

Lions? Club TV Bingo coming this fall, bringing faster play to region



Written By **Sam Odrowski**

Bingo players across the region have lots to be happy about.

Following the success of the Orangeville Lions Club's introduction of Radio Bingo, which ran from December 2021 to May 2022, they're launching TV Bingo and expanding it to Hillsburgh, Erin, Garafaxa Woods, Grand Valley, and all of Caledon, for September 13.

It's going to be broadcasted by Rogers, free of charge, and the Lions will be doling out roughly \$100,000 to \$150,000 in prize money over the next year. It will be \$3,000 in prize money per regular game and \$5,000 on special holidays.

Shelburne residents can play at RogersTV.com and pick up bingo cards at designated locations in neighbouring municipalities when the game launches, closer to September.

?The real key here is even if you lose in the bingo game, you still win because you donated some money to the Lions Club, and it's going back into the community,? said Mayor Sandy Brown, Orangeville Lions Club member.

During Radio Bingo, some of the charities the local Lions Club donated to included Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Ukraine humanitarian relief, Choices' Men's Shelter, and the Orangeville Minor Baseball Association for its ?Shack? revitalization project.

Other charities will receive help through TV Bingo, with the Lions anticipating they'll raise \$100,000 over the next year.

The way the TV Bingo works is a player purchases a bingo card in advance and tries to mark off any of the letters L-I-O-N on their bingo card. Players also compete for the first full card.

Another way folks can win is by hitting a bingo with the progressive jackpot number. A number will be selected at the start of the season and if it is used to hit a bingo, the person who hits it wins all the money in the jackpot. If no one hits the number, the jackpot will grow by \$200 each game.

The odds of picking any one ball is 1 in 75, so there's potential the jackpot could get into the thousands, Mayor Brown noted.

Tickets will be sold at \$10 a card.

The Orangeville Lions Club became interested in bringing TV Bingo to the region after watching how smoothly it's been running for the Lions Club in Kitchener-Waterloo.

All of the numbers called are displayed on screen for each game, making it easy for viewers to follow.

'It's impossible to not know where you are and get lost in the middle of the game,' said Mayor Brown.

He added that a lot of the folks who played Radio Bingo were older and some were hard of hearing, so having the easy-to-follow TV Bingo broadcast should help.

The local Lions Club purchased a brand-new bingo machine for TV Bingo where balls are called from.

The total cost was approximately \$25,000 but the return on investment is anticipated to come fast, as the Lions' estimate they'll bring in roughly \$100,000 over the next year.

The machine instantly detects the first bingo from the bingo cards sold that week, making it easy for the Lions to verify if players do in fact have a bingo. This is a new feature that wasn't available with Radio Bingo.

'It's very quick verification of the winner,' said Mayor Brown. 'The game goes much smoother.'

A fun angle to the Radio Bingo was the kitchen parties that friends and families would have together while playing the game each week.

'We expect that's going to be carried forward,' said Mayor Brown. 'There'll be people getting together having fun.'

He also noted with the addition of other municipalities in the region for bingo, such as Caledon, Erin, and Bolton, the number of people playing should triple. Radio Bingo saw anywhere from 300 to 600 per game on average.

Fans can expect some banter from the bingo caller, keeping them entertained as they play the game.

The Orangeville Lions' Club is partnering with a variety of vendors in the communities TV Bingo is being offered, primarily at gas stations, variety stores, and grocery stores.

Depending on interest levels, bingo cards could be sold in Shelburne since Rogers TV can be streamed by anyone online.

Pick up locations will be announced closer to September 13, ahead of TV Bingo's official launch.