
10. Set ablaze
11. Slacken
12. Culture medium
13. Marsh bird
14. Frost, e.g.
25. Clock feature
27. Small
29. Stoat's kin
31. Be of use
32. Soup server
34. For fear that
36. Church official
37. On ship
38. Laugh
39. Theme
40. Baby's garment
41. Gas pump number
42. Improved
44. Awry
49. Hilo howdy
50. Pigment
52. Plummeted
55. Suspiciously alert
57. Trace
59. Attache
62. Unexpected boon
64. Wrestling hold
68. Testy
69. Stiff
71. Speak
72. Gaucho's tool
73. Drawn from a keg: 2 wds.
74. Presidential refusal
75. Shackle
76. John Doe, e.g.
77. Part of a dollar
78. Tense
82. Tarzan's chum
83. Provoke

ACROSS

1. "___ Loves You"
4. Teasing taunt
8. Chafe
12. Deadly reptile
15. Iced beverage
16. Cognizant about
17. Hodgepodge
18. Thick substance
19. Scrap
20. Afresh
21. Choir part
22. Exist
23. "___ Got Sixpence"
24. Northern
26. Herring
28. Salon offering
30. Chime
31. Nautical position
33. Adverse
35. Benefit

40. Receiver
42. Rye or whole wheat, e.g.
43. Spoonbill's kin
44. Candle parts
45. Computer transmission: hyph.
46. Clothes
47. Dock rodent
48. Diplomat's skill
51. Staff symbol
53. A Khan
54. Milky jewel
56. Sweepstakes
58. Too soon
60. Maui goose
61. Fatty liquid
62. Soar
63. Novice
65. Former
66. "___ Window" (Hitchcock film)

67. Brace
 70. Continental currency
 74. Imitation leather
 77. Red shade
 79. Lightweight metal
 80. Distinctive period
 81. Keep
 84. Venerable
 85. Produce lace
 86. Turkey type
 87. Accessible
 88. Make a ringing sound
 89. Zeta follower
 90. Less than two
 91. Barber's call
 92. Swirl
 93. Type of music
- DOWN**
1. Expose
 2. Throw
 3. Ardent

SHELBURNE SPORTS



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PAULA BROWN PHOTO

ELIMINATION GAME: The Shelburne Muskies are done for the season after taking a 9-2 loss to the Ripley Wolves in game four of their best-of seven playoff series. The Muskies lost the series in four games with the final game taking place in Ripley on February 18.

Muskies done for the season after loss to Ripley Wolves

Written By Brian Lockhart

The Shelburne Muskies are done for the season after losing their first-round playoff series against the Ripley Wolves.

The series ended with a 9-2 win for Ripley in game four on Wolves home ice on Friday, February 18.

After a regular season that landed them in the number eight spot in the standings, the Muskies had an 8-9 record and 16 points after 17 games.

The regular season was interrupted in January when government restrictions closed arenas around the province.

As a result, leagues had to make a decision whether to extend the season or continue where they left off.

The WOAA made the decision to finalize the standings based on winning percentage and go directly into playoffs. That meant the Muskies were up against the first place Ripley Wolves in the first round.

Game one of the series got underway on February 4 in Ripley and ended with a 7-1 win for the Wolves.

The series was in Shelburne at the Centre Dufferin Recreation Complex on Saturday, February 5, for game two. The Muskies were trailing 2-0 in the series after taking a 6-2 loss in that game.

The third game of the series was postponed due to weather so the series was back in Shelburne on February 12.

After giving up a 5-3 loss in that game, the Muskies had one more chance to keep the series alive, but the final outcome in game four meant the Shelburne squad could get out the golf clubs and start looking for some post-season fun.

All senior games scheduled for Saturday, February 19, were postponed due to bad weather across the province.

In the other WOAA AA championship series, the Minto 81's are leading the Clinton Radars 3-1 in their series.

The Seaforth Centenaires will advance after winning their series over the Durham Thundercats in five games.

The Tavistock Royals will advance to the next round after winning their series with the Saugeen Shores Winterhawks in six games.

