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PAULA BROWN PHOTO

SHARING LIFE STORY: Shelburne resident Alice Porter and the author of her autobiography A Remarkable Life Joseph D. Driskill celebrated the book's release with a special book signing at the Mel Lloyd Centre in Shelburne on Jan. 16. See a full story on Page 5.

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## Founder of Orangeville Citizen, former owner of Shelburne Free Press passes away at 89

Written By **SAM ODROWSKI**

A man who devoted his life to community news and keeping people informed recently passed away.

Thomas Claridge, 89, who was born and raised in Shelburne, passed on peacefully at Headwaters Health Care Centre in Orangeville on Jan. 18, surrounded by the love of his family.

He leaves behind his three children Alan, Nancy and Christopher as well as his four grandchildren Jacob, Ella, Owen and Maija.

Family was also something that Thomas always cherished.

"Beyond being passionate about the different work that he had professionally, his passion was just making sure that his kids and grandkids were happy," said Nancy.

Claridge started his journalism career with the Canadian Press shortly after graduating from university and went on to write for the Globe and Mail for 30 years. While working as a reporter for the Globe, he purchased the Shelburne Free Press and Economist from his father in 1972 and

founded the Orangeville Citizen in 1974. Thomas and his wife Pam, who passed in 2024, also owned and operated the Grand Valley Star-Vidette and Caledon Citizen. Their son Alan contributed as reporter, editor and general manager over the years.

"[Tom] had gumption to start a newspaper in Orangeville where there already was an established newspaper at the time, [the Orangeville Banner]. He was just that serious about the responsibility of informing the community and providing an outlet for public response — all while he worked for the Globe," said Sheila Duncan, who worked as editor of the Orangeville Citizen, alongside Thomas, for around 20 years.

After he left the Globe and Mail in 1999, he became the managing editor of The Lawyer's Weekly. He held this role for many years before retiring but continued to write and edit for the newspapers he owned.

"I said for years, he'd probably die at his desk because that was what made him the happiest," said Alan. "He didn't golf, he didn't collect stamps or do woodworking or anything like that. He was happy working. He was happy doing what he was passionate about."

Nancy added, "He wasn't a man that had a lot of time because of all the work



**REMEMBERING TOM:** Thomas Claridge is remembered for his dedication to community newspapers, the Anglican Church and his family. Born on May 31, 1936, he passed away at the age of 89 on Jan. 19, 2025.

that he did, but when he was involved with something, he gave it his all, and he always wanted to make sure people were taken care."

Continued on Page 2

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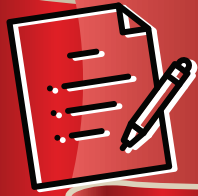
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REMEMBERING

# THOMAS CLARIDGE

BORN MAY 31, 1936 • DIED JAN. 18, 2025



Continued from FRONT

She said, "The newspaper was not a venture to make money. It was to serve

the community and make sure there were jobs there. That's the way he liked to contribute."

Alan said when Thomas bought the

Shelburne Free Press and started the Orangeville Citizen, him and Pam were doing a majority of the work.

"Dad was the editor, the principal reporter, and the sports reporter for a long time," he recalled.

"When both Nancy and I were younger... dinner times in the weekdays were always after 8 o'clock. If it was a Monday, which was production day, dad was heavily involved in not just the writing and the editing, but the production of the actual paper, so we'd eat later. Then the other four weekdays, he was in Toronto, working for the Globe and Mail."

Alan said he learned a lot about the value of hard work from his father.

"The biggest thing that he instilled in me was a work ethic," he noted.

Duncan said while working with Thomas, his brain never shut off.

"He was always thinking and always full of ideas. His face would light up with a thought and he'd often have a chuckle before he took off with his latest idea," said Duncan. "He amazed me with his well-reasoned editorials and how quickly he could interpret and analyze everything from legal judgments to provincial energy reports."

She added, "Journalism was in his blood and he had the brain and the integrity that suited that passion."

Carolyn Dennis, who worked with Thomas at the Orangeville Citizen for around 20 years, as office manager, described him as a "gentleman and a very gentle man."

She said he was naturally curious, very knowledgeable about a variety of topics and was always a pleasure to chat with.

"Tom would sit down and talk to you and listen intently and carry on a conversation for as long as you want," Dennis recalled. "It was always very interesting to talk to him because he was really well educated. He knew a lot about a lot of things... and he could tell a story."

Alan said, "He was somebody you could talk to about literally almost any subject and he could carry a conversation with you about it."

Dennis said Thomas dedication to the

newspaper ensured local residents knew what was happening where they live.

"His impact on the community was huge because he really believed in community newspapers and community knowledge – getting the facts out there," said Dennis.

She added that him and his late wife Pam were also very active in the Anglican Church.

Thomas wasn't raised Anglican but converted when he met Pam, who he married in 1965.

"He got a lot of happiness from the community that he found in the in the churches that he was involved with," said Alan.

Nancy noted, much like Pam, he had a passion for music, joining church and community choirs. For a period of time, he was director of Orangeville Music Theatre (OMT).

Thomas and Pam's love of music was something they passed down to their kids.

"If you can believe it, all of us used to be performing on the stage of the ODSS cafeteria," Nancy recalled.

Thomas accompanied Pam and Nancy on several concert tours to Carnegie Hall as well as France, Austria, Italy and Wales.

Behind the scenes, Thomas would ensure people visiting the town for music had a home to sleep in and that local events were well publicized.

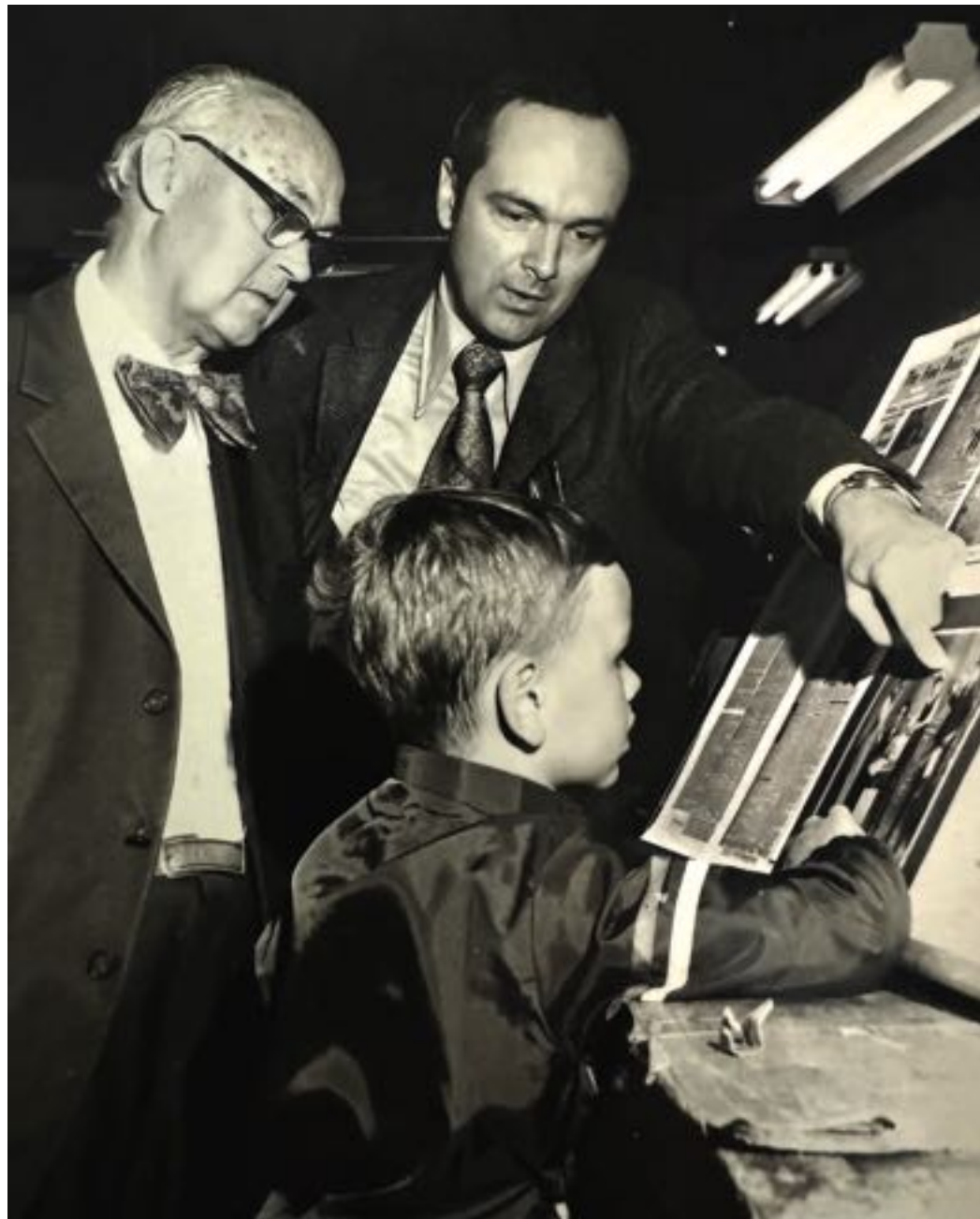
Nancy and Alan said their parents' dedication to giving back and supporting the community is something they picked up as well. Both of them have been members of the local Rotary Club and Nancy helps organize the Orangeville Blues and Jazz Festival each year.

