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JOSHUA DRAKES PHOTO

PROTECTING WATER: Melancthon municipal election candidates voiced opposition to the proposed Strada Aggregate Quarry during a Watershed Guardians of Dufferin County forum at Horning's Mills Community Hall on Oct. 14. Candidates highlighted concerns about the quarry's potential impact on local water resources and outlined their plans to continue opposing the project. Turn to Page 6 for a full story.

Haunt in the Park returns with new scares

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Haunt in the Park is returning to Shelburne's Fiddle Park this Halloween season, bringing a new layout, fresh scares and family-friendly activities as the long-running community attraction marks another year of frightening fun.

Organized by the Little family and running from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. on Oct. 23, 24, 30 and 31, organizer Carola Little said that the event has become a Halloween tradition in the community.

"For the past 33 years, the Little family and their friends and neighbours have put on the Haunt in the Park," Little said. "Currently held in Fiddle Park in Shelburne, it's a great free family event that brings everybody out. The community responds wonderfully to this event, and they always come out in droves and support us in 100 different ways."

The free attraction relies entirely on volunteers and local support, with organizers spending weeks constructing elaborate scenes and preparing the park for visitors.

This year's event marks a return to Fiddle Park after construction and renovations prevented the haunt from being held there last year. The attraction has called the park home since 2015, and organizers are looking forward to welcoming visitors back to the renovated space.

JOSHUA DRAKES PHOTO

FRIGHT AT FIDDLE PARK: With over 70 volunteers per night, Shelburne's Haunt in the Park is setting up to be bigger and scarier than ever before for Halloween 2026. With classic horror movies, Fallout, Harry Potter and more as featured sections of the haunt, Haunt in the Park promises to scare you for a good cause as it continues its tradition of supporting the food bank.

"It feels like coming home a little bit," Little said. "We've been here since 2015, barring last year, of course, and it feels a little bit more like we know we have our sure footing under us, and with all the park renovations, we're quite confident that this year's event will be better than ever."

Little said that this year, there is a new section for guests to enjoy, and other areas have undergone improvements.

"We do have a new area, which is like a Harry Potter area after the Voldemort attack," she said. "We've enhanced or perfected certain areas as well. We've tried new ideas in certain areas... we have so many characters this year that even if you don't take the time to appreciate the scenery, the scare will still be there for you regardless."

Continued on Page 5

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Treats in the Street brings Halloween magic to downtown Shelburne

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

Treats in the Street celebration returns Saturday, Oct. 24, inviting families to enjoy a festive Halloween adventure while discovering local businesses, all contained to downtown Shelburne

The annual event is hosted by the Shelburne Business Improvement Area (BIA) in partnership with the Town of Shelburne.

The free, family-friendly event runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and promises an opportu-

nity for children and parents to celebrate the season together.

The event will get started at Jack Downing Park, where trick-or-treaters can pick up a treat bag and a ballot for the Great Pumpkin Hunt. From there, families can explore participating businesses along Main Street and Owen Sound Street together, collecting treats and taking part in Halloween-themed activities.

The event encourages residents to experience the heart of their community.

The celebration also highlights the role

small businesses and community partnerships play in creating memorable local traditions. By bringing families into the downtown core, Treats in the Street can offer participants a lively introduction to Shelburne's shops and services in a relaxed, seasonal setting.

Organizers are also encouraging attendees to support local families in need through donations to the community food bank.

Families are encouraged to arrive in costume and make time to explore the participating businesses throughout the morning and early afternoon.

As Shelburne prepares for another Halloween season, Treats in the Street is an opportunity for neighbours to connect, local businesses to shine, and children to make some lasting autumn memories before the seasons switch towards winter.

The event will also be running alongside Shelburne's Haunt in the Park, which will be running its Mini-Boo event from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., offering those not looking for too much fright an opportunity to experience the Haunt during the daytime.

Dufferin County council prospects make their pitches to voters

Written By **JAMES MATTHEWS**

Dufferin County candidates had the opportunity to lay out some of their election platform planks during the Dufferin Board of Trade's online all-candidate forum.

Mayoral and deputy mayoral candidates in the Oct. 26 municipal elections made their pitches for votes Sept. 25. The mayor and deputy mayors represent their municipalities on the upper tier council.



"A strong local economy starts with supporting the businesses that call Grand Valley and Dufferin County home," said Paul Latam, a mayoral candidate in Grand Valley.

A local business owner, he said he breathes agriculture and grew up on 50 acres of land that grew produce.

"When the last crop of shingles on farmland goes on, it means that we can no longer produce the food that we need. We have some of the best farmland in Ontario and we need to work to preserve it."

Steve Soloman, Grand Valley's incumbent mayor, said he has served the community with honesty and integrity.

years to the community with strong leadership, practical experience, and real results. In that time, he was the county's warden five times.

He said he's championed high-speed internet, affordable housing, economic development initiatives, senior's care, and environmental protection.

"I have consistently worked on boards and committees that keep our communities running," White said.

In Mono, John Creelman, the incumbent mayor, said the town was studied about 30 years ago by a panel of municipal experts from a number of countries, and they liked what they saw.

"The recommendation to the community at the time (was) preserve the best of what you have because you will never get it back," he said.

Meaningful progress means municipalities need to work together, and she brings willingness to listen, a collaborative approach, and a commitment to consider the larger picture.