OMHA provides hotel tips for hockey players

Written By Brian Lockhart

For many young hockey players, their first experience staying at a hotel is when their team is on the road for a tournament.

The Ontario Minor Hockey Association is offering tips to players to have a successful hotel experience when away from home.

Spending time with your teammates and friends during a road trip is exciting, but there's a lot more that should go into hotel selection than just finding the first one available.

Getting a good night's sleep is key for playing hockey with a high level of performance

Finding a hotel with comfortable bed helps make sure that getting rest is counting for something.

Staying in a hotel presents a few chal-

lenges for young players not used to the experience.

The mattress is different, the pillows aren't the same, and the temperature and layout are all new. It may be tough to immediately adjust.

A study about sleep while travelling showed that half of your brain may remain alert when you sleep in a new location – at least for the first night. You should give yourself a few extra minutes to get into your routing while on the road.

A different schedule for each day of a tournament will make it harder to get into a bedtime routine.

You should avoid high intensity activities before bed and give yourself time to relax and wind down.

Stick to your team's travel curfew.

Continued on Page 9

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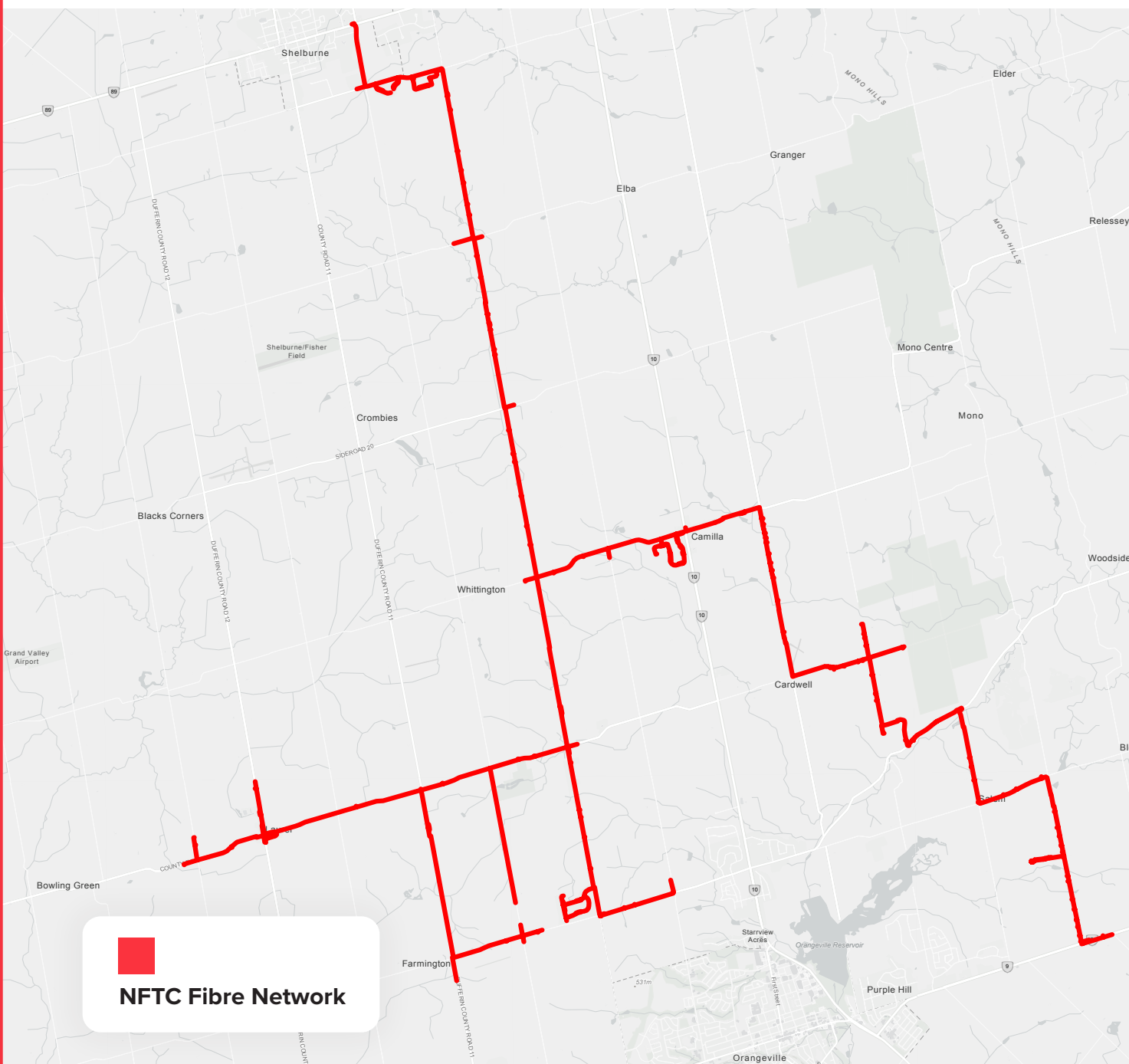
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INEZ RUTH MCINTYRE