"Serving the community was deeply ingrained by our parents in us," Nancy said.

A celebration of life for Thomas will be held on Friday, Jan. 31 at 2 p.m. at St. Mark's Anglican Church in Orangeville.

Donations may be made to the Orangeville Food Bank or St. Mark's in lieu of flowers.

In Thomas's memory, a tree will be planted in the Dods & McNair Memorial Forest at the Island Lake Conservation Area.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**MULTI-GENERATIONAL JOURNALISTS:** Fred Claridge (left), his son Thomas Claridge (centre), and grandson Alan Claridge review newspaper content at the Shelburne Free Press office in the mid 1970s. Fred owned the Shelburne Free Press and Economist before selling it to Thomas in 1972. Alan held several roles at the newspapers Thomas owned over the years, such as editor, reporter and general manager.



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# Mulmur encourages participation in 2025 Kraft Hockeyville Competitions

Written By PAULA BROWN  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Township of Mulmur is calling on the support of community members as they join the 2025 Kraft Hockeyville Competition.

In a press release issued on Jan. 15, the Township of Mulmur announced its participation in the 2025 Kraft Hockeyville Competition, with the hopes of winning \$250,000 to use for arena upgrades and the chance to host an NHL game.

"The Honeywood Arena is more than just a rink; it's where memories are made, friendships forged, and community spirit thrives," wrote the Township in the press release. "Together, we can showcase the passion, community spirit, and love for hockey that define Mulmur and make Honeywood Arena deserving of this incredible opportunity."

The Kraft Hockeyville Competition starts with the "Nomination and Rally" phases, which run from Jan. 1 to March 2.

Community members are being encouraged to rally for the Honeywood Arena by submitting a nomination story, written or video, which shares why the Honeywood Arena is important to them and the community, and how winning the competition will help enhance the arena for future generations.

Participants can also help by earning "rally points": 10 points for a nomination story; 3 points for each photo added, with a maximum of 5; 1 point each for posting a supporting rally note; and 1 point for reach to other stories and photos.

Rally points contribute to 20 per cent of the total score, while judges evaluate the nomination stories for the remaining 80 per cent.

The Township of Mulmur highlighted how the Kraft Hockeyville Competition could bring "much-needed" renovations to the Honeywood Arena, which has been a vital hub for the community and a beacon of hockey spirit since 1912.

The Township added that the prize money would enable them to make upgrades and repair the aging facility, provide a safe and more welcoming space for skaters and hockey players, and continue to foster a love for hockey for future generations.

The Top 3 Runner-Ups will receive \$25,000 for arena upgrades.

"Every rally effort is crucial," said the Township.

Those interested in submitting their stories and connection to the Honeywood Arena can do so by visiting [www.hockeyville.kraftcanada.ca](http://www.hockeyville.kraftcanada.ca).

The deadline for submissions is March 2.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**TAKE A SHOT:** The Township of Mulmur is hoping to bring upgrades to the Honeywood Arena as they announce their campaign for the 2025 Kraft Hockeyville Competition. The first place prize for the competition is \$250,000 while the top three runner-ups receive \$25,000.

# Dufferin County Council selecting members of Homelessness Task Force

Written By PAULA BROWN  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Dufferin County Council has appointed two Councillors to the Homelessness Task Force.

During their council meeting on Jan. 9, Dufferin County Council appointed Orangeville Mayor Lisa Post and Melancthon Deputy Mayor James McLean as representatives for the Homelessness Task Force.

In August of 2024, at the County's Health and Human Services meeting, the director of Community Services provided an overview of existing policies and practices to address homelessness in Dufferin County.

As part of the presentation, it was recommended that Council consider the creation of a Homelessness Task Force. The task force was officially adopted at a regular meeting held in September.

The Homeless Taskforce, which consists of six public members and two council representatives, will look at identifying sustainable and innovative options for providing housing

and support services to homeless people in Dufferin County. In addition, the task force members will access the Dufferin County Master Housing Strategy and provide community education and engagement.

Duties of Homelessness Task Force members include collaborating with current homelessness tables and organizations that provide support in the community; working to identify and analyze additional tools and resources to enhance existing services and providers; potential opportunities for affordable housing and supports; and looking at associated costs, resources, and implementation timelines.

Following the adoption of the Homelessness Task Force motion, the County of Dufferin invited local residents to submit applications to become members of the task force. The period to submit applications closed on Dec. 16.

According to the County of Dufferin, a total of 15 applications were received for the six public member positions.

As newly appointed Council representatives, Post and McLean along with Brenda Wagner, who is the director of Health and Human Services, will be tasked with selecting the Homelessness Task Force's members.

The Selection Committee will review sub-

mitted applications to identify candidates to invite for interviews.

After shortlisting candidates, the Selection Committee will conduct interviews and the successful applicants will be appointed with Council approval.



FILE PHOTO

# OPINION

## Bring in the new recruit

Every few years I'm required to renew my firearms license.

It's not a big deal. You fill out a form and submit it with payment and a new photo. If you're a firearms owner in good standing, you'll receive your new license in a few weeks.

There are several questions you must answer when requesting your license renewal.

You are asked if you are drug or alcohol-dependent – and that's a legitimate question for someone who wants to own a gun.

The last thing anyone needs is Zeke, the crazy neighbour, getting drunk and firing off a few rounds from the front porch.

There is also a question asking if you have had a recent marital break-up or the break-up of a significant relationship.

Apparently, having a break-up of some sort could significantly affect your ability to make sound and rational decisions. At least that's what the authorities who decide who gets a gun license must think.

There's probably a good reason behind that question.

For most of the law-abiding gun-owning population, having your girlfriend split for the coast won't cause you to start shooting up the street.

The last time I had to fill out a license renewal form, it just happened that at the same time, the Prime Minister had announced that he and his wife were calling it quits and heading for a divorce.

I kind of chuckled as I wrote my answer on the form.

If having a marital break-up was considered a possibly serious problem for someone who had a firearm locked up in the basement, what impact would the same negative experience have on someone who is running the country?

Although, I don't think a divorce would really cause a collapse of an existing government.

Mr. Trudeau has now announced his resignation and his intent to step down while a new leader for the Liberal Party is chosen.

This isn't really a big surprise.

Most two-term prime ministers in Canada end up leaving with a lot of people angry at them. You can be a popular leader in this country for about five years – after that, it's downhill. The difference in this case is Trudeau's own party turned against him.

There are plenty of citizens who have never liked that P.M. That's obvious from the many protests, some still ongoing, against his policies.

I think he did some good. He was a

high-profile prime minister internationally, even if his high profile came from his youthful looks and already well-known surname.

He certainly kept the Canadian profile large on an international level. He's one of the few, maybe the only world leader, who met Queen Elizabeth in a personal setting when he was a child, and again when was the leader of the country.

Overall, I think many of his policies have flopped.

His carbon tax system managed to raise the cost of gas considerably, and that was the intent. The result was higher transportation costs which translated directly to higher prices for everyday necessities like food. This sparked a new round of inflation as every other business in the country piled on to increase their prices, whether justified or not.

All this inflation while wages stagnate has made for a very difficult situation for millions of Canadians.

Trudeau's policy on immigration has become a total disaster. That's not all his fault. The Liberal think tanks in Ottawa, which influence government policy, have all determined for some reason, that the county needs to dramatically increase its population to be successful.

The geniuses in the think tanks appar-

ently have not done much research. Many of the most successful countries on the planet have small and steady populations.

Nordic countries in particular have small populations, yet enjoy a good life and a good standard of living.

The mass immigration we have experienced over the past several years has backfired, and born-and-bred Canadians are paying the price.

With so many people arriving on our shores, the demand for housing has gone through the roof – especially in Ontario – and so has the demand for a price when selling.

I know plenty of younger people who cannot afford to buy a house in their own hometown – and that is an absolute shame.

We definitely need some new federal policies to get the current situation under control.

Any new federal government must start thinking of the welfare of Canadians first, and last, and create new policies that benefit the citizens of this country.

They must listen to the voice of the country's citizens, not some Ottawa think tank with a misguided agenda.

**BRIAN LOCKHART**  
FROM THE SECOND ROW



## The Middle East: Where next?

In the 80 hours between Wednesday, Jan. 15, when the Gaza ceasefire agreement was announced, and Sunday, Jan. 19, when it went into effect, Israeli air strikes on the Gaza Strip killed 123 Palestinians including dozens of women and children. The Israel Defence Force (IDF) said it had tried to avoid civilian casualties, but it had to kill the 'terrorists' of Hamas wherever they were.

Now, of course, it has to stop killing them, at least for a while. 33 Israelis will be freed by Hamas over the next few weeks in return for 1,890 Palestinian prisoners. However, much of the IDF and even members of Prime Minister Binyamin 'Bibi' Netanyahu's own cabinet expect to go back to war after the first phase of the hostage exchange.

The second phase will be much harder for Netanyahu's supporters and allies to swallow. It requires complete withdrawal

of the IDF from the Gaza Strip and the use of Hamas members as a sort of police force (mostly unarmed) to facilitate the return of more than a million Palestinians, already many times displaced, to their wrecked homes in the northern part of the territory.

That's the stage when the cease-fire is likely to break down, because hard-line Israelis will see it as a defeat. In fact, two far-right cabinet ministers voted against the cease-fire and said that they will quit and bring Netanyahu's coalition government down unless the war resumes after the first phase ends.

The cynics are therefore convinced that Netanyahu will first take credit for the hostage exchange to reduce the domestic political pressure on him, then use a real or faked violation of the cease-fire by Hamas as an excuse to restart the war. After all, he needs a war if he is to stay

out of jail.

Just staying in power and out of jail was a persuasive explanation for his behaviour until quite recently. Only the war spared Netanyahu from a devastating inquiry into his failure to foresee and prevent the Hamas attack in October 2023, and it also stalled his ongoing corruption trial.

"We changed the face of the Middle East," Netanyahu said last week. He's right, and it may give him a new lease on power.

Hamas is leaderless and has lost its Iranian patron. The IDF has devastated Hezbollah in Lebanon and killed its leader. Iran's formerly dominant position in Syria was swept away together with the Assad regime. Even Iran itself has been revealed as a paper tiger in terms of its missiles and its air defences, and there are serious questions about its internal stability.

And now Netanyahu has Donald Trump on his side. Not under his thumb – Trump's people put huge pressure on Netanyahu to get his final assent to the cease-fire – but the Israeli leader will have been quick to grasp that new opportunities are opening up for him as the Middle Eastern constellation of powers shifts.

Netanyahu will probably never talk the United States into attacking Iran for him, but he did get Trump to cancel the no-nukes accord with Iran and clamp strict sanctions on the country in 2019. He is not without influence at the new White House.

Could Netanyahu get the United States to apply even stronger sanctions against Iran now that Trump is back on top? Prob-

ably yes, and in that case the road would be open for the two of them to pursue their pipe-dream from last time: the 'Abraham Accords.'

That 'peace treaty', establishing diplomatic relations between Israel and some Arab countries that had never actually fought against it (United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan) was touted as the defining diplomatic achievement of the first Trump presidency. In fact, it never amounted to much, because Saudi Arabia, the greatest power of the eastern Arab world, never joined.

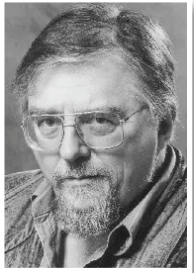
Now, perhaps, with Iran so crippled, Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman of Saudi Arabia might be persuaded to make peace with Israel and set up some sort of joint hegemony over the Middle East. Or such at least may be the visions now dancing before the eyes of Trump and Netanyahu. Even 'MbS' (as he is known) might be tempted.

More pipe-dreams, and even if they should come to pass, they wouldn't last long.

Netanyahu has been trying to write the Palestinians out of the story for his whole political life, and Trump may go along for the ride. But MbS doesn't dare let Israel expunge the Palestinians, neither does General Sisi in Egypt, and Iranians wouldn't hear of it even if the regime changes.

There is no viable plan, and peace is not nigh.

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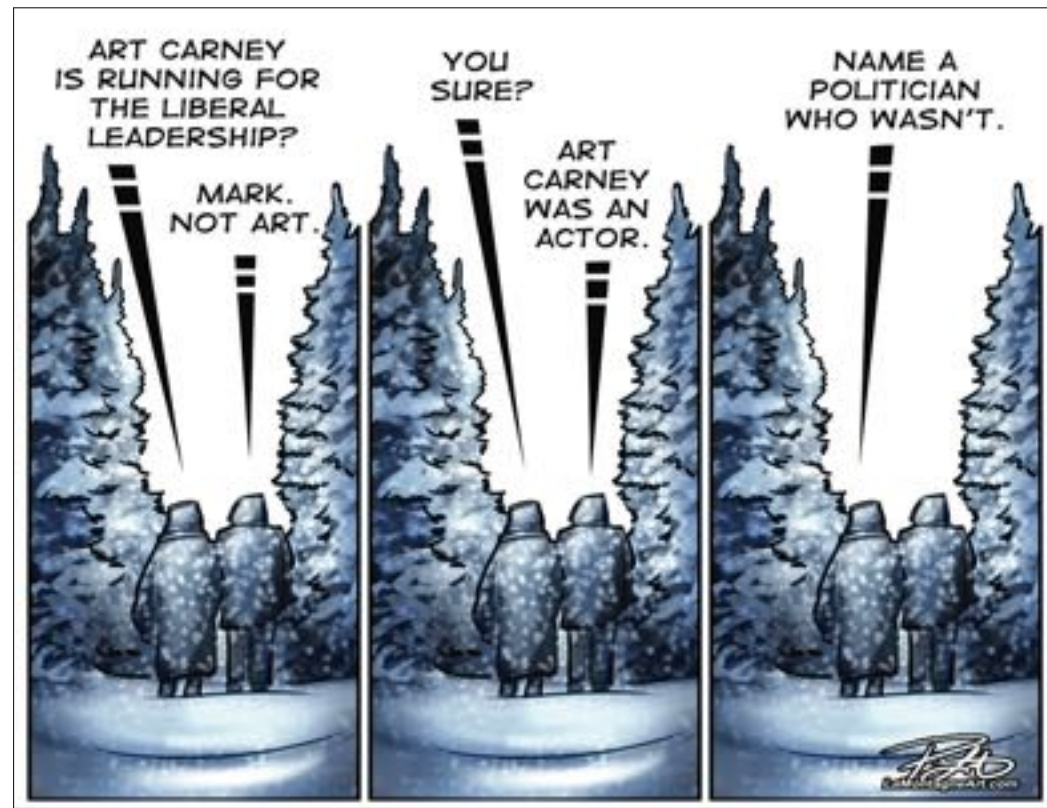
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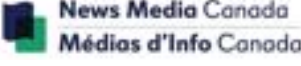




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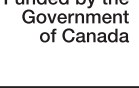
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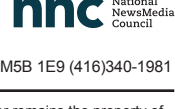
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# Dufferin Arts Council: Why the arts are more important than ever

I'm a relative newbie to the arts scene. That is, recognizing the arts for its importance to me and everyone. It's no secret that the arts play a pivotal role in livable communities.

Cities and towns that demonstrate active and dynamic arts and culture are more attractive to individuals and businesses. Ask anyone that's on a physician's recruitment team and they'll tell you that candidates are looking for those qualities as much as any other.

Supporting local arts and culture is not just about enjoying art events and exhibitions; it's about investing in the cultural, economic, educational, and social well-being of your community. The arts enrich our lives in many ways.

The Ontario school curriculum states that "the intellectual and emotional development of children is enhanced through study of the arts. Exposure to the arts at a young age has been linked to improved academic performance, enhanced creativity, and better problem-solving skills.

Arts education is essential for the holistic development of children. Supporting local arts and cultural programs ensures that children have access to these edu-

cational opportunities, setting them up for future success." And yet, the arts are lacking if not absent in many schools.

As for the adults, funding for the arts isn't an option in many municipalities. Arts organizations are usually expected to raise their own funds through sponsorships, events, and donors. That often leaves little energy to do the work. Funding requests are typically met with a standard requirement to frame the case around jobs and the economy.

That case can be made. In his book "The Compassionate Imagination – How the arts are central to a functioning democracy," Max Wyman addresses this.

A 2019 Statistics Canada report showed the direct economic impact of the culture industries in Canada in 2016 (latest census with analyzed stats) was 58.9 billion, a 16 per cent increase over 2010. Equal to \$1,611 per Canadian and 2.8 per cent of GDP.

StatsCan's definition of culture is audiovisual and interactive media, visual and applied arts, writing and publishing, live performance, private heritage and library resources, and sound recording.

To illustrate in the greater context:

- Arts and Culture: \$58.9 Billion
- Agriculture, forestry fishing and hunting: \$39 Billion
- Accommodation and food services: \$46 Billion
- Utilities: \$46 Billion
- Sports: \$7.3 Billion

The arts clearly stimulate economic growth in a region.

Visitors not only spend money on tickets to performances or art exhibits but also on hotels, restaurants, and local businesses.

By supporting local arts organizations, you contribute to the creation and sustenance of employment opportunities.

"The arts also foster creativity, which is a driving force behind innovation in various fields, including technology, business, and science. When you support the arts, you contribute to a culture of creativity that can lead to breakthroughs and advancements in other sectors."

In my role as the Grants Chair for the Dufferin Community Foundation, I noted that half of the recent grant applications for Arts and Culture funding were from social service agencies. They weren't

arts organizations, but they used the arts to support and heal their clients. The increase in art therapy programs and businesses tells us that engaging with the arts can have therapeutic effects on individuals. The arts are used to reduce stress, improve mental well-being and as an outlet for self-expression.

Citizens are suffering from a lack of belonging like never before as reported by the Community Foundations of Canada, whereas communities that prioritize the arts tend to have increased civic and social engagement.

Art events and cultural activities provide opportunities for people to come together, share experiences, and connect with one another. This sense of community fosters social cohesion and a greater sense of belonging.

By supporting local arts and cultural initiatives, you contribute to the overall health and happiness of your community and neighbours. With what we're seeing in the news and elsewhere, we need the arts more than ever.

SHIRLEY BOXEM  
GUEST COLUMN



# Local woman releases autobiography, reflects on work as missionary nurse in India

Written By PAULA BROWN  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

When you get to a point in your life and look back there's always the hope that it's a story worth telling.

Shelburne residents had the opportunity to learn about the life of local resident Alice Porter during a book signing on Jan. 16 at the Mel Lloyd Centre. The book signing celebrated the release of Porter's autobiography, *A Remarkable Life*, written by author Joseph D. Driskill.

All proceeds raised from the sale of books at the signing were donated to the Shelburne Food Bank.

*A Remarkable Life* follows Porter's life from growing up on a farm just outside of Shelburne, studying to become a nurse, and serving 36 years as a missionary nurse in India.

Born Mable Alice Porter on Aug. 1, 1926, she was the oldest of four daughters and spent her formative years growing up on a

250-acre farm near Corbetton, Ont. From an early age, Porter knew that she wanted to become a nurse.

"I'd always wanted to be a nurse, even when I was very young. I had a little nurse's outfit with the little cap and apron," recalled Porter. "It's just what I wanted to do."

After finishing high school, Porter was still too young to be accepted into a nursing education program so instead, she took a summer course at what was then known as the Normal School in Toronto to teach a year of elementary school.

She was officially accepted into the nursing program at Toronto General Hospital in the fall of 1945 and went on to graduate as a registered nurse and later received a Bachelor's degree and diploma in Nursing Administration.

In 1954, Porter stepped into her role as a missionary nurse in India, which she would hold onto for more than three decades until her retirement in 1990.

Speaking about why she chose to go to India as a missionary nurse, Porter simply states

"they needed a nurse there".

In 2009, Porter was presented with an Order of Ontario Certificate for her life's work.

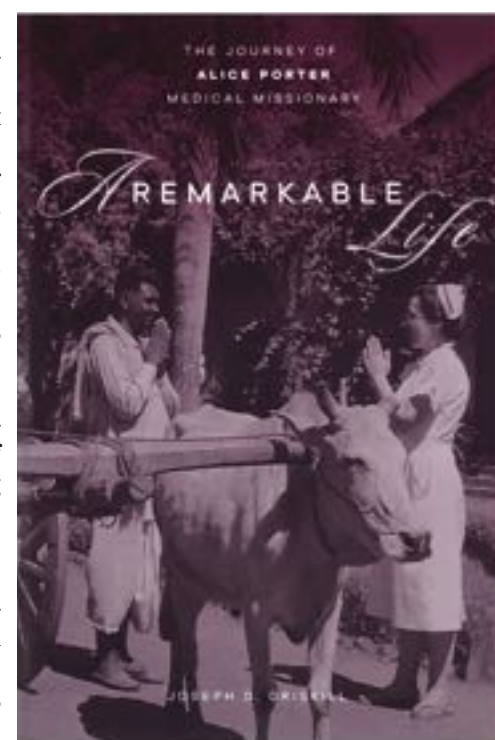
Driskill and Porter began the groundwork for the book in 2022 while writing an article on her life as a missionary nurse in India for the College of Churches of Christ in Canada's quarterly newsletter.

"We sifted through stories and came up with what we had for the one page, but there were so many other stories that she shared as we were trying to decide what to use that are now in the book," explained Driskill.

Jumping off the newsletter article, Driskill acting as Porter's scribe began a series of phone and in-person interviews documenting her life.

"As I discovered her story, I learned she had such amazing experiences," said Driskill. "I feel like her experiences on the farm prepared her for what she encountered while on the mission field."

*A Remarkable Life* by Joseph D. Driskill is available to purchase at [www.blurb.ca](http://www.blurb.ca).





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# Structure fire in Mono over the weekend deemed non-suspicious

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers, alongside the Caledon Fire Department, responded to a structure fire located on County Road 7 in Mono on Sunday, Jan. 12. The response took place at approximately 7:19 a.m. and upon investigation, the fire has been determined to be non-suspicious. Anyone who may have witnessed the incident and wishes to speak with victim services is encouraged to contact Caledon/Dufferin Victim Services at 905-951-3838.

# Sharp-eyed officer removes impaired driver off Dufferin County roads

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers have charged an Orangeville resident with impaired operation-related offences, thanks to their keen observation. Officers were conducting general patrol in the area of C Line in Orangeville on Jan. 10 at approximately 3:44 p.m. when they observed a vehicle that had been mentioned in a traffic complaint the day prior. The officer initiated a traffic stop, and after a brief conversation with the driver, they quickly identified signs leading to an

impaired driving investigation. Orangeville Matthew Van Vugt, 45, has been charged with operation while impaired - blood alcohol concentration (80 plus). The accused individual is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Orangeville. His driver's license was suspended for 90 days and his vehicle was impounded for seven days. The listed charge has not been proven in court.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

# Project Lifesaver openings available in Dufferin County through Dufferin OPP

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

The Dufferin Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) recently announced it has openings for Project Lifesaver clients in Dufferin County. This life-saving program is designed to help families with loved ones who are at risk of wandering due to conditions like Alzheimer's, autism, or other cognitive impairments.

### How Project Lifesaver Works:

- **Personalized Bracelet:** Each individual enrolled in the program is provided with a personalized bracelet that emits a unique radio frequency signal.
- **Tracking Technology:** If the person wearing the bracelet goes missing, the OPP and emergency responders use specialized tracking equipment to locate the signal, enabling a fast response.
- **Rapid Response Time:** The bracelet's signal allows for a much quicker recovery, which can be critical in reducing potential

risks or dangers that may arise when someone with cognitive impairments is lost. **24/7 Monitoring:** The program operates 24/7, ensuring that if a person goes missing at any time, the OPP response can be immediate and efficient. "Project Lifesaver has been a valuable resource for the community, providing peace of mind to families and enhancing the safety of vulnerable individuals," said Dufferin OPP in a press release. "The program is administered by Caledon Meals on

Wheels and has been generously funded by the Orangeville Lions Club, ensuring that residents in Dufferin County have access to this important service." For more information or to inquire about eligibility, please contact Dufferin OPP Const. Andrew Fines at [andrew.fines@opp.ca](mailto:andrew.fines@opp.ca). "Don't miss out on this opportunity to provide an extra layer of protection for your loved ones," said Dufferin OPP's press release.

# The Ontario SPCA and Humane Society urges caution near waterways to keep pets safe

The Ontario SPCA and Humane Society would like to remind the public to take extra precautions to keep pets safe around lakes and rivers, which may not be safe. To help ensure a safe winter for everyone, stay vigilant around bodies of water and keep these five tips in mind when out with your furry friend:

- 1. Always use a leash** – Keep your dog on a leash when walking near water. If you live near the water, always supervise pets outdoors. Hypothermia can set in quickly and your dog may not be able to climb back on the ice if they fall through.
- 2. Play away from the ice** – Avoid areas where your dog might be tempted to explore dangerous ice. Choose safe locations for winter play and exercise.
- 3. Check ice safety** – Before venturing out the ice, check ice thickness. Slushy, thawed, or recently refrozen ice is particularly dangerous, as is ice near flowing water.

Avoid venturing onto ice at night when visibility is reduced.

- 4. Know the risks in your area** – Fast-flowing water and slippery banks can increase hazards. Stay aware of your surroundings to keep your pet safe.
- 5. Be prepared for emergencies** – Be cautious and avoid putting yourself at risk if trying to rescue a pet. Carry a cell phone for quick access to emergency services. "Animals are naturally curious and unpredictable, which means even the most well-trained pet can unexpectedly dart onto unsafe ice. The consequences can be devastating," says Jennifer Bluhm, vice president of community outreach services with the Ontario SPCA and Humane Society. "Keeping your pet on a leash near waterways and choosing safe play areas could be the difference between a fun winter outing and a tragedy." For more tips on keeping your pets safe this winter, visit [ontariospca.ca](http://ontariospca.ca)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**SAFETY FIRST:** The Ontario SPCA and Humane Society is encouraging the public to follow safety tips when walking pets around waterways. Lakes, rivers and other bodies of water can be a danger to cats and dogs.

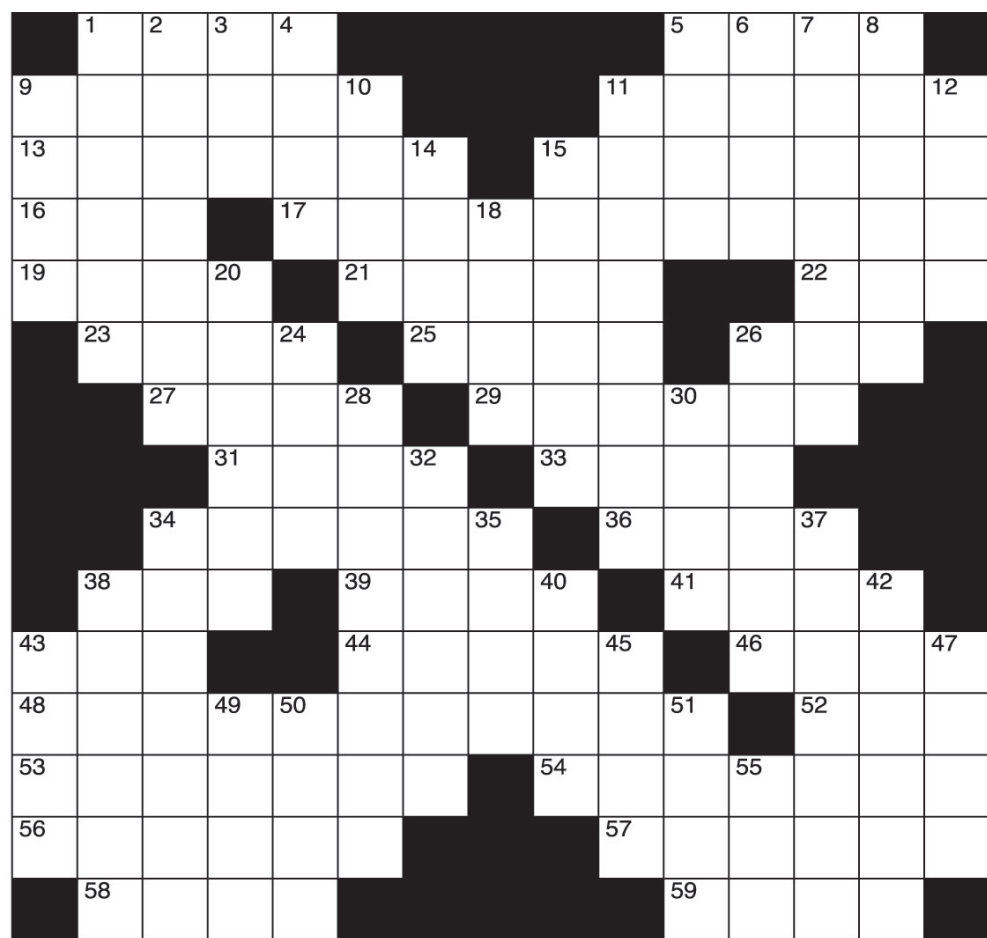
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## CROSSWORD



### CLUES ACROSS

- |                              |                                |   |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. "Loser" rocker            | 33. Palmer and Hepburn are two | 1. __ Aires, city beliefs                                       |
| 5. Partner to relaxation     | 34. More than one              | 2. Coarse grass 30. Z Z Z                                       |
| 9. Mixing                    | 36. Places down                | 3. Type of gene 32. One who confines another                    |
| 11. Winged nut               | purposefully                   | 5. Competition 34. Bishop                                       |
| 13. Expression of blame      | 38. Pitching statistic         | 6. Muslim ruler title 35. Garlands                              |
| 15. Vast ocean               | 39. Type of sword              | 7. Hunting expeditions 37. Bird that flies by the coast         |
| 16. Comedienne               | 41. Witnesses                  | 8. Large mollusk 38. Optical device                             |
| Gasteyer                     | 43. Body part                  | 9. Bind securely 40. Greek goddess of discord                   |
| 17. Multiply                 | 44. Mixes slowly               | 10. Former U.S. presidential candidate                          |
| 19. Meat from a pig (French) | 46. Satisfy                    | 11. 2-point plays in football                                   |
| 21. Related                  | 48. Strong belief              | 12. Breezed through 42. Some are "Rolling"                      |
| 22. Rocker Stewart           | 52. One's physique (slang)     | 13. Felt for 43. Formerly (archaic)                             |
| 23. Surprise completely      | 53. More frightening           | 14. Type setting 45. Thrust a knife into                        |
| 25. Loon                     | 54. Soup cracker               | 15. Felt for 47. German river                                   |
| 26. Canister                 | 56. Teaches                    | 18. Codified rules 49. Atomic #26                               |
| 27. Large, deep-bodied fish  | 57. One who carries something  | 20. Small dome 50. Make a grotesque face                        |
| 29. Takes forcefully         | 58. Actor Sean                 | 24. Chevrotain 51. Primordial matter of the universe            |
| 31. Oil cartel               | 59. Changes gland              | 26. Male reproductive gland 55. Chinese philosophical principle |

### CLUES DOWN

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

# Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County educates community for awareness month

Written By PAULA BROWN  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County is making sure those diagnosed with dementia-causing illnesses are not forgotten as they recognize Alzheimer's Awareness Month.

Alzheimer's Awareness Month is a 31-day campaign recognized each January by the Alzheimer's Society of Canada, which looks to raise awareness and education for those living with dementia-causing illnesses.

"Our overall goal is to let people know that we're here to help and to get people to understand that the numbers speak for themselves; dementia is a health care crisis," said Carmelina Cicuto, executive director of the Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County.

Dementia is a broad term that describes a set of symptoms that may include memory loss, changes in mood, and difficulties with thinking, problem-solving and language. Dementia happens when brain cells become damaged and eventually die. There are many diseases and conditions which can cause dementia, with Alzheimer's disease being the most common.

The Alzheimer's Society reports that in Ontario alone over 300,000 people are living with dementia and that number is expected to triple by 2050.

According to the Alzheimer Society of Dufferin County, there are currently 1,500 people living with a dementia diagnosis in the County, which has a population of 66,257.

"I don't think people realize the staggering number. People need to understand the importance of that number," said Cicuto. "Unless you know someone who has the disease, you're not going to look into dementia. It's not part of your world."

In helping bring more education to the growing disease, Cicuto said it's important to address the stigma faced by those with a dementia diagnosis.

"People are afraid to say 'I have dementia.' Dementia is not the end of life. There are people still working who have a dementia diagnosis and there's a young onset group of people in their 50s and 60s that have dementia, but they're still living," said Cicuto.

"The more we talk about it the more accessible it's going to be," added Nancy Frater, Chair of the Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County's Board of Directors.

Alzheimer's Awareness Month helps to highlight the resources available to people with dementia-related illnesses, including supports for their loved ones and caregivers.

Mono resident Margot Steane has been a caregiver for her husband, George Steane since his diagnosis in 2017 with cognitive impairment, which has since developed into Alzheimer's. She contacted the Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County in 2019 for education as a caregiver and eventually joined two support groups for caregivers.

"My role now is to mainly ensure safety and to ensure that he is well taken care of. These groups are very supportive of each other. They really help people like me who have not experienced [Alzheimer's] first-hand," said Steane.

She spoke about the significance of Alzheimer's Awareness Month in recognizing families going through the dementia journey.

"The month really brings it home that there



PETER RICHARDSON PHOTO/SUBMITTED PHOTO

**RAISING AWARENESS:** The Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County is bringing a focus on education, community engagement, and fundraising as they recognize Alzheimer's Awareness Month.

are people who are going through this journey, there is help out there, and this disease is not going away. Bringing it to the public reminds them that this is something people are living with."

While Alzheimer's Awareness Month gives the local Society the time to raise awareness and share education with the community, it also gives them the time to fundraise for donations to support the programs and resources they provide.

According to the Alzheimer Society of Ontario, dementia presents challenges for individuals, families, care partners and the health care system which ultimately costs the province over \$30 billion annually.

Cicuto told the Free Press that operating all of the programs provided by the Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County costs over \$700,000 per year.

Although they receive partial funding from the government, the Alzheimer's Society also depends on generous contributions from community members – such as Susan Reynolds.

In December of 2024, Reynolds raised funds for the local Alzheimer's Society by selling almost 40 handcrafted "pocket dolls" at Booklore in Orangeville.

The miniature-sized dolls were hand-knitted by Reynolds and took roughly 12 hours to complete a single figure.

The decision to donate the proceeds raised from the sale of the pocket dolls was one close to Reynolds' heart.

In 2000, Reynolds and her husband became the primary caregivers of her mother, Clarice Hunt, after she was diagnosed with dementia. Remembering her mother as a beautiful knitter, Reynold wanted to use the knitted dolls as a tribute to her memory.

"I was unaware of the Alzheimer Society back then and the programs, awareness and support, and so I didn't reach out to them," she recalled.

Reynolds' pocket dolls sold out within the week of availability and raised more than \$1,000 for the Alzheimer's Society of Dufferin County.

"We couldn't have raised the money without the incredible support of those who purchased them. It was a community effort; wasn't just me," she said.

To help spread awareness of Alzheimer's and other dementia-causing diseases, the Alzheimer Society of Dufferin County will be hosting a "Dementia Experience Day" event on Jan. 30.

The event will consist of two one-hour sessions, where participants will be walked through different scenarios to simulate a

first-hand look and feel of what it is like to live with dementia.

"We're putting people in a situation where they have no choice but to be vulnerable and the only way you'll understand what someone's going through in the dementia world, is to be vulnerable," said Cicuto.

"You need to have the experience to truly understand," said Frater.

For more information about Alzheimer's and the local resources available, visit the Alzheimer Society of Dufferin County website. The Alzheimer Society of Dufferin County can also be contacted directly by

phone at 519-941-1221 or by emailing info@alzheimerdufferin.org.

## NOTICE

### OF THE ANNUAL AND A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING OF DUFFERIN MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY (the "Company")

NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Company will be held at the Shelburne Royal Canadian Legion, 203 William Street, Shelburne, Ontario, on Thursday, March 20, 2025 at 1:30 p.m. to:

- Receive the Annual Reports (Chair, President & CEO, Financial, etc.).
- To Appoint Auditors and authorize the directors to authorize the Board of Directors to fix the remuneration of such auditors.
- Ratify the Acts of the Board of Directors.
- Elect Directors:
- Two positions, to serve until the effective date of amalgamation, if approved, and failing which for a term of three years each; and
- One position, to serve until the effective date of amalgamation, if approved, and failing which for a term of two years

AND NOTICE is hereby given that a Special General Meeting of the Company will be held concurrently with the said Annual General Meeting, at the same time and location, to:

- Seek the approval of the members of the Amalgamation Agreement between the Company and Algoma Mutual Insurance Company which provides for the amalgamation of the two corporations under the name "Integrated Mutual Insurance Group" and which Agreement has been unanimously approved by the Directors of the Corporation, with the amalgamation to be effective July 1, 2025.
- Seek the approval of the members of By-law 1-2025, being a general By-law relating to the business and affairs of the amalgamated company, to be effective July 1, 2025.

The Corporation's annual statement will be available on the Company's website (www.dufferinmutual.com) 21 days prior to the Annual General Meeting. A member of the Company may also obtain a copy by sending a written request to the Secretary of the Company at 802 Main Street East, Unit 4, Shelburne, Ontario, L9V 2Z5, at least 14 days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

Copies of the Amalgamation Agreement and proposed By-law are posted on the Corporation's website (www.dufferinmutual.com). Copies are also available for review at the Corporation's offices at 802 Main Street East, Unit 4, Shelburne, Ontario, L9V 2Z5, and will be mailed to any policyholder who requests such copies. Copies of all the foregoing will also be available at the meeting.

Individuals interested in applying for a position on the Board of Directors are invited to submit their application. Application forms are available at the Corporation's Head Office and must be duly completed and returned to the same address. To be considered for the role, completed applications must be received by the Secretary of the Company no later than 4:30 p.m., on Thursday, February 20, 2025. It is important for applicants to ensure that they meet the necessary qualifications as outlined in the Company By-Laws, which can be reviewed at the Company's Head Office.

As of the current date, the following individuals have been qualified and endorsed by the nominating committee to stand for election to the Board of Directors of the Company:

- Kevin Greer
- Frank Barretto
- Scott Wilson

These candidates have met the necessary criteria and have been duly endorsed for consideration in the upcoming board elections.

The Company By-Laws may be reviewed Monday to Friday, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at the Company's Head Office, including the portion of the By-Laws that relate to Qualifications of Directors.

In accordance with Company by-laws, only information in the notice of the meeting may be transacted at the meeting.

By order of the Board of Directors,

Edward Forbes,  
Corporate Secretary  
January 17, 2025

Dufferin Mutual is a provincially licensed Insurance Company located in the town of Shelburne since 1895. We are a financially stable company (see our financial statements on our web site). We offer high quality insurance products for homes, farms, commercial operations, and automobiles. We have a dedicated staff located in Shelburne with distribution through highly qualified independent insurance brokers and agents throughout Ontario.

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# SPORTS

## Junior C hockey moves to final stretch of the regular season

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

With most teams having at least 30 games behind them, Junior C hockey in Ontario is moving into the final stretch of its 42-game regular season.

In the North Carruthers Division of the Provincial Junior Hockey League (PJHL), the Alliston team is in first place with a 30-1 record and 61 points – that’s 10 points ahead of the second-place Orillia Terriers.

The Hornets took their first loss of the season on Jan. 10, when they were upset by the last-place Muskoka Bears in a game that

was decided on a shoot-out after the teams played to a 4-4 tie and overtime couldn’t decide a winner.

In second place in the division, the Orillia Terriers have been having a good season. They have a 25-4 record including one overtime loss.

The Terriers have won over every team in the division except Alliston.

In third place, the Stayner Siskins have a 22-9 record. They will be trying to take over second place with some wins in their final 11 games.

The Penetang Kings, Innisfil Spartans, and Huntsville Otters are in the middle of

the pack. The three teams are separated by eight points and will be trying to move in the standings for a better playoff berth as the regular season winds down.

The Midland Flyers are in seventh place with 15 points.

In the basement, the Muskoka Bears have won only three games this year and have pretty much a zero chance of making the playoffs.

In the other PJHL divisions, the Clarington Eagles are leading the East Orr Division by four points.

The Frankford Huskies are in first place in the East Todd Division with 50 points – two

ahead of the Napanee Raiders.

In the North Pollock Division, the Mount Forest Patriots are in first place by a single point over the Hanover Barons.

The Dundas Blues are in the number one spot in the South Bloomfield Division. They lead the Niagara RiverHawks by six points.

In the South Doherty Division, the New Hamburg Firebirds are leading by two points over the Norwich Merchants.

The Essex 73s are in first place in the West Stobbs Division with 60 points.

In the West Yeck Division, the Exeter Hawks are in first place with a two point lead over the Petrolia Flyers.

## Royals senior basketball team finishes regular season in second place

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

The Centre Dufferin District High School Royals senior basketball team wrapped up the regular season with a home-court win over the Norwell District Secondary School Varsity Reds on Monday, Jan. 13.

The Royals arrived at the game with a 5-2 record and second place in the District 4 standings.

In the first quarter, the Norwell took an early lead before the Royals caught up and took over to go ahead 15-9 at the end of the first quarter.

At the half, the Centre Dufferin team was leading 40-17.

Returning for the second half, the Royals kept up the pressure and made some solid moves on offence.

They ended the third quarter with a 50-29 lead.

The Varsity Reds had an impressive fourth quarter and gained some ground but the Royals matched them basket for basket and left the court with a 65-45 win.

“We had a couple of talks to get the drive up and the motivation up and keep pushing,” said Royals forward Tristan Park of the Royals dominance on the court after the first quarter. “I think all the boys did great in today’s game. There was a couple of times where we started pushing and we had to slow it down a bit and keep the ball movement going. The season’s going great. Against Erin, we’ve had a couple of losses, but that’s a team that’s very beatable.”

Erin District High School is the only team the Royals have not won against this season. The Erin team is in first place in the District 4 standings and is undefeated.

“We played good today, the season’s going good,” said Royals forward Jason Dwomoh. “The team’s feeling good, I think we’re going to get back at Erin in the finals.”

The Royals have averaged 64 points per game over the last five games.

The District 4 senior playoffs are scheduled to get underway in Tuesday, Feb. 11, with the quarter-final round.



BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

**BIG WIN:** The Centre Dufferin District High School senior boy’s basketball team hosted the Norwell District Secondary School Varsity Reds on the court at CDDHS on Monday, Jan. 13. It was the final Royals game of the regular season. The Royals left the court with a 65-45 win and a second-place finish in the District 4 standings.

BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

**SECOND STANDINGS:** The Centre Dufferin District High School Royals junior boys’ basketball team took on the Wellington Heights Secondary School Wolverines on the court at CDDHS on Monday, Jan. 13. The Royals won the game 54-21 and secured second place in the District 4 standings. The District junior division will start playoffs with a quarter-final round on Feb. 11.



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**ATHLETE OF THE WEEK**

**LAUREN SMITH**

“My whole family plays hockey, so that’s how I got into it,” said Centre Dufferin District High School Royals centre, Lauren Smith, of how she started in the sport. “I like the competition level and meeting new people.”

Outside of school, Lauren plays hockey with the Mississauga Hurricanes.

A well rounded athlete, when she’s not playing hockey, Lauren competes in rugby, field hockey, and volleyball.

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19+

# Shelburne residents encouraged to participate in CMHA's push-up challenge

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

Staying physically fit is a common aspiration among people who set New Year's resolutions.

But exercising doesn't only improve people's physical health, it supports their mental health as well.

To assist people in their efforts to get physically and mentally healthier, Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Peel Dufferin is encouraging participation in The Push-Up Challenge.

During this fitness-based mental health initiative, running from Feb. 11 to 28, participants are encouraged to do 2,000 push-ups,

representing the 2,000 lives lost to suicide each day, worldwide.

Canadians from all ages and walks of life can participate in the event, which engages people in mental health through connection, physical activity and education.

"The Push-Up Challenge is a great way for the people of Orangeville to get fit, connect with their community, do something positive for their mental health, and support the Canadians who experience ill mental health each year," said David Smith, CEO of CMHA Peel Dufferin said

"Everyone has mental health and it's likely we all will experience a mental health issue at some point in our lives. By pushing up

and learning about mental health, we hope to break down the stigma so that Canadians don't think twice about reaching out for help."

The Push-Up Challenge is free to participate in and fundraising is optional. However, participants can choose to fundraise and support the Canadian Mental Health Association through the challenge.

"Participants of all ages and abilities will push-up while learning about mental health, with the number of daily push-ups changing to reflect a vital mental health fact," said CMHA Peel Dufferin in a press release. "Alternatives to push-ups are also encouraged, such as sit-ups, squats or other alternative

exercises. Progress can be tracked through a dedicated app which also allows you to easily fundraise and see how your friends are going with the event."

The Push-Up Challenge has been taking place in Australia for the past eight years, with over 700,000 participants completing 1.2 billion push-ups and raising over \$50 million for mental health.

This year marks the second time the event will take place in Canada, run by CMHA.

Last year saw over 49,000 Canadians challenge themselves to complete 2,000 push-ups and raise an incredible \$2.4 million dollars.

To register for The Push-Up Challenge, visit [bit.ly/3Dolxi4](http://bit.ly/3Dolxi4).

# Big Brothers Big Sisters to bring back Bowl For Kids Sake fundraiser this coming March

Written By PAULA BROWN  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin and District are giving Dufferin residents the opportunity to help give local youth a "brighter future" with the return of one of their most well-known fundraising events.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin and District have announced the return of their Bowl for Kids' Sake fundraiser, which will be held on March 21 at the Best Western Hotel in Orangeville.

"We're very excited here at Big Brothers Big Sisters, to be bringing the event back again. It's a great way for us to connect with the community, and the community has been very supportive and very kind to us over [the] decades we've run this event," said Nancy Stallmach, executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters Dufferin.

The Bowl for Kids' Sake fundraiser is an event the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin

and District have been hosting since 1980 and helps raise money to support local mentoring programs.

The last time the event was held was in 2019 after the event was cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In an interview with the Free Press, Stallmach spoke about the significance of the event as a fundraiser for Big Brothers Big Sisters.

"[At] Big Brothers Big Sisters, we don't get a lot of government funding. We really rely on the community to help support us with fundraising events and donations to be able to stay in existence," said Stallmach.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin and District has a goal of raising \$20,000 through Bowl for Kids' Sake.

Stallmach noted that the money raised will fund their various mentoring programs that match local children facing adversity with a caring mentor.

The Bowl for Kids' Sake event on March 21

will consist of 14 virtual bowling lanes in the ballroom of the Best Western hotel, created using Wii consoles and projector screens. Groups will have one hour to play Wii Bowling and time slots for noon and from 4 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.

The theme of the event is St. Patrick's Day and participants are encouraged to dress up for the "Best Costume" contest.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin and District have space for a total of 70 teams.

"Back in the heyday of doing it, we would get about 300 people coming through during the event," recalled Stallmach. "We're not sure if we'll have quite that response the first year doing it again, but we're hoping we'll have a really good response."

Those interested in taking part in the Bowl for Kids' Sake fundraiser can register by visiting the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin and District's website.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**VIRTUAL BOWLING:** Big Brothers Big Sisters of Dufferin and District has announced the return of one of their longest standing fundraisers - Bowl for Kids' Sake. The fundraising event, which raises donations to support local Big Brothers Big Sisters programs, will be held on March 21 at the Best Western hotel in Orangeville.

## Shelburne Public Library shares weekly news

### Upcoming Events

Our Seniors Tech Tutoring appointments are available on Tuesdays and Thursdays (5 p.m. to 7 p.m.). It's the perfect opportunity to ask your tech questions in a friendly environment. Call 519-925-2168 to book an appointment.

Our Seed Library is seeking donations! Help our seed library grow by donating spare, viable seed! Seed donations can be dropped off at the Main Circulation desk during open hours. Please label your seeds with the variety, date it was harvested, and the location it was grown (ex- Snow Peas, harvested Fall 2024, Shelburne).

### Recommended read

**Women in Sunlight** by Frances Mays: Four American expats and stran-

gers become unexpected friends during a magical year in Tuscany. Featuring a writer's complicated relationship with the subject of her biography and long-postponed dreams and shifting senses of adventure and bravery that readers will enjoy.

**Why Rose recommends it:** It's been quite some time since I've read a book with such passion for life between the pages. Set in stunning Tuscany, four women navigate "what comes next" in their lives. We get to experience lush and vivid descriptions of new found hobbies and careers - from gardening, to paper-making, and poetry - readers will be entranced with the seemingly endless happiness Tuscany brings for this group of friends.

Sprinkle in a great love of food and good wine, and readers will dream of jet-setting to San Rocco with haste.



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PETER RICHARDSON PHOTOS

HEALTHY BUSINESSES: Shelburne residents met face-to-face with local health and wellness providers and business owners on Saturday (Jan. 18) at Centre Dufferin District High School (CDDHS) through the 7th Annual Shelburne Health and Wellness Expo.



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