Emerson Pendleton also has legs in the three-horse race for Mono's head of council. He said he aims to represent all residents and not just certain population segments.

"I think everybody should be dealt with equally," he said.

He acknowledged that Davie and Creelman have steered a steady course for fiscal responsibility in their years on council. And they have been effective at maintaining Mono's rural character.

"But I want to jump in and really advocate for agriculture," Pendleton said. "Agriculture is the biggest business in Dufferin and Mono."

Mulmur Mayor Janet Horner has been acclaimed to her seat for the next term. But two current councillors are campaigning to be deputy mayor.

Patricia Clark has been on council over the last two terms. And her past professional roles have given her much experience with finances, human resources, planning, and marketing.

Those are skills that are valuable around the council table, she noted.

"I've always been active in the community," Clark said.

As deputy mayor, she said she will continue to work to balance Mulmur's cherished rural lifestyle with its housing needs and appropriate commercial growth.

The other deputy mayor hopeful, Andrew Cunningham, didn't participate in the Dufferin Board of Trade's election forum.

Wade Mills is the incumbent candidate to be Shelburne's mayor. Residents' other choice for the role is Pratheeb (PK) Uthayakumar.

"I'm the one in the room that can hold the culture of council and, as we all know, culture eats strategy for breakfast," he said. "My understanding is great about this town."

Philip Rentsch, the incumbent deputy mayor in Grand Valley, said the role means being a voice at the county council level.

Dufferin County will be faced with a stark choice over the next council term, he said.

"It's probably the main reason why I want to stick with it," Rentsch said. "We have tried to be all things to all people but we haven't had the courage or the guts to pay for it. And I think that's going to be the issue."

If the upper tier wants to do everything through the county itself and freeze out private enterprise from assuming some of the responsibilities and services, then taxes at the county level need to increase, he said.

His choice would be to do less as a government and tap for-profit and non-profit entities to provide some services.

Creelman said Mono's best is in its rural character, its unsurpassed natural environment, the lowest tax rate in Dufferin County, no debt, and approachable and respected elected officials.

He said he will work to maintain the town's best attributes, ensure residents' voices are heard, and that the municipality is well run.

"Every resident expects well-delivered and affordable municipal services," he said.

Just about half of residents' tax dollars go to county services, he said.

"Your mayor needs to know the workings of Dufferin County and how to advocate for our share of services, especially badly needed county road maintenance and safety improvements," Creelman said.

And he's the mayor to do that.

Melinda Davie is a Mono councillor in the running for the mayor's job. There are important decisions ahead for Mono, she said, and included roads and infrastructure among the priorities that need more than short-term fixes and deferrals.

"We need to think strategically about upkeep, investment, and how to ensure that what we have built, will build, and maintain today serves our community well into the future," she said.

Laura Campbell has locked horns with incumbent Fred Nix in the deputy mayoral arena.

Campbell is a business owner, and that experience has afforded her an awareness of the region's economic challenges, she said. But there are also environmental challenges and those regarding development that need to be addressed.

"I want to take a greater responsibility for my home community," she said. "And I want to bring my passion and my enthusiasm and my expertise in small business and in grassroots work and community building to Dufferin County."

Mills said Dufferin County has shaped who he is today.

He served two terms as the county's warden, a time that taught him that progress comes through listening, finding common ground with all councillors and staff, and building consensus around shared priorities.

Economic development is one of those priorities of the upper tier, he said.

"I think we need to help our existing businesses thrive, help employers find the people that they need, and create more opportunities for our residents to work closer to home," Mills said.

To that end, he believes a regional approach to economic development is the correct path.

Uthayakumar didn't participate in the board's online forum. Neither did deputy mayor candidates Len Guchardi, Mike Green, and Andrea Knight.

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COMMUNITY VOICES

FTP wants to make purple impossible to miss this November

This November, Family Transition Place (FTP) is calling on the Orangeville, Dufferin and Caledon communities to Shine the Light on Woman Abuse.

As Ontario recognizes Woman Abuse Prevention Month, FTP is inviting residents, businesses, organizations and community leaders to help make woman abuse visible by lighting up their homes and buildings with purple throughout November.

Together, we can raise awareness, show support for survivors and send a powerful message that our community stands united against gender-based violence.

Last November, FTP introduced the Shine the Light on Woman Abuse initiative, created by the London Abused Women's Centre, encouraging residents to show their support for survivors by lighting their homes and workplaces with purple bulbs.

This November, FTP is building on that momentum by inviting even more residents, businesses and organizations to take part. Purple bulbs and Shine the Light polybag signs are available for purchase, helping spread awareness and encouraging conversations among friends, neighbours and the wider community.

Together, we can turn our communities purple to show support for survivors and raise awareness of women's abuse.

The purple light bulb campaign creates a highly visible reminder that violence against women happens in communities across Ontario, including our own and that everyone has a role to play in preventing it. By simply



changing an outdoor light bulb to purple, community members can become part of a collective display of awareness, support and solidarity.

Purple is recognized as a symbol of courage, survival and honour in the movement to end violence against women. This initiative is about more than changing a light bulb — it's about starting conversations and bringing an important issue out of the shadows.

Woman abuse can take many forms, including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and financial abuse and often happens behind closed doors.

When we shine purple, we show survivors they are not alone and help spark conversations about healthy relationships and creating safer communities. Awareness can be the beginning of change. When we make the issue of woman abuse visible, we create endless opportunities for change, connection and action.

FTP is also continuing its participation in the Wrapped in Courage campaign, a province-wide initiative led by the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses (OATH). Community members are encouraged to wear purple scarves throughout November as another visible way to stand in solidarity with survivors of gender-based violence.

Nov. 25 marks the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, a significant day during Woman Abuse Prevention Month. Throughout November, FTP will raise awareness and encourage community involvement through proclamations and flag-raising ceremonies, reinforcing the importance of standing together to end violence against women.

While November provides an important opportunity to raise awareness, FTP emphasizes that support for individuals experiencing violence is needed year-round.

FTP hopes residents will join the movement and help make purple impossible to miss this November. Imagine driving through Orangeville, Caledon and Dufferin County and seeing purple lights shining from homes, businesses and organizations throughout the community. It would send a powerful message that we see this issue, we stand with those affected by it, and we are committed to building safer communities.

How you can Shine the Light on Woman Abuse this November

- Wear a Purple Scarf: Show your support for survivors by purchasing and wearing a

Wrapped in Courage purple scarf.

- Light Up Purple: Shine a light on woman abuse by illuminating your home or business with a purple bulb throughout November.

- Start a Conversation: Talk with friends, family, coworkers and your community about woman abuse and healthy relationships.

- Get Involved: Encourage your workplace, school, business or community group to join the campaign.

- Nov. 25: Recognize the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women by attending a local flag raising or act of awareness.

This November, FTP is asking the community to take one simple action: Shine the Light on Woman Abuse.

Together, through awareness, compassion and community action, we can help break the cycle of abuse and create a future where every woman feels safe, respected and empowered. This November, let's make purple impossible to miss and show our community that we stand together against gender-based violence.

For more information about these initiatives, purchasing Wrapped in Courage scarves, purple light bulbs or Shine the Light lawn signs, or accessing services offered by FTP, visit familytransitionplace.ca or call 519-942-4122, ext. 243.

By purchasing these items, community members help raise awareness of woman abuse, show solidarity with survivors and support the important work of FTP.

Care Day brings health and community supports together at the Mel Lloyd Centre

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Shelburne residents will have an opportunity to connect with local health and community services under one roof when a Care Day event comes to the Mel Lloyd Centre on Oct. 29.

The event, running from 1 to 4 p.m. in the centre's New Horizons space, is being organized by the Dufferin Area Family Health Team in partnership with the Hills of Headwaters Collaborative Ontario Health Team and Dufferin County Community Support Services. Held during Community Support Month, the event will focus on services and resources for seniors.

Visitors can connect with health and social service providers, access foot care, attend informative presentations and participate in activities. Light refreshments will

also be available. Heidi Vanderhorst, director of operations for the Dufferin Area Family Health Team and lead for Care Days across Dufferin County, said the initiative is designed to make accessing support as straightforward as possible.

"The whole concept is to be barrier-free," she said. "So you don't need to register. You don't need a health card. There's nothing like that that's needed at all. You can just walk in and access the services you need."

Vanderhorst continued, "For instance, if you needed some mental health support, and maybe you've been a bit leery to reach out and speak to someone, if we have a mental health therapist that day, you can actually have a short session with them to get an idea of what it would be like. And then we can refer you to those services ongoing. That's really the idea: we can

support the person on the spot at that moment."

Unlike a traditional health fair, Care Days allow visitors to have meaningful conversations with providers and, where available, receive support directly at the event. Attendees can also be connected with appropriate services for continued assistance afterward.

Visitors can explore services independently or ask a navigator to help them find the right providers. Private spaces are also available for confidential conversations.

Organizations expected to participate in the Shelburne event include the Alzheimer Society, community paramedics, TeleCheck services, a registered dietitian and an occupational therapist.

Care Days began in March 2025 as a collaboration between the Dufferin Area Fam-

ily Health Team and the Ontario Health Team. Since then, 41 events have supported more than 500 people across Dufferin County and Caledon.

The events also provide an opportunity for residents without a primary care physician to learn about a patient portal and wait-list process that can help connect them with a local family doctor.

Vanderhorst encourages residents to attend, even if they are unsure which services they need, noting that visitors can explore at their own pace without committing to participate.

The Care Day takes place Oct. 29 from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Mel Lloyd Centre in Shelburne.

Those looking to learn more about Care Days and access the care provider portal can go to: hillsofheadwaterscollaborative.ca/accessprimarycare

Delivery driver charged with several counts of fraud following investigation in Shelburne

Dufferin OPP have charged a Brampton resident with multiple fraud-related offences and theft following an investigation in Shelburne.

On Oct. 13, an individual attending a residence in Shelburne to deliver parcels allegedly stole personal property belonging to the resident. The stolen property was subsequently used to make multiple unauthorized purchases at various retail locations, including gas stations and hardware stores.

On Oct. 14, at approximately 4:40 p.m., officers from the Dufferin OPP Detachment received information that individuals believed

to be involved in the investigation were in the area of Main Street in Shelburne.

Officers attended the area and located the suspects in a white cargo delivery van. A traffic stop was conducted, and both individuals were arrested at the scene.

As a result of the investigation, Danish Ajimal, 24, from Brampton, has been charged with:

- Theft Under \$5000
- Fraud Under \$5000 (four counts)
- Use of Credit Card (four counts)
- Possession Property Obtained by Crime Under \$5,000 - in Canada

- Driver fail to surrender licence
- Improper tires
- Drive vehicle or boat with cannabis readily available

The second male was released unconditionally.

The accused individual is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Orangeville at a later date to answer to the charges.

The listed charges have not been proven in court.

The Dufferin OPP encourages residents to take precautions to protect their personal

belongings when receiving deliveries.

"Keeping valuables, identification, and financial documents secured and out of sight can help prevent theft and protect against the unauthorized use of personal information," said Dufferin OPP.

"When possible, monitor parcel deliveries and ensure personal property is kept out of sight and secured. If you notice suspicious activity or believe your property has been stolen, report it to police."

To report a crime or provide information about a criminal investigation, contact the OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

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7pm - 11pm

Friday October 30th
7pm - 11pm

Saturday October 31st
7pm - 11pm

All events are FREE
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Melancthon candidates outline key priorities at Watershed Guardians forum

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Watershed Guardians of Dufferin County hosted a municipal election candidate forum at Horning’s Mills Community Hall on Oct. 14, giving Melancthon residents an opportunity to hear candidates discuss their priorities, particularly concerns surrounding proposed quarry expansions and the protection of local water resources.

Mayoral candidate
Ruth Plowright is running for mayor of Melancthon after living in Horning’s Mills for 38 years with her family. Drawing on her experience in business and community life, she wants to protect local water resources, preserve the township’s rural character and ensure future development is carefully considered. She also highlighted road safety and community amenities.

Incumbent Mayor Darren White is seeking re-election after serving on Melancthon council since 2009 and as mayor since 2014. His priorities include protecting agricultural land and water resources, managing growth responsibly and maintaining the township’s infrastructure. White also emphasized fiscal responsibility and continuing to challenge proposed aggregate expansions he believes could threaten local water supplies.

Deputy mayor
James McLean spoke about the importance of protecting water, agricultural land and the township’s rural character. He highlighted the need to work with neighbouring municipalities and other levels of government to address concerns about proposed aggregate operations and their potential effects on shared water resources.

McLean was acclaimed as deputy mayor.
Councillor candidates
Bashir Ahmmed is running for councillor with a focus on community involvement, road safety and protecting local residents. He spoke about speeding and dangerous traffic along local roads, including the need to address concerns around County Road

17 and Highway 124. Ahmmed also encouraged residents to work together and make their concerns heard.

Shaen Armstrong is seeking a seat on council and highlighted the importance of responsible growth, road safety and fiscal responsibility. She has attended council and committee meetings and wants to better understand why township boards and committees experience turnover. Armstrong said she hopes to strengthen community participation and support the volunteers who help keep Melancthon active.

Kait DeVore is running for councillor after moving to Melancthon with her husband in 2020, where they hope to raise their family long-term. Her community involvement includes volunteering with emergency services support, serving on a local hall board and acting as treasurer of her school council. She wants to encourage more residents to participate in township decisions.

Jim Hillis is running for council after living in the area for 45 years. He reflected on how the community has changed, saying he believes the township has lost some of the neighbourly spirit and participation he remembers from when he first arrived. Hillis hopes to help rebuild community involvement and encourage more residents to take part.

Bryan Lemcke is seeking a seat on council, bringing experience from public works, recreation and the private sector. A longtime Dufferin County resident, he emphasized the importance of practical decision-making, accountability and transparency in local government. He wants the council to draw on different backgrounds and perspectives to make informed decisions in the best interests of residents.

Nancy Malek is running for councillor after previously serving on council from 2010 to 2014 during the Highland Quarry dispute. She has been involved with community boards and local advocacy, and described herself as a water activist. Malek wants to protect the township’s groundwater and agricultural land while encouraging residents



JOSHUA DRAKES PHOTOS

CANDIDATES’ CONCERNS: With the Strada quarry at the focus of the forum, election candidates shared their plans for how they plan to serve the community and protect its natural waterways in the face of the large aggregate facility looking to push below the water levels in the region. Each candidate agreed to oppose the quarry during their question sessions with members of the community.

and neighbouring communities to speak up about proposed development.

David Miller is running for councillor after living in the community since 2001 and working as a local small-business owner. In his introduction, Miller said he wants the opportunity to represent residents and help make things better in the township. He offered a brief introduction, focusing on his connection to the community and desire to serve.

Incumbent councillor Bill Neilson is seeking another term, emphasizing responsible fiscal management, sustainable growth and open communication with residents. He pointed to proposed expansions

of aggregate operations as a major concern, warning they could affect the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater. Neilson said protecting water is essential for residents, farms and future generations.

Mardi-An Ziegler is running for councillor after growing up in the area and working as a registered practical nurse before retiring. She said she wants to give back to the community and help protect its future. Her priorities include safeguarding water and natural resources, ensuring residents have a voice and approaching local challenges with facts and practical solutions.

Continued on Page 12

Haunt in the Park returns to Shelburne’s Fiddle Park this weekend with new scares

Continued from Front

Behind the scenes, preparations extend well beyond the weeks leading up to Halloween. Planning and prop construction take place throughout the year, while the physical build begins in late September. The attraction is then dismantled and packed away within two weeks after the event concludes.

The volunteer team is also larger than ever, with nearly 70 volunteers expected on each event night. Participants include people earning high school volunteer hours, Halloween enthusiasts and community members eager to help deliver one of Shelburne’s seasonal highlights. For families looking for a gentler experience, Haunt in the Park will also host its daytime Mini Boo event on Saturday, Oct.

24, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. With masks off, monsters on their best behaviour and most animatronics switched off, the daytime event allows children and parents to explore the attraction and appreciate its detailed scenery without the full nighttime scares. Mini Boo will also feature Party Safari with reptiles and Make It Sweet’s Sweet Treat Truck. A free shuttle will run between Fiddle Park and the downtown Treats in the Streets event, helping families travel between the two Halloween destinations. The

first 500 children attending Mini Boo will receive a treat bag alongside their candy. Entry is free to everyone, but donations are greatly appreciated, such as nonperishable food products or cash for the Shelburne Food Bank. Currently, Haunt in the Park is still looking for more volunteers to help with Halloween night on Oct. 31. Go to hauntinthepark.com to learn more. With a large team, plenty of scares, and strong community backing, Haunt in the Park is set to once again scare locals for a good cause.

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Enjoy the outdoors with an Ontario Park pass from the Shelburne Public Library

It is a beautiful time of year to explore the outdoors, and your library card can help you do just that. Join the library on a guided hike. Join Carl, Bruce Trail expert and library staff, on a guided hike through Splitrock Narrows Nature Reserve on Saturday, Oct. 24. Meet in the parking lot at 10 a.m. Although leashed dogs are allowed on the Bruce Trail, please leave your furry friends at home for this community hike. Borrow a pass to discover a new (or favourite) place. Visit one of our province’s beautiful parks with one of our Ontario Parks passes. Check out one of the Credit Valley Conservation parks. There is so much to see and do, and nine conservation areas to choose from. All you need is a pass. The Mansfield Outdoor Centre is one of our area’s best-kept secrets. This four-season destination nestled in the scenic hills of Mulmur offers a range of services and activities for the outdoor enthusiast, and you can visit for free by borrowing a day pass from the library. Looking for a pretty view but from inside? Borrow a pass to the Museum of Dufferin and take in not only the rich history from



our area, but the beautiful panoramic views of the surrounding farmlands and rolling hills from the Silo Gallery located on the fourth floor. Looking for your next read? Check out The Edge of Space-Time by Chanda Prescod-Weinstein and recommended by Molly. This is Professor Weinstein’s second book, and I’ve made a mad dash for the first. You may be thinking, ‘why would I want to read a book that’s basically an annotated textbook when I’m out of school?’ While that thought never occurs to me, I can understand. The concepts of Space and Time are vague, massive and wholly open to interpretation. Because of this, Professor Weinstein seeks to simplify concepts previously gate-kept by academia and to amplify the natural intelligence and curiosity which resides within us all. She references Star Trek, Wu-Tang Clan and Carl Sagan among myriad references. She brings personal anecdotes and deep feelings to the table of higher learning. In short, she connects the dots that sometimes feel all over the place for most people. If you’ve ever wondered what else you might learn about yourself and the universe, this book is for you. And me. And all of us.

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Dufferin Oaks Family Council hosts information session for residents' families

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Dufferin Oaks Family Council is working to help families better understand the services available to their loved ones through a two-day information session designed to connect them with staff, community organizations and support services.

The sessions will take place on Nov. 6 and 7 from 2 to 4 p.m. and brings together a range of organizations and service providers. Attendees can ask questions, meet department representatives and learn more about the resources available at the long-term care home.

Dennis Cox, co-chair of the Family Council, said the idea grew out of conversations with council members who discovered they were unaware of some of the services and activities available to residents.

“There was a number of questions from the family council members,” he said. “They didn’t know this, they didn’t know they had that. Many people didn’t know

that certain services were available. We realized that maybe we should do something to help that.”

Although families receive an information guide when a loved one moves into Dufferin Oaks, Cox said the stress and uncertainty surrounding that transition can make it difficult to absorb everything at once.

The council decided an in-person information session would give families another opportunity to learn about the home and speak directly with management and service providers.

The Family Council consists of approximately 14 members, with about five actively involved in organizing its initiatives. Its members are relatives of residents who work together to advocate for their loved ones, raise concerns with management and help identify potential improvements.

The council meets monthly, primarily through Zoom, and maintains a cooperative relationship with the home’s management team.

Cox said the council also provides a point of contact for families who have questions or are unsure how to navigate life at the home. He noted that residents on different floors have different needs, making it important for the council to hear from a broad range of families.

“If there’s family members that are not quite sure what to do or what’s going on, they can talk to us anytime... We’re there to speak to them too.”

The information session is intended to highlight the services and activities available to residents, including supports that families may not immediately realize are offered. Cox said the home provides a variety of programs and activities, including regular concerts and social opportunities.

Organizing the event began earlier this year, with planning meetings starting last winter.

Cox said community agencies and service providers have been receptive to participating, with several expressing interest after an earlier open house.

Some participating organizations include the Alzheimer’s Association, the Ontario Caregivers Association and the Family Councils of Ontario.

The council hopes to make the information session an annual event, recognizing that building awareness and attendance may take time.

Beyond the event, the Family Council continues to work with Dufferin Oaks on resident advocacy and quality improvement. Cox represents the council on the home’s Quality Improvement Council, where department heads review operations and identify areas for improvement.