Inez Ruth McIntyre of Amaranth passed away peacefully at Headwaters Health Care Centre after a short illness on Thursday, February 17, 2022 in her 94th year. Loving wife of the late John Ross McIntyre. Cherished mother of David (Francine), Bonnie (Ron) and Diane (Paul). Devoted grandmother of Peter (Sara), Janet (Ian), Jack, Robbie (Maryann), Jasmine (Ryan), Karren (Shayne), Reg (Kayla) and Aimée (Jason) and 13 great-grandchildren. Predeceased by her siblings Joy, Bruce, Dave and Agnes. A private family service was held in the Jack & Thompson Funeral Home chapel. Spring Interment at Shelburne Cemetery. If desired, donations to the Alzheimer's Society, Heart & Stroke Foundation or Trinity United Church would be appreciated. Online condolences may be placed at www.jackandthompsonfuneralhome.com.

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Regional restrictions on recreation/sport facilities being lifted soon

Written By Sam Odrowski

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health's top doctor is soon rescinding her Letter of Instruction regarding proof of vaccination requirements at facilities used for sports and recreational fitness activities.

Dr. Nicola Mercer's letter went into effect on Sept. 23, 2021, in alignment with the provincial COVID-19 vaccine passport program, but with the program being lifted March 1, WDG Public Health is following suit.

The lifting of the Letter of Instruction is welcomed news for Orangeville based phys-

iotherapist Peggy Bond and about 20 per cent of her patients who aren't vaccinated against COVID-19. They've been unable to access fall prevention programs, stroke specific programs, and exercise programs for people with COPD or osteoporosis, offered at rec centres/sports facilities.

"People that used to be enrolled in these programs twice a week, sometimes once a week to maintain and prevent decline were severely impacted," she said. "I've had some people who access me who are paying privately for me to do an [in-home] program with them but the vast majority have been stuck not doing anything."

The key benefit of allowing access to the venues that run programs is preventing further decline, according to Bond.

"We know that with those particular diseases, especially COPD, which is a progressive declining respiratory disease, that people need continued activity to prevent decline, prevent mortality. But also, to prevent cost to the healthcare system because of course, they're going to be the ones that have to go into hospital more often and have more interventions," she explained.

"Same thing with strokes, people that have strokes tend to that have worse balance, so they're falling more. So again, they're going to lose function, so they'll be less likely to be able to live independently, and require

increased levels of care, and also more medical intervention. We've got our people that have osteoporosis, they need to do weight bearing exercise, so again, access to facilities where they're going to be able to have equipment where they can do that sort of thing is great."

Bond said her patients who have less serious health problems are also happy to see the Letter of Instruction lifting.

"A lot of people impacted were seniors, that just were actively engaging in a program, let's say at Alder Recreation Center, like their aquafit program for their arthritis or Zumba for their balance, stuff like that," she said. "They were just doing it to prevent issues from getting bad enough that that they would need either to take medicine, or to perhaps look at getting things like knee replacements and surgeries."

Over the nearly six months that the Letter of Instruction has been in effect, Bond said she saw a lot of her impacted patients' health decline, and it will take some time for them to recover, but she's thrilled they'll be able to get back into their routines.

