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MEET THE AUTHORS: Authors in the Hills of Mulmur guest authors, from left, Terry Fallis, Heather Marshall, and Linwood Barclay, pose with their novels during the Sunday event at The Foley Barn. Guests at the sold-out event had opportunities to engage directly with the authors about their books and literature before being treated to food and refreshments during the after-party. See story on Page 6.

Take Back the Night coming to Shelburne for the first time

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

Shelburne residents will have an opportunity to come together against sexual and gender-based violence next month as Family Transition Place (FTP) hold its annual Take Back the Night event in the community for the first time.

The event will take place Thursday, Sept. 17, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Mel Lloyd Centre. The evening will feature guest speakers, community resource tables, a two-kilometre empowerment walk through Shelburne and a candlelight vigil to honour survivors and remember those whose lives have been lost due to gender-based violence. The event is open to community members of all ages, and no registration is required.

Kelly Lee, manager of fund development and communication at FTP, said that while Take Back the Night has been an international movement for decades, FTP and partner organizers wanted to expand their awareness work into another community within their service area.

"Take Back the Night events have been taking place internationally for years, starting back in the 70s," she said. "So we thought, what a great place to land, and it's an opportunity for us to expand the awareness piece into a different community that we support."

The Shelburne event is being organized by FTP in partnership with Dufferin Child and Family Services (DCAFS) and Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC). The three organizations work together to support victims and survivors of sexual violence in Dufferin County, and the event will provide an opportunity for all three partners to connect directly with residents.

This marks the first time FTP has hosted its own Take Back the Night event in Shelburne. The organization has historically partnered with Georgian College on initiatives recognizing the event.

Lee said the Mel Lloyd Centre was selected as the venue because of its central location and the number of community services already operating there.

"We have an office in the Mel Lloyd Centre, and there's other services available through our partnerships in the Mel Lloyd Centre," she said. "Because it's such a central location with other services nearby, it's a good opportunity for us to sort of touch base in that space and in the Shelburne community."

The event is intended to connect residents with organizations and supports they may not otherwise encounter through a single community gathering.

Attendees will have time at the beginning of the evening to visit information tables, meet community partners and ask questions about available services. Representa-

tives from FTP, DCAFS and HHCC will be present, along with other community organizations connected to the work.

The information component is a significant part of the evening. Organizers want residents to leave with a better understanding of where support is available for people who have experienced sexual violence, as well as information that can help people feel more informed about personal and community safety.

The formal portion of the evening is expected to begin shortly before 6 p.m.

Lee said that guest speakers and partner representatives are likely to speak.

"We're working on the complement of speakers right now," she said. "We do know that we'll have representation from each of the partners to speak, but we are also looking at survivors to speak about their experiences as well. We have a couple of other things that we're looking at that are a little bit outside the box beyond guest speakers as well."

The event will then move outside for a two-kilometre empowerment walk.

The planned route will begin at the Mel Lloyd Centre, travel behind the building and continue through Shelburne. Participants will travel along Jelly Street, cross at Main Street and continue onto Victoria Street before returning to the Mel Lloyd Centre.

Continued on Page 6

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FEATURED ITEM

Shelburne council approves traffic calming strategy, 34 speed cushions

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

Shelburne Council has approved a new traffic calming strategy that will see 34 permanent speed cushions installed across five streets, with additional measures planned as funding becomes available.

The strategy was presented to council during an Aug. 24 meeting in response to ongoing concerns about speeding, traffic volumes and pedestrian safety. A staff report to council notes that traffic calming is intended to reduce vehicle speeds and cut-through traffic while improving safety for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users.

Council approved permanent speed cushions at five locations: five on Anishinaabe Drive between Red Elm Road and Highway 24; five on Berry Street between Fiddle Park Lane and Greenwood Street; four on Fiddle Park Lane between Berry Street and Morden Street; 10 on Greenwood Street between Main Street East and Fiddle Park Lane; and 10 on Simon Street between Victoria Street and Main Street East.

During the discussion, council questioned how the permanent installations would affect snow clearing and emergency response.

Staff said the design would account for snow maintenance, while the fire department had indicated it could navigate around the traffic-calming measures.

The approved measures are expected to be implemented in 2026, subject to budget availability. The report estimates the capital cost at \$231,500, which can be covered by funding the town has already received through the provincial Road Safety Initiative Fund.

Council also approved the recommendations for submitting a further RSIF funding application for traffic-calming measures and requested that Dufferin County consider transferring ownership of portions of County Road 124, County Road 11 and Side Road 30 to the town.

The transfer is intended to grant Shelburne greater control over traffic safety, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and future road planning.

Council ultimately accepted the report and approved all recommendations.

FILE PHOTO

TRAFFIC: Traffic moves through Shelburne as the town prepares to introduce new traffic-calming measures on several streets in an effort to improve road safety.



Flato-related properties in Melancthon and Dundalk recently placed under receivership

Three properties tied to Flato-related companies in Melancthon Township are now under the control of a court-appointed receiver amid more than \$29 million in outstanding debt.

TDB Restructuring Limited was appointed receiver and manager June 23 following an application by Dorr Capital Corporation and Olympia Trust Company against Flato Greens Inc. and six related companies.

The receivership includes properties

at 516276 County Road 124, 476259 Third Line and 159135 Highway 10 in Melancthon Township. The receiver's notice identifies the three properties as part of eight properties in Melancthon, Dundalk and Beeton covered by the receivership.

The court proceeding remains active, with TDB Restructuring listed as receiver. The June 23 appointment order placed the assets, undertakings and properties of the seven debtor companies under the receiver's control.

The debt owed to Dorr Capital had reached approximately \$29.07 million by June 5, according to insolvency reporting based on the court materials. The debt arose from five cross-defaulted real estate loans involving the Flato-related companies.

The receivership does not itself establish that any proposed development on the Melancthon properties has been cancelled. The

properties will now be dealt with through the court-supervised receivership process.

The receivership also covers four properties in Dundalk and one in Beeton.

The financial difficulties have also surfaced in a separate court proceeding involving Flato-related companies tied to a Lindsay development. Cameron Stephens Mortgage Capital Ltd. filed an application Aug. 7. A scheduling appointment was set for Aug. 24 in Toronto.

Three serious collisions send 10 people to hospital in north Dufferin last weekend

Written By **SAM ODROWSKI**

Three serious collisions in Mulmur and Melancthon over the weekend sent 10 people to hospital, including several with serious or life-threatening injuries.

The collisions occurred between Saturday, Aug. 22 afternoon and Sunday, Aug. 23 afternoon, according to the Dufferin OPP.

The most recent occurred around 4:30 p.m. Sunday on Highway 89 near 4th Line in Melancthon, where two sedans and a minivan were involved in a three-vehicle collision.

Seven people were transported to a local

hospital, with two sustaining serious injuries.

Highway 89 between 4th Line and 5th Line was closed for several hours while officers investigated.

Earlier Sunday, at approximately 4:30 a.m., Dufferin OPP responded to a serious two-vehicle collision on County Road 18 (Airport Road) near County Road 21 in Mulmur.

The collision involved a minivan and a sedan. The driver of the sedan sustained serious injuries and was taken to a local hospital before being transferred to a Toronto-area trauma centre.

The driver of the minivan was also transported to hospital with unknown injuries.

The OPP's Traffic Collision Investigation team was brought in to investigate the Mulmur collision. County Road 18 between County Road 21 and 20 Sideroad was closed for several hours.

The third collision occurred Saturday at approximately 5:40 p.m. on River Road between Mill Street and the Mulmur-Melancthon Townline in Melancthon Township.

Police said a group of motorcyclists were travelling on River Road when one motorcycle left the roadway and struck a tree.

The lone motorcycle driver sustained life-threatening injuries and was transported to a Toronto-area trauma centre.

The roadway was closed for several hours while emergency crews responded and police investigated.

All three investigations remain ongoing.

Anyone who witnessed any of the collisions or has video footage is asked to contact Dufferin OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

Anyone who witnessed any of the collisions on Aug. 23 or 24 and wish to speak with victim services can contact Caledon/Dufferin Victim Services by phone at 905-951-3838.

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Shelburne Council reinstates draft approvals for Main Street East development, defers wastewater servicing allocations

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

Shelburne council has reinstated the expired draft plan approvals for a proposed residential development at 600 Main Street East, giving the project until April 2, 2028, to advance toward final approval.

The property, located on the north side of Main Street East, is already pre-serviced for a development consisting of 58 townhouse dwellings, along with private roads, a parkette, open space, a stormwater management facility and other related infrastructure.

The development has a long planning history. Draft plans for the subdivision were originally approved in 2018, with council granting several extensions over the years since.

Most of the requirements for final approval had been completed by 2025, and council had delegated final approval to

the town clerk, subject to the owner providing the remaining outstanding information and clearances.

Those conditions were ultimately not completed, and the approvals lapsed on April 2, 2025. The property subsequently entered receivership. The receiver asked council to revive the approvals and provide another three years to find a purchaser and move the development toward construction.

The Planning Act allows council to reinstate a lapsed draft plan approval once, provided certain requirements are met.

The town's report found the requirements had been satisfied, including that fewer than five years had passed since the approvals expired and that they had never previously been reinstated under the applicable legislation. The receiver also provided a sworn declaration confirming that there were no agreements for the sale of land based on the approved draft plan.

Town staff supported reinstating the approvals, noting that underground services and roads have already been completed, although the roads have not yet received preliminary acceptance.

Engineering and landscape designs have also been completed and approved. Staff said the development could contribute to the town's housing needs and includes a planned trail connection and creek crossing linking Main Street with Greenwood Park.

However, the council did not restore the project's wastewater servicing allocation.

The receiver had requested that servicing capacity be reallocated to the property to make it more attractive to potential purchasers. That request could not be granted because the town currently has no unallocated wastewater capacity available for new development.

Council previously determined that new servicing allocations would have to be tied

to the completion of planned upgrades to the Wastewater Pollution Control Plant.

The town's engineer has determined that additional development approvals must be coordinated with those upgrades.

Council instead deferred the servicing allocation until the receiver provides a detailed development timeline and enters into a subdivision agreement that aligns the project's timing with the wastewater plant upgrades.

The town engineer must also confirm that sufficient servicing capacity will be available when the development requires it.

The reinstatement gives the receiver and any future purchaser until April 2, 2028 to satisfy the remaining conditions and obtain final approval. If the plans lapse again after that date, they cannot be reinstated a second time, and the owner would have to apply for new draft plan approvals.

Shelburne council approves zoning for private school at 712 Main Street East

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

Council approved a zoning amendment allowing By Design Learning Centre, an established independent elementary school currently operating in Orangeville, to relocate to 712 Main Street East in Shelburne.

Council considered the application during its Aug. 24 Planning Act public meeting. The proposal would allow the existing two-storey commercial building to be used as a private school serving students from kindergarten through Grade 8.

The property has previously been used for a variety of commercial purposes, including an insurance office, medical office, pharmacy and hearing-aid centre. The school plans to use the existing building, with nine classrooms shown in its submitted floor plans.

Council members raised questions about transportation, outdoor space, the building and the property's proximity to neighbouring industrial uses.

The school does not currently plan to provide school bus service, with students expected to be transported by parents or guardians. The application also does not

propose an outdoor play area at this time, with programming primarily planned for inside the building.

A nearby industrial property owner did not object to the application but raised concerns about the compatibility of a school beside an industrial operation, including potential noise and truck traffic. The applicant plans to install fencing around the property and keep school activities within the site.

Traffic and student drop-off were also discussed. The property has 38 parking spaces, compared with 23 required under the town's parking calculation. However, the Ministry of Transportation has requested further information about the proposed traffic circulation and student drop-off and pickup arrangements to ensure vehicles do not queue onto the highway.

Council ultimately approved By-law 31-2026, rezoning the property from Service Commercial to Service Commercial Exception to specifically permit a private school.

The approval does not mean the school can begin construction immediately. The applicant must still satisfy applicable building, transportation and other requirements before opening at the site.

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BIA

Town of Shelburne certifies candidates running in 2026 municipal election

Candidates running for mayor, deputy mayor, and councillor will battle it out this fall, as they promote their platforms and goals to the public in an effort to secure a seat on Shelburne council.

A total of 13 candidates have been certified by the town clerk to run in the upcoming election, challenging incumbents seeking reelection for another term.

Incumbent Mayor Wade Mills has a challenger in aspiring candidate Prath-eeb Uthavakumar, a Shelburne-based lawyer.

The position of deputy mayor will be more hotly contested as the incumbent, Shane Hall, is not seeking reelection, leaving the seat open to three challengers. Sitting Councillor Len Guchardi is seeking this position, along with two challengers, Mike Green and Andrea

Knight.

A bigger race will be heating up for the five councillor seats in Shelburne, as only two currently sitting councillors are certified as running for reelection: Kyle Fegan and Lindsay Wegener.

New candidates seeking election include Donald Paul Williams, Jim Bates, Lynda Buffett, Alethia O'Hara-Stephenson, Brad Reid and Sohayla Smith.

The candidates, both incumbent and aspiring, will make their cases to the public on Monday, Oct. 26, 2026.

The town is reminding residents to check that they are on the voter's list. To register as a voter or to update your voting information, contact the Shelburne Clerk's Office at clerk@shelburne.ca.

For more information on the election, visit: shelburne.ca/town-hall/2026-municipal-election



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OPINION

Trying to see the fox through the hurly-burly

Once in a while, you find something shiny and bright through the murk.

The Bancroft Times and Bancroft This Week, sister papers to the Citizen and Free Press, told the story earlier this month about 12-year-old Avery, her grandmother Julie Parco, and their attempt to save a young fox they found sick with mange.

Julie had been gardening in early August when she happened upon a red fox that she thought was sleeping. The tiny animal had rested on a bit of moss on the property, curled in a corner made of logs integrated into the landscaping.

The fox had cuts and bald spots in its fur. The fox attempted to walk a few times but collapsed each time it stood on shaky legs.

The ailing animal was placed in one of those blue bins for items to be recycled. The fox was comfortably set on a blanket and provided water to weather a trip to an animal rescue facility.

Avery insisted on sitting in the vehicle's backseat, beside the animal, as

they drove about an hour and a half on a beautiful summer day to the Woodlands Wildlife Sanctuary in Minden. The sanctuary rehabs rescued wildlife before they're released back into their natural environment. According to its website, more than 800 animals are brought to the sanctuary each year.

Unfortunately, the fox succumbed to its injuries and the effects of the parasite that causes mange. It died only about half an hour before they made it to the animal rescue centre.

The fact that Avery chose to go to such lengths for a fox on a beautiful sunny day, one of only six days she was to spend with her grandparents, showed a depth of compassion.

"He died peacefully with someone by his side rather than being left to nature for other animals to eat him," Parco said.

Maybe we're our perfect selves when we are children. Unjaded and rich in compassion until we enter those middle years of social media trolls and the sneering horde.

When the world spins us so it is easy to step past somebody on the street and on hard times instead of dropping even just a few coins into an empty paper coffee cup. Not all of us. But many of us.

Self-help books and therapy sessions remind us to assume positive intent as we muddle through years focused on jobs that will be forgotten and possessions that in a way end up possessing us.

To live assuming positive intent is a means to tamp down our automatic negativity. To assume positive intent is to consider that other people's actions are borne of positive motives. Or at the very least, the things people do or don't do could be the fruits of neutral motives.

And then something happens in our later years after some life has been lived and lessons have been taken from experiences. The lives spent fumbling yield a perspective that's realized on aged reflection. Our quality of life has by then become a little more existential and less based on achievement.

Professions and jobs are necessary and become more important as it becomes increasingly difficult to make the ends meet. But you realize there was something missing all those years you punched a clock. A day is made successful by the smiles of loved ones, a meaningful hug. The sounds of coins dropping into a paper coffee cup held by somebody on the street.

Or thinking to help an ailing fox found in your grandmother's garden.

Running the race becomes less about finishing and more about the race itself.

We get back some of what was lost from our childhood hearts. Maybe not lost. Perhaps just tucked beneath all the other things that rose in importance. It happens once in a while for some people. The ones who look hard through the murk and come up with something shiny and bright. There may even be something there so that compassion becomes empathy.



JAMES MATTHEWS
THE BUSTLE IN THE HEDGEROW

Africa: Getting history wrong

"I think that there's a strategy to divide and conquer and to create a very contrived confusion," said Samuel Okuzeto Ablakwan, Ghana's foreign minister. "We denounce and totally reject those claims that Africans are as guilty and complicit as those who masterminded this whole atrocity." He's wrong, of course, but it's still a common delusion.

Ablakwan has been given special responsibility by the African Union to be 'champion for reparatory justice' for three centuries of the transatlantic slave trade, and claims that "Ghana was the crime scene". (An estimated 15 per cent of the African slaves sent west came from Ghana.)

Some of the 'reparations' demanded are easy to make. An apology is always welcome, even if it's only for the deeds of your ancestors. It's not really your fault, and apologies are free.

Beyond that it gets more complicated, but there's no harm in sending help to developing African countries for schools or health. If Africans want to sweeten the pot a bit by bringing up the colonial misdeeds of European countries, that's fine too. But the slavery thing is more complicated.

I met real ex-slaves for the first and only time when I was a very young man doing

research for a PhD in the ‘Sublime Porte’ (the Ottoman imperial archives) in Istanbul. Another student mentioned that there was a group of ex-palace slaves – former ‘Black A as’ – who gathered at a café just down the hill in Sirkeci. Buy them lunch, and they’ll talk to you.

And there they were: four or five very old black men seated around a table, holding court in a Turkish I had never heard before: the old Ottoman Turkish, which freely mixed Arabic and Persian words and grammar with the Turkish core. I was reading that kind of Turkish every day in the archives, but I had never heard it spoken fluently before.

Slavery was officially abolished in the Ottoman empire in 1857, but within the privacy of the Sultan's palaces the old customs prevailed right down to 1909 (the Young Turk revolution). That included the custom of having black Africans, castrated in their childhood or early teens, as harem guards (although the harems were already empty).

When they were turned out onto the street they had nowhere to go. They couldn't go home, if they even knew where that was, so they stayed close to the Palace and between odd jobs they lived on alms from

strangers. (Turks are quite generous that way.) Sixty years later there they still were: Africans who spoke only a very old-fashioned Turkish.

I went back several times because it was good for my Turkish, but also because it was a window into the past. They felt great bitterness about what had happened to them, and although in most cases they could not say where they had been born, couldn't even remember their native language, they knew that they had been betrayed and enslaved by their own people.

I never wrote about this before because it seemed beyond the scope of this column, but now it feels relevant. What happened to those old men, now long gone, is not only a story of the cruelty and greed of foreign slave-traders. It is also a story of African cruelty and greed: every African who left the continent as a slave was enslaved in Africa, by Africans.

What, you thought the Europeans went inland and captured slaves themselves? They weren't even allowed to go inland. The fortified 'barracoons' where the slaves were held captive until European slave-trading ships showed up to buy them were owned by local kings or merchants. They saw it as a business, not a horror.

The slaves came from every part of Africa except the far south. Many were sold west across the Atlantic: – 10-12 million over 300 years (circa 1550-1850).

More were sold north to the Muslim countries, across the Sahara or up the Indian Ocean coast – up to 17 million over 1,200 years, beginning soon after the rise of Islam and lasting into the early 20th century.

And of course, tens of millions of Africans live and died as slaves over the centuries without ever leaving Africa.

Ablakwan is wrong both factually and morally. He ignores all the Africans who weren't sold to 'Western' countries, because only Europeans and Americans might be shamed into paying up. There are much wiser people in Ghana.

King Tackie Teiko Tsuru II, leader of Ghana's Ga people, recently said: "I think that the transatlantic slave trade was the greatest crime against humanity, and (my) ancestors also took part as players in that trade...To be able to go forward, you have to look at your past. It dawns on us to admit our fault and correct it."



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COMMUNITY VOICES

More than a meal: Community partnerships help FTP feed hope every day

Behind every meal served at Family Transition Place (FTP) is a story of compassion, community, and care.

For individuals and families arriving at the shelter, a warm meal often represents far more than nourishment. It provides comfort after a difficult day, creates a sense of normalcy during a time of uncertainty, and reminds clients that they are supported by a community that cares.

Over the past year, FTP prepared more than 4,000 nutritious meals for women and children accessing its emergency shelter, with menus thoughtfully designed to meet a wide range of dietary needs. From food allergies and intolerances to cultural and religious preferences, every meal is prepared with care to ensure clients feel welcomed, respected, and included.

In addition to daily meals, the organization's kitchen prepares more than 3,000 muffins, sandwiches, and healthy snacks each year, ensuring women and children have access to nourishing food throughout the day. Whether someone is heading to work, attending appointments, taking children to school, or simply needing a quick snack between counselling sessions, these homemade offerings help sustain clients as they focus on rebuilding their lives.

The kitchen also celebrates life's important milestones.

Every client staying at FTP on their birthday receives a homemade birthday cake, specially prepared just for them. For many, it is a simple but meaningful reminder that they are valued and deserving of celebration, even during one of the most challenging chapters of their lives.

Food has also become an opportunity for healing and connection through the organization's growing garden program.

Over the past two years, FTP has cultivated a thriving garden that actively engages clients in planting, tending, and harvesting fresh produce and herbs. The garden not only supplies ingredients for daily meals but also provides therapeutic opportunities to connect with nature, learn new skills, and experience the satisfaction of growing food from seed to harvest.

The garden has flourished, producing an impressive variety of fresh ingredients, including cucumbers, tomatoes, garlic, beans,



Swiss chard, potatoes, and an assortment of culinary herbs such as dill, parsley, and basil. Edible flowers, including chamomile, also make their way from the garden into the kitchen, adding both beauty and flavour to meals prepared for shelter residents.

These fresh ingredients enhance the quality of meals while reflecting the organization's commitment to providing healthy, nourishing food prepared with care.