The Family Council is also welcoming new members.

Cox said greater awareness of the home’s services can help families make more informed decisions and better support their loved ones.

To learn more about the information session or join the Dufferin Oaks Family Council, contact Dufferin Oaks at: 519-925-2140

Headwaters Health Care Foundation raises \$40,000 during Hike to Fight Cancer

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Headwaters Health Care Foundation’s Hike to Fight Cancer was a clear success, as the organization reports raising \$40,000 in support of local cancer care.

The third annual Hike to Fight Cancer was held on Oct. 8 at the Caledon Ski Lodge. The location served as a scenic backdrop as over 150 participants took the trails to hike in support of cancer patients, to honour loved ones and celebrate survivors.

The foundation recognized the largest

individual fundraiser, Karen Webster, who raised \$1,157. They also recognized the largest group fundraiser, Direct Plastic, who raised a collective \$3,151.

The organization extended its thanks to participants and partners who made the day possible.

“The Headwaters Health Care Foundation extends its heartfelt thanks to the event sponsors, prize donors, volunteers, participants, and supporters whose generosity and enthusiasm helped make this year’s hike such a tremendous success,” the foundation said in a statement.

“Thank you to everyone who hiked, donated, volunteered, sponsored, and cheered us on. Together, you are helping make a difference for patients and families facing cancer in our community. We can’t wait to see you on the trail again next year.”

This year’s hike differed from previous ones, as feedback requested some easier routes for more accessible activities, which seems to have resonated with attendees, as evidenced by the strong turnout and participation.

Following the hike, participants were welcomed back inside the ski lounge for

refreshments. A lasagna dinner prepared in-house by the lodge was followed by interactive activities and games, including a silent auction, raffle and pumpkin weighing contest.

With \$40,000 raised from this year’s hike, the Headwaters Health Care Foundation is already looking forward to next year and what new opportunities for fundraising could bring.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

HIKING FOR HEALTHCARE: The Hike to Fight Cancer, put on by the Headwaters Health Care Foundation, brought out 150 hikers to the Caledon Ski Resort to take to the trails in support of cancer patients in the community. The fundraiser was very successful, collecting \$40,000 throughout the campaign. The foundation thanked all those who participated in the hike and those who helped raise money. Funds raised will support cancer care at the Headwaters Health Care Centre.

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Be FoodWise this fall by learning how to store your produce to help you waste less food in your household and save more money in the process!



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Store Loose



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Fridge
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Fridge
Remove bands & ties. Store sealed container, lined with a damp towel.



Potatoes
Cupboard/Pantry
Store loose or in a mesh bag separate from onions.

Looking for more examples of how to store your produce?

Download the Produce Storage Guide! Visit dufferincounty.ca/waste or scan the QR code for a copy!

The Plan to Save, Reduce Food Waste campaign can help households waste less food, save more money, and eat healthier in the process. Check out the campaign on our website to learn more!



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Arts & Entertainment



LOCAL COMMUNITY EVENTS

Theatre Orangeville double bill delivers two compelling acts: review

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Theatre Orangeville tried something new, and it worked.

Theatre Orangeville has just kicked off its ‘Season of Discovery’ this fall, and has prepared a lineup of unique, diverse, Canadian productions.

The first up at Theatre Orangeville was a unique experience that the theatre has not tried before — a double bill. A double bill is a pair of one-act plays that run back-to-back in a slot that would fit a two-act play — productions that are well known in Orangeville.

But this time, artistic director Jennifer Stewart wanted to do something different, to show how Theatre Orangeville is thinking outside the box and looking for new ways to engage guests and platform Canadian talent.

Love is for Poor People and Or You Can Do Nothing are two one-act, one-actor productions crafted by Canadian playwright Stewart Lemoine. Both productions lean heavily into monologues, as they follow the main and only characters looking back on their lives, reflecting on choices, paths taken and people they’ve met.

Love is for Poor People follows a woman only known as ‘her’ as she dubiously recounts lovers and suitors that she’s met throughout her life, and the chaotic tornado her life has been. Being an enjoyer of finer tastes, the best money can buy, and particularly rich suitors, she recounts a particularly passionate romance while travelling abroad. Through multiple glasses of champagne, she recounts how it broke all her previous rules and tastes and has stayed with her throughout her life.

Emma Grabinsky brought a calm but fierce presence to the character on stage, making for an iconic performance that is guaranteed to leave an impact. The character is erratic, unpredictable and keeps you guessing about what could possibly come next, and Grabinsky latched on strongly to that aspect, while also being able to display a person behind that persona, one that

might be lonely, longing for a connection that was not to be.

The story also required the sole actor on stage to be able to think on their feet, which Grabinsky did with comedic effect, stopping mid-monologue to say “bless you” to an audience member when they sneezed, like a friend would excuse another at a party.

The story could jump from fast-paced to slow, taking up the entire stage to just one microphone and a spotlight, and the audience was hooked through the whole thing. Excellent use of props, stage design and movement kept up this illusion that despite there only being one person on stage, the stage felt busy — densely populated, even.

For Or You Can Do Nothing, the similarities and differences between the two productions were on full display.

Unlike Love is for Poor People, which is a reflection on life through the lens of the main character and driven by their experiences, Or You Can Do Nothing is different, instead choosing to showcase a reflection of life not through the main character, but through their interactions with others and how these strangers perceive and interact with him.

Enter Owen Fyfe, a man with an unusually large home and an ability to recognize potential in people who may not see it in themselves. Fyfe isn’t necessarily a rich man; his large house is the product of an inheritance his mother received during their many travels in his youth.

What he does have in abundance is empathy, understanding, a skill for seeing potential. Throughout his story, he recounts meeting a collection of very different people with different skills, dreams and problems. He offers them a choice - do something about it and stay with him for a time, or do nothing.

As new characters continue to pour into the house, from a woman questioning her divorce, a young musician, a famous vocalist, and more, Fyfe not only learns about the people that stay with him, but he learns more about himself at the same time.

Actor Ron Pederson delivered a masterclass in his portrayal of Owen Fyfe. A



BOB SMITHSON PHOTOGRAPHY PHOTO

DOUBLE BILL: Lining up two plays back-to-back from Canadian playwright Stewart Lemoine, Love is for Poor People and Or You Can Do Nothing were both masterclass performances from Theatre Orangeville. With only one actor per play portraying a singular character, each production remained captivating and engaging for audience members as each character reflects on their lives in different ways.

longtime fan of Stewart Lemoine, Pederson dominated the stage from the first line to the last.

He brought a dynamic character to life, capturing unique vocal patterns, body language and facial expressions, which had audience members completely immersed. His welcoming and humorous disposition was disarming even for the audience, even when he was only talking to other characters on stage, which he did through Fyfe making impressions of the other characters.

His performance, like Grabinsky’s, did such a powerful job of breathing life into characters we’ve never seen or met; one could have assumed there were at least 4 people on stage during the play and forget this was a one-man show.

Once again, the set design was simple,

practical, yet iconic, each item serving a purpose without causing clutter or becoming an obstacle. Pederson made excellent use of the stage, making every corner, every spot, come to life.

Putting both plays together, Theatre Orangeville took a risk that could’ve fallen flat. Two plays, a new format, one actor for each is a gamble that needs all pieces to deliver to have a successful night, and artistic director Jennifer Stewart made all the right moves. The double bill was a fun, captivating and memorable kickoff to another season of local theatre in Orangeville.

Love is For Poor People and Or You Can Do Nothing shows continue at Theatre Orangeville until Nov. 1. Tickets can be found online at theatreorangeville.ca/show/love-is-for-poor-people-or-you-can-do-nothing.

Well-Comm Network’s Fall Wellness Expo to take over Monora Park Pavilion

Following the success of its spring event, the Well-Comm Network (WCN) is returning to Monora Park Pavilion on Wednesday, Oct. 28, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The expo has grown significantly since May and will now fill both levels of the pavilion, bringing together 46 vendors and a full day of 32 wellness experiences to choose from.

Guests will have the opportunity to meet local wellness professionals, discover products and services, attend educational workshops, classes and activities, participate in guided practices and explore new approaches to supporting their well-being.

The expanded Expo will feature six distinct areas throughout the pavilion: the Vendor Village, Inner Sanctuary, Nourished Kitchen, Workshop Haven, Longevity Studio & Vendors, and Connecting in Nature.

Each area offers a different way to experience wellness. Attendees can browse products and services, take part in intimate guided sessions, watch practical food and nutrition demonstrations, attend educational workshops, explore healthy aging and functional movement, and participate in outdoor experiences.

“We were so encouraged by the community’s response to our first Expo in May,” said Deborah Kolody, founder of WCN and the WCN Wellness Expos. “This fall, we are expanding into the entire pavilion so

we can offer even more opportunities for people to learn, participate and connect with the wellness support available in our area.”

The event is designed to be welcoming and approachable, whether someone is already familiar with holistic wellness or simply curious about what is available. Guests are welcome to spend the entire day at the Expo or visit for a few hours.

Admission is \$10 and includes a \$10 vendor coupon to spend with the vendor of their choice. Admission also includes access to the scheduled workshops, classes, activities and experiences. Each session is available on a first come basis.

Expo passes can be purchased in advance or at the door. Advance purchasers can enjoy added bonuses, gifted by expo vendors as well as a multitude of door prizes.

The official Fall Expo Event Guide is included inside the free fall issue of The Unfolding Wellness eMagazine.

The guide provides attendees with information about the Expo vendors, scheduled experiences and everything they can explore throughout the day.

The Well-Comm Network is a local, not-for-profit community that connects wellness seekers with wellness professionals through networking events, workshops, expos, an online wellness directory and The Unfolding Wellness eMagazine

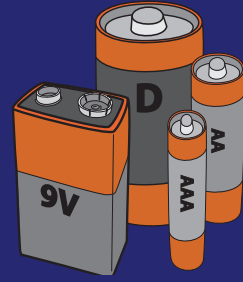
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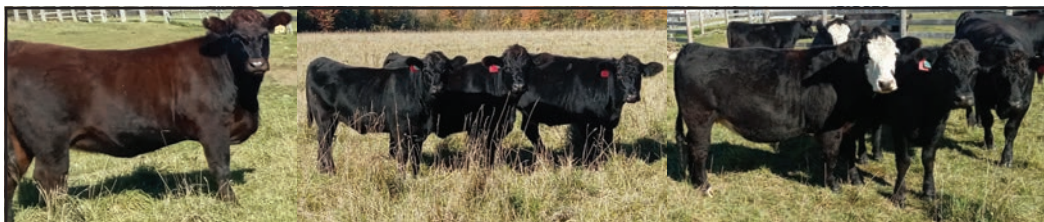
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Townline, turn south & go 5 miles to farm on East side.

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Melancthon candidates outline key priorities at Watershed Guardians forum

Continued from Page 6

Candidates respond to quarry concerns

Following candidate introductions, the forum switched gears and moved to a question period. Candidates were asked questions primarily concerned with the Strada Aggregate Quarry that threatens the water supply for municipalities in the region.

The first question was straightforward. For each candidate, what have they done in the last two years to oppose the Strada quarry?

Acclaimed Deputy Mayor McLean outlined steps taken by council, including hiring independent peer reviewers to scrutinize Strada's studies on air quality, dust, traffic and hydrology, as well as retaining additional legal counsel. He also described meetings with community groups and political representatives, and a recent meeting with Six Nations representatives to raise awareness of the proposed quarry.

"Strada has to conduct various studies into air quality, dust, traffic, hydrology," McLean said. "They hire experts to do all these studies. We hire our own, what we call peer reviewers, to review those studies and to vet them. And those peer review studies are coming in all the time,

and they're finding some very real concerns with the way Strada studies have been conducted."

"We've also hired additional legal counsel. Some of the brightest minds in our province, who have been up against quarries in other parts of the region, are now on our team and are working closely with us," he added.

Incumbent council candidate Neilson traced his opposition to concerns raised at his first council meeting, when he questioned Strada's compliance report and water sampling results. He also described reviewing monitoring plans, visiting the Milton Quarry to compare its operations with Strada's proposal, and joining delegations to neighbouring municipalities to raise concerns about water protection.

"This began for me back at my very first council meeting back on April 7, 2022," he said. "In 2025, I visited the Milton Quarry. I wanted to see how a quarry actually operated, and this was a below-the-water-table quarry as well. Very good learning experience. We visited with the Six Nations there two weeks ago as well to get the word out, and they were very receptive to what we had to say."

Council candidate Malek described years of advocacy against the quarry, including sharing peer-review findings with

media outlets and provincial and federal ministers. She said her work with local advocates helped bring the issue to the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, which contacted Strada to request peer reviews and test results.

"I have been working on this for years," Malek said. "Those of you who know me, I talk about this constantly. I and Kyle Seebach have been directed to the federal government for this, and the Minister of Fisheries, Joanne Thompson, hooked me up with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, a federal agency, and they have approached Strada and have asked for their peer reviews and their test results. We deserve fresh water. We deserve not to have our wells destroyed."

Council candidate Armstrong said she attended public meetings to hear different perspectives, then visited the Milton Quarry to better understand its operations and compare its practices with what was being proposed for Melancthon. She said the visit highlighted potential risks and gaps, prompting her to write multiple letters opposing the proposal. She also re-

viewed reports and continued attending council meetings to stay informed.

"I live by the mantra 'listening is learning', so the first thing I did was attend as many meetings as I could," she said.

"I was one of the few people that actually signed up to go see the Milton Quarry. I'm glad I did because I learned things, and I learned what wasn't being done here that was being done there, and the risks are a lot higher up here. I took that information, and I wrote letters. And I didn't just write one letter; I wrote several letters."

With the municipal election right around the corner, the Strada quarry looms over the election and community, with all candidates, both incumbent and new, vowing to continue fighting it regardless of the election results.

All have plans to see the fight won, but not everyone has the same path to fight back.

The municipal election takes place on Oct. 26.

For more information on the Watershed Guardians, go to: juststopit.ca

Three people charged with impaired driving over three days throughout Dufferin County

Dufferin OPP charged three individuals with impaired driving-related offences between Oct. 10 and 12.

On Oct. 10, 2026, at approximately 1:21 a.m., officers were conducting a Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (RIDE) spot check in the area of Broadway and Mill Street in Orangeville when a vehicle entered the checkpoint.

During the interaction with the driver, officers initiated an impaired driving investigation.

As a result of the investigation, Peter Olenicz, 37, from Halton Hills, has been charged with operation while impaired - blood alcohol concentration (80 plus).

On Oct. 11, at approximately 10:30 p.m., officers were conducting a Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (RIDE) spot check in the area of Broadway and Mill Street in Orangeville when a vehicle entered the checkpoint.

During the interaction with the driver, officers initiated an impaired driving investigation.

As a result of the investigation, Riley

Schilger, 26, from Schomberg, has been charged with operation while impaired - blood alcohol concentration (80 plus).

On Oct. 12, 2026, at approximately 7:10 p.m., officers were dispatched to the area of Manor Crescent for a call for service. While on scene police spoke with an individual who arrived on scene.

During the interaction with the individual, officers initiated an impaired driving investigation.

As a result of the investigation, Daler Aulakh, 32, from Orangeville, has been charged with operation while impaired - blood alcohol concentration (80 plus) and operation while impaired - alcohol and drugs.

All three accused are scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Orangeville at a later date to answer to the charges.

The driver's licences of all three accused were suspended, and their respective vehicles were impounded.

None of the charges have been proven in court.



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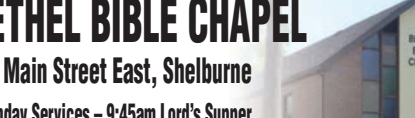
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