"I think that it's a great decision, and I'm grateful that they [WDG Public Health] did that because this is going to help the overall health of our community, and overall decrease the impact on health care because this is available," she noted.

NOTICE OF A COMPLETE APPLICATION FOR AN OFFICIAL PLAN AND ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT

RECEIPT OF COMPLETE APPLICATION

TAKE NOTICE that the Township of Melancthon has received a complete application from Duivenvoorden Haulage Ltd. (DHL) to amend the Township's Official Plan and Municipal Zoning By-law 12-79. The application affects lands located in Part of East Half of Lot 13 and the East Half of Lot 14, Concession 4 O.S. (4th Line) in the Township of Melancthon (see attached Key Map). The purpose of the applications are to redesignate and rezone lands for the purpose of expanding existing pit operations currently utilized by DHL.

AND PURSUANT to Section 34 (10) of the Planning Act, the application file is available for review at the Municipal Office. Please visit the Township's website or contact the Clerk to arrange to review this file.

DETAILS OF THE APPLICATION FOR OFFICIAL PLAN AND ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT

The purpose of the proposed amendments is to redesignate and rezone lands having a land area of approximately 44.55 hectares (110.2 acres) located in Part of Lots 13 and 14, Concession 4 O.S. (4th Line O.S) for the purpose of opening a new mineral aggregate (pit) operation to the north of the existing DHL pit operation.

This application will also be subject to an application under the Aggregate Resources Act (ARA) to obtain a license for a Class A, Category 3 gravel pit.

The applications are accompanied by the following studies and reports which are available for review on the Township's website or by attending the Township office:

1. Natural Environment Level 1 & 2 Technical Reports
2. Hydrogeological Assessment Level 1 & 2
3. Noise Impact Study
4. Stage 1, 2 and 3 Archaeological Assessment
5. Agricultural Impact Assessment
6. Planning Justification Report
7. Traffic Review
8. Stormwater Management Brief
9. ARA Site Plans (Existing Conditions, Operation and Rehabilitation)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND MAP OF LAND SUBJECT TO THE APPLICATIONS

A key map showing the land to which the proposed amendments apply is provided on this notice.

A public meeting will be held on these applications in accordance with Planning Act requirements to allow interested parties with appropriate time to review the applicant's studies and reports. Notice of the public meeting will be provided in a similar manner to this Notice.

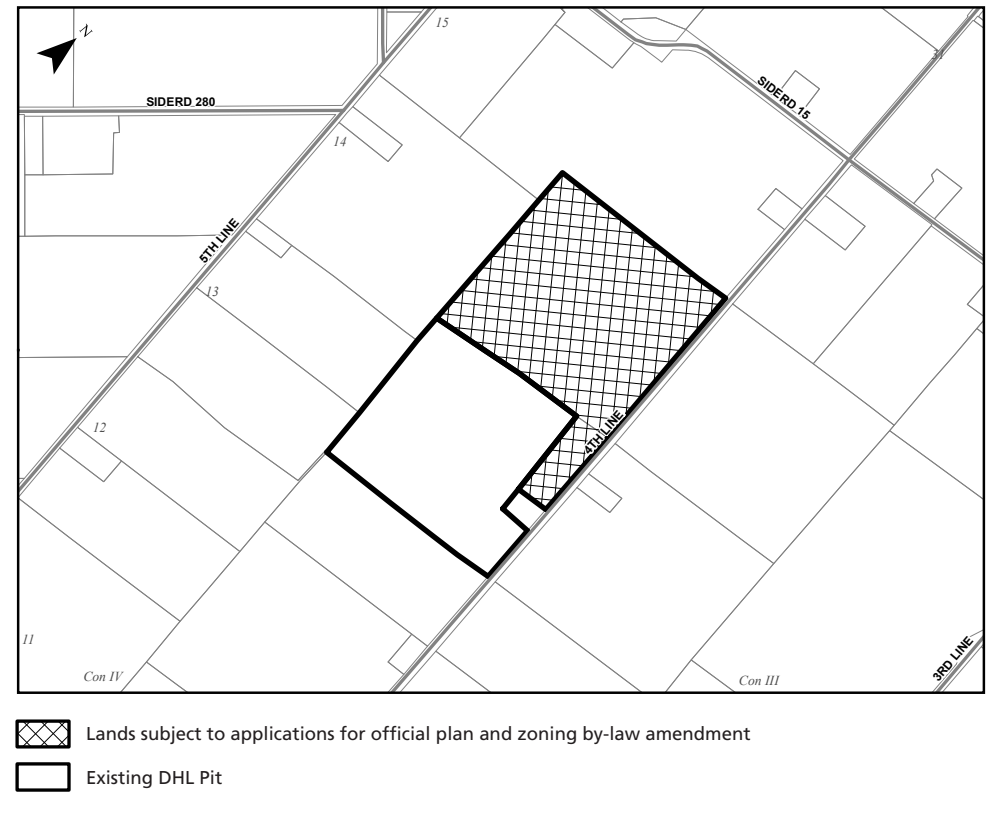
If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Council for the Corporation of the Township of Melancthon in respect to the proposed amendments, you must submit a written request (with forwarding addresses) to the Clerk of the Township of Melancthon at 157101 Highway 10, Melancthon, Ontario, L9V 2E6, email - dholmes@melancthontownship.ca. Members of the Public with specific questions about the applications may also contact Mr. James Hunter, Planner for DHL at (705) 812-3281.

If a person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to Council before the proposed amendments are approved, the person or public body is not entitled to appeal the decision of Council to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

If a person or public body does not make oral submissions at a public meeting or make written submissions to Council before the proposed amendments are approved, the person or public body may not be added as a party to the hearing of an appeal before the Ontario Land Tribunal unless, in the opinion of the Tribunal, there are reasonable grounds to do so.

Mailing Date of this Notice: February 16, 2022

Denise B. Holmes, CAO/Clerk - Township of Melancthon



Ontario government provides support for agricultural and horticultural societies

Written By Rob Paul
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Government of Ontario announced that it will provide \$1 million to support the Province's agricultural and horticultural societies who continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This will help them continue to operate and support their important efforts to educate people about the value and significance of agriculture in the province.

The funding will flow through the Agricultural and Horticultural Support and Recovery Funding Initiative and builds investments of more than \$7 million to assist these organizations during the pandemic.

This initiative features two funding streams: Base Support Funding and Hardship Funding for eligible Agricultural Societies.

Base Support Funding will be issued to all eligible Agricultural and Horticultural Societies through funding payments of \$1,000 as a means of supporting their continued incorporation and activities. Hardship Funding for eligible Agricultural Societies will provide additional support which will be based on reported gate revenues from 2019. This will help off-set operating losses, liabilities, and fixed overhead costs related to land and buildings.

Agricultural and horticultural societies across Ontario are represented by two independent associations: The Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies represents 213 rural Agricultural Societies, and the Ontario Horticultural Association represents over 270 Horticultural Societies.

"The members of the Ontario Horticultural Association express their gratitude to Minister Thompson and the Ontario government for their continued support during these challenging times," said Charles Freeman, President of the Ontario Horticultural Association. "This funding will assist the societies and clubs in their ongoing endeavours to serve and beautify their communities."

Agricultural and Horticultural Societies play a critical role in educating Ontarians on the importance of agriculture and celebrating a rural way of life. Supporting the important sector, at this time, will ensure the long traditions and economic contributions of the societies will continue and strengthen as the province manages the impacts of COVID-19 and moves forward into the future.

Eligible agricultural and horticultural societies can expect to receive funding before March 31, 2022.

Continued from Page 6

OMHA provides hotel tips for hockey players

If you have a later game, put the Do Not Disturb sign on the outside of your hotel door, to avoid hotel staff interrupting you.

You can bring along some extras like your own pillow or ear plugs if it will make a difference in getting a good night's sleep.

If possible, ask for a room away from high-activity and loud areas of the hotel.

Things like elevators and ice machines may bring in unwanted noise at all hours of the night.

All these things factor into having a good experience when you are on the road for a tournament and want to have a good night's sleep to be ready for your game.

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