At the heart of the kitchen is Claudia, FTP's food and nutrition service worker and a certified Red Seal chef. Drawing on her professional culinary expertise, creativity, and passion for cooking, Claudia transforms fresh, locally sourced ingredients into nutritious, comforting meals that nourish both body and spirit. She has also documented many of her culinary creations (you can scan the QR code to see some of them!), giving the community a behind-the-scenes look at the care, skill, and attention that go into every dish prepared for the women and children staying at the shelter.

While Claudia's dedication is at the heart of FTP's food program, she is the first to recognize that its success is made possible through the generosity of an incredible network of community partners, local businesses, schools, farms, organizations and private donors. The following are just a few of the many supporters whose contributions help ensure every meal, snack, and dessert served at FTP is prepared with care.

Among these valued community partners is the Orangeville Food Bank — including its garden program — which continues to provide food and fresh produce that help

keep the shelter's pantry well stocked throughout the year. Their longstanding partnership plays an important role in ensuring clients have access to nutritious, balanced meals. We are also grateful for the ongoing support of Share the Bounty, whose regular donations of non-perishable food items help supplement our food supplies at both our Orangeville shelter and our satellite office in Shelburne, ensuring that clients at both locations have access to essential pantry staples.

Fiddle Foot Farm's Fall and Winter Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program has also become an invaluable source of fresh, locally grown vegetables. Seasonal produce from the farm brings exceptional quality and flavour to the kitchen while strengthening the connection between local agriculture and community care.

Several local businesses have also made meaningful contributions to the program. Little Caesars Pizza Orangeville regularly donates pizzas for shelter residents, offering a comforting and familiar meal for women and children. Extravaganza Brazilian Pastries & Sweets Inc. generously provides gourmet pastries that add moments of comfort and enjoyment, while Bluebird Café & Grill regularly donates freshly made soups, helping ensure clients have access to wholesome, nourishing meals.

These organizations represent only a small sample of the many businesses, community groups, and individuals who stand behind FTP. Alongside countless private

donors whose generosity often happens quietly behind the scenes, their financial contributions, food donations, and acts of kindness enable the organization to respond to changing needs while continuing to provide high-quality, nutritious meals to women and children staying at the shelter. Together, these partnerships demonstrate what is possible when a community comes together to support its most vulnerable members.

For women and children fleeing abuse, arriving at a shelter often means leaving behind nearly everything familiar. A warm dinner, a freshly baked muffin, a packed lunch, or a homemade birthday cake may seem like small gestures, but they offer comfort, dignity, and a sense of belonging during an incredibly difficult time.

FTP's food program serves as a powerful reminder that food is about more than filling empty plates. It builds connection, restores hope, and helps create a safe environment where healing can begin.

As demand for services continues, ongoing community support remains essential. Every donation, every partnership, every garden harvest, and every shared meal help ensure that women and children arriving at FTP are welcomed with compassion and care.

Community members interested in supporting the organization's work can learn more about donation opportunities by visiting the Give page on FTP's website: familytransitionplace.ca

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Shelburne council approves changes to library board governance

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Shelburne council has approved changes to the structure and appointment process of the Shelburne Public Library Board, with the new system expected to take effect for the board term beginning around Jan. 1, 2027.

The changes follow a review by town staff, who found they could not locate a formal Town of Shelburne establishing by-law or governance agreement creating the library board under the Public Libraries Act. Staff identified potential legal, administrative, governance and financial accountabil-

ity risks with the existing arrangement.

Currently, the nine-member board includes five representatives from Shelburne and one elected representative from Amaranth, Melancthon, Mono and Mulmur. Those four municipalities independently select their representatives, without approval from Shelburne council.

The approved changes will move to a hybrid system. Beginning in 2027, the board will include three Shelburne resident representatives and two members of Shelburne council, along with one resident representative from each of the four municipalities that financially support the library through an agreement or contract.

Shelburne council will appoint all board members directly through its regular board appointment process. If another municipality does not put forward an applicant, or if an applicant is not approved, council can allocate that seat to a Shelburne resident.

The report notes that Shelburne contributes approximately 56 per cent of the library's operating budget, while the other four municipalities collectively provide the remaining 44 per cent. Shelburne also owns the library building and lands and, beginning in 2026, assuming most capital costs under a new memorandum of understanding.

During the discussion, Councillors raised concerns about the balance between finan-

cial contributions, representation and use of the library.

Shelburne currently covers the majority of the library's operating costs and will assume most capital costs under its new agreement with the library, while residents of neighbouring municipalities continue to use the facility.

Council also considered whether changes to the appointment process could affect the willingness of neighbouring municipalities to continue contributing financially to the library.

Council directed staff to prepare a new establishing bylaw for consideration by the end of September 2026.

Authors in the Hills of Mulmur event sells out, draws strong community reception

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

More than 170 people turned out for Authors in the Hills of Mulmur on Sunday, Aug. 23, braving heavy rain to attend the annual literary event.

Held at the Foley Barn in Mulmur, the event brought together authors Terry Fallis, Heather Marshall and Linwood Barclay for an afternoon of conversation about their books, writing processes and lives as authors. The discussion was moderated by Bernadette Hardaker.

Organizer Nancy Frater said that the event was a huge success, describing a full venue and eager attendees.

"Authors in the Hills was fantastic," she said. "Despite the rain, 170 people trudged out to attend on Sunday. The atmosphere was great; it's like a group of friends coming together. Everyone looks forward to it. They get to meet everybody and have a chat with everyone, and they love talking to the authors."

Despite the weather, organizers said the event was sold out more than a month in advance, highlighting the continued interest in the event and its literary programming.

The authors were also able to interact with attendees following the discussion, with questions covering topics ranging from the writing process and finding ideas to artificial intelligence and the authors' individual back-

grounds.

A particularly notable part of this year's event was the opportunity for attendees to purchase Linwood Barclay's latest book ahead of its official Canadian release, with organizers receiving permission to offer copies early to those attending the Mulmur event. Frater said this was a special arrangement, which usually is not allowed to happen in Canada.

"In Canada, you're not supposed to sell the book until the actual release date," she said. "But we were lucky; we had permission since Linwood was coming, to sell the book two days earlier. So that was kind. It was very neat that people here could get to be the first to read this."

Frater said the event has grown into a collaborative community effort involving a committee and volunteers responsible for everything from preparing the venue and organizing food to parking and seating.

She praised the team for its hard work, which helped make Sunday a nearly seamless experience.

"We have a committee of six or seven people, and so it's not just a one person event," Frater said. "It's a committee working together...it's very collaborative."

She added, "Someone looks after cleaning the barn, the food, and the volunteers. We have volunteers for Mulmur that set up the



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

DECADES OF SUPPORT: Authors Terry Fallis, Heather Marshall and Linwood Barclay took part in Authors in the Hills of Mulmur on Sunday, Aug. 23, at the Foley Barn, with Bernadette Hardaker moderating. More than 170 people gathered for an afternoon of literary discussion and conversation.

chairs and be the parking attendants, so that everything is organized like a fine wheel because you only have three or four hours to pull this event off. It has to be well organized for the people who come, and the authors, and everyone else."

The annual event continues to draw visitors from across the Headwaters region and beyond, while showcasing Mulmur as a destination for arts and literary events.

Frater credits the event's beginnings to Mulmur Mayor Janet Horner.

"This event really is the brainchild of Janet

Horner," she said.

"It's based in Mulmur, so we call it that, but it's gone far beyond that. We have people coming from all over Headwaters country, and even from the city for this event."

Although rain dominated much of the afternoon, the weather eventually cleared around 3 p.m., allowing attendees to head outside and enjoy an ice cream truck.

With such a successful event, from engaged participants to a sold-out venue, organizers are already planning to return with another Authors in the Hills event next year.

Take Back the Night candlelight vigil and walk coming to Shelburne for the first time

Continued from Front

"So it works out to be just about two kilometres in a loop," Lee said. "So we'll have that opportunity to walk right through the main part of Shelburne, and which brings a little bit of exposure to the event above and beyond just being at Mel Lloyd Centre."

The walk is rooted in the broader purpose

of Take Back the Night, which focuses on challenging concerns about safety in public spaces after dark. While the movement has historically focused heavily on women's safety, organizers emphasize that safety concerns can affect people across communities.

The evening will conclude with a candlelight vigil, creating space to recognize

survivors and remember people who have lost their lives as a result of gender-based violence. The event will also give attendees an opportunity to connect with services and resources available locally.

Organizers are hoping the event will encourage more than awareness for one evening.

"We're hoping that people walk away a little bit more confident in their community," Lee said. "And that people are talking about this issue, with the hopes that we can end the cycle of violence and raise awareness about how people are still feeling unsafe, you know, 30, 40, 50 years later after this event started, and what can we do as a community to talk about what can be done to end this sort of violence."

The event also aims to encourage broad-

er community conversations about safety and the continued prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence. Organizers acknowledge that the issue has persisted for decades and that communities continue to face the challenge of finding ways to prevent violence and support survivors.

The event could also become an annual fixture in Shelburne.

FTP is committed to continuing Take Back the Night as an annual awareness initiative, with organizers hoping this year's event can establish a foundation for future gatherings in Shelburne. The success of the venue, route and overall format will help determine how the event develops in future years.

The event is open to everyone, including children, although organizers note that there will not be children's activities and that the evening will include discussions about sexual violence and safety. Parents and guardians are encouraged to consider the nature of the content when deciding whether to bring younger children.

Take Back the Night will run from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 17, at the Mel Lloyd Centre, 167 Centre St. in Shelburne. No registration is required.

The event is being presented as an opportunity for residents to learn about local support, stand in solidarity with survivors and take part in a visible community effort focused on creating safer spaces in Shelburne and across Dufferin County.

For more information about Take Back the Night and to learn about more community resources, contact Family Transition Place at 519-942-4122 or visit: familytransitionplace.ca

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Council supports motion requesting LifeLabs expands hours, capacity

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Shelburne council recently supported a motion asking LifeLabs to extend its operating hours and explore expanding its service capacity in town, citing population growth and increasing demand for diagnostic testing.

Councillor Lindsay Wegener brought the motion forward during council's Aug. 24 meeting.

"The Town of Shelburne was named the fastest-growing town in Ontario and the second-fastest-growing municipality in all of Canada between 2011 and 2016, population surged by 39.1 per cent and the Town of Shelburne is expected to grow to a population of over 15,100 by 2051," Wegener's motion read. "Demand for accessible healthcare services, including laboratory and diagnostic testing, has increased with this population growth."

"Current LifeLabs operational hours and facility capacity are insufficient to meet the needs of residents, often requiring travel to neighbouring communities for required testing."

Wegener said LifeLabs had previously operated from approximately 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., but reduced its hours to 8 a.m. to noon.

She also raised concerns about lengthy waits at the Shelburne location, and said residents can sometimes face difficulty accessing testing at convenient times.

The motion asks LifeLabs to review and extend its operating hours to better accommodate working families, seniors and students. It also asks the company to explore opportunities to expand the Shelburne location or increase its service capacity.

The request comes as another diagnostic office is preparing to open in Shelburne.

The motion says the additional service, alongside the town's continued population growth, makes it important to ensure local diagnostic capacity keeps pace with demand.

Wegener said she had contacted LifeLabs' regional management regarding the issue and was told the company was already advocating for additional hours but needed community support and evidence of demand.

Council supported the motion, and Mayor Wade Mills said that it would be shared with surrounding municipalities in the coming days.

The motion does not require LifeLabs to make any changes, but formally asks the company to review its hours and capacity at the Shelburne location.

Free BBQ at Monora Park to mark World Alzheimer's Month in Dufferin County

For families navigating a new dementia diagnosis, knowing where to turn can make all the difference — and in Dufferin County, that place is the Alzheimer's Society.

This September, the Alzheimer Society of Dufferin County is inviting the community to come together for a free Family BBQ on Thursday, Sept. 17, from 2 to 6 p.m. at Monora Park in Mono, part of World Alzheimer's Month. The event comes at an important time for the local society: demand for dementia support in Dufferin County has reached an all-time high, with new referrals doubling compared to this time last year.

The society is currently supporting more than 531 individuals living with dementia and their caregivers on a day-to-day basis, and its reach extends much further through community education, outreach and training. More than 1,500 people benefit from the services and education delivered through the society across Dufferin County, including in long-term care and retirement homes.

"We are currently seeing up to 30 new referrals in a single month, which represents a significant increase in demand for our services," said Jenna Hunter, community engagement coordinator with the Alzheimer Society of Dufferin County.

Hunter said several factors are contributing to the growth.

"There is greater awareness of dementia and of the programs and supports available through the Alzheimer Society, which is encouraging more individuals and families to reach out for help," she said. "At the same time, Dufferin County's population is aging, and age remains the greatest known risk factor for dementia. As our older adult population grows, we expect the need for dementia support, education and caregiver resources to continue growing as well."

Hunter said the impact of the Alzheimer Society's services can often be seen in the everyday experiences of the families it supports.

"We may meet a family shortly after a dementia diagnosis when they are overwhelmed and unsure of what comes next," she said. "Our team can help them understand the diagnosis, navigate available resources and connect the person living with dementia with meaningful programming, while also providing their caregiver with education, support and opportunities for respite."

"Over time, that family can go from feeling as though they are navigating dementia alone to having a team they can call, programs they can rely on and a community that understands what they are experiencing," Hunter said. "While we always protect the privacy of our clients, stories like this are representative of the difference our programs can make for families right here in Dufferin County."

"This is why community support is so important," she said. "As referrals continue to rise, donations and fundraising help us ensure that individuals living with dementia and their caregivers can continue to access compassionate, specialized support close to home."

That community support is exactly what the Alzheimer Society of Dufferin County is hoping to build on with this month's Family BBQ.

"World Alzheimer's Month is an opportunity for our entire community to come together, learn more about dementia and show local families that they are supported," Hunter said. "At some point, dementia will touch nearly all of our lives — whether we know someone, love someone or care for someone living with the disease. We hope families will join us for an afternoon of community, awareness and fun."

The Family BBQ is free and everyone is welcome. Please note there is a max capacity of tickets, so anyone interested in attending is encouraged to register.

Attendees can enjoy a BBQ, a large silent auction, a 50/50 draw, family-friendly activities and the opportunity to meet the Alzheimer Society team to learn more about the programs and services available to individuals and caregivers throughout Dufferin County.

While there is no cost to attend, donations are gratefully accepted. Funds raised will remain in the community and help the society continue meeting the rapidly growing demand for dementia services.

This World Alzheimer's Month, Dufferin County is encouraged to come together, start conversations about dementia and help ensure local families have somewhere to turn when they need support.

Anyone planning to attend the free Family BBQ is asked to notify the local Alzheimer Society by calling 519-941-1221 ext. 104 or registering online: alzheimer.ca/dufferin-county

Three motorists charged with impaired driving offences in recent days

Three Dufferin County motorists have been charged with impaired driving-related offences following separate incidents over the past several days.

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers responded to a traffic complaint at about 7:38 p.m. on Aug. 22 in the area of County Road 3 and 24 in East Garafraxa Township.

Officers located the vehicle and launched an impaired driving investigation.

Manh Nguyen Tran, 38, of Guelph, was charged with operation while impaired — blood alcohol concentration (80 plus), operation while impaired — alcohol and drugs, and driving a motor vehicle with liquor readily available.

At about 2:30 a.m. on Aug. 25, officers on general patrol in the area of Burbank Crescent in Orangeville found a driver asleep behind the wheel of a vehicle.

Officers approached the vehicle and launched an impaired driving investigation.

Raj Varmal, 29, of Orangeville, was charged with operation while impaired — blood alcohol concentration (80 plus) and novice driver — blood alcohol concentration above zero.

The third incident occurred at about 12:36 a.m. on Aug. 26 during a Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (RIDE) program at Mill Street and Broadway in Orangeville.

Police said a vehicle failed to stop and was located a short time later. Officers conducted a traffic stop and observed signs of impairment before launching an investigation.

Kevin Buck, 35, of Orangeville, was charged with operation while impaired — alcohol and drugs, operation while impaired — blood alcohol concentration (80 plus), and failing to stop for police.

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

The motorists' licences were suspended and their vehicles were impounded, police said.

None of the listed charges have been proven in court.



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The Vets conclude season with U13-F team winning gold at provincials

Written By CHRIS PERROTTE

The Vets top tournament scorer, Cooper Reed, notched two goals to help his U13-F team win gold at the Ontario Lacrosse Association Festival Provincials held at the Iroquois Park Sports Centre in Whitby from July 31 to Aug. 2.

Jaxson Horsley and James Wright each scored twice as well, with Bentley Sawyers and Gilby Harper both chipping in with a goal apiece to secure an 8-3 win over the Quinte Bayhawks. Nolan Nisbett played strong in net to backstop them to their gold medal victory.

“[It] feels pretty good winning a gold medal, which is the end goal of any team. So [I’m] pretty excited about that,” said Head coach Tucker Cunningham. “Watching the kids find their role and perform in big time moments.”

This was Cunningham’s first year as head coach after spending the previous year as an assistant coach.

The Shelburne Vets won all five of their games in their round-robin tournament to advance to the final game on Aug. 2, ending their season a perfect 6-0.

“It feels great to see where we started at the beginning of the season. To watch the team grow as a whole,” said Cunningham.

Seventeen U13 players donned the Vets jersey this season, including 11-year-old Claudia Sodoma, who has been playing with the boys for the past three seasons and plays very strong defence for her team. The backstop to the defence is the Vets’ two goaltenders, Jack Brown and Nolan Nisbett, who have been taking turns all season tending the net.

In the U15 C Division, the Vets faced the London Blue Devils and lost a close match 7 to 5. The U11 squad advanced to the quarter-final, losing by two in a high-scoring game 11 to 9 to the team from Clarington.

The U13 Vets brought home the ultimate prize by winning the gold medal with a 6-5 victory. The U9 team’s quest for the gold medal fell short as they lost 7 to 5 to the Kahwanake Mohawks in the D Division Finals.

Trevor Reid, who is the president and development skills coordinator, expressed that all the Vet teams had a great season and he can’t wait till next season.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

THE GOLDEN TEAM: The U13 Vets proudly showing off their gold medals after winning the Ontario Lacrosse Association Festival Provincials at Iroquois Park Sports Centre from July 31 to Aug. 2.



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TEAM: U13 VETS
LACROSSE TEAM

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

CLAUDIA SODOMA

Claudia Sodoma is a multi-sport athlete who loves playing many sports, including lacrosse and soccer. When there isn't a girls' team available, you will find Claudia playing on the boys' squad until a girls' rep team becomes available, as is the case with soccer.

Claudia is a member of U13 Melancthon Vets who recently captured Gold at the Ontario Lacrosse Association Provincials in Whitby on Aug. 2.

"I felt very happy. It was an amazing feeling as all of our hard work helped," she said.

Claudia is the only girl on the U13 Vets squad. She plays defence and sometimes takes the draws (face-offs) for her team. When she is on the pitch playing soccer, she's a striker.

This fall, Claudia will take to the ice, where she'll join the Orangeville Tigers. She would love to play on either left or right wing as a forward, where she can contribute both offensively and defensively for her team.

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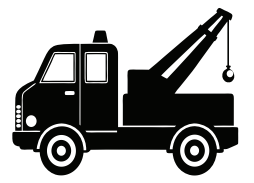
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New Credit Valley Trail bridge unveiled, connecting the community

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A new 40-metre pedestrian bridge spanning the Credit River is being celebrated as a major milestone in the development of the Credit Valley Trail, bringing the vision of a continuous 100-kilometre route through the Credit River Valley one step closer to reality. Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) officially opened the bridge on Aug. 20 at its Tranmer property, part of the Upper Credit Conservation Area north of the Dufferin County Road 109 bridge. The crossing connects the east and west sides of the property and is a key link between Island Lake Conservation Area in Orangeville and communities farther south in Caledon. CVC CAO Terri Hamilton welcomed guests to the bridge’s grand opening. “We’re marking a really incredible milestone along the Credit Valley Trail, which is the unveiling of the new pedestrian bridge here at the Tranmer property, part of our Upper Credit Conservation area,” she said. “Where we’re meeting right now is the future trailhead of the Credit Valley Trail, It will connect to the nearly 27 kilometers of the former Orangeville-Brampton rail line that’s currently in process of being converted by

the town to a multi-use trail, and this will link the headwaters through the forks of the credit and into Brampton.” “Large shared projects like this remind us that community infrastructure is never the work of a single organization, but great things truly are accomplished together in partnership,” Hamilton added. The bridge opening ceremony included prominent dignitaries and guests, with Orangeville Mayor Lisa Post present to congratulate the team behind the project’s completion. “I am especially proud to see this project moving forward,” she said. “Orangeville is the northern gateway to the Credit Valley Trail, and Island Lake Conservation Area serves as a welcoming trailhead for residents and visitors beginning their journey through the Credit Valley River. This new bridge at the Upper Credit Conservation area strengthens that connection.” “I want to thank Credit Valley Conservation, the Government of Canada, and the Government of Ontario through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. Thank you to Dufferin County, the Town of Caledon, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and all the partners whose vision and collaboration have brought us to this day — a huge

congratulations to all of you,” Post added. Scott Cafarella, manager of capital projects at CVC, was also present at the grand opening, and said that the team was incredibly pleased to see the project finally reach its conclusion. “It’s a fantastic feeling to have this bridge open and in place,” he said. “After so many years of collaboration and planning and construction to be at this point and to realize one of the main missing links and connections in the Credit Valley Trail, it’s just amazing to see it all come together.” Planning, design, permitting and approvals took about two years, including work with Dufferin County to secure a trail easement within the County Road 109 right-of-way. The bridge itself was fabricated off-site over roughly six months, then transported to the property in three sections on truck beds. At the site, crews assembled the sections before a crane lifted the completed structure over the Credit River and onto its abutments. The bridge’s distinctive enclosed design serves a practical purpose. Because of its proximity to County Road 109, a cage-like structure protects pedestrians from potential debris. On the north side, however, the enclosure is absent, preserving views toward the provincially significant wetland.

The project’s origins date back nearly a decade, when CVC’s Upper Credit management plan identified the need to connect the two halves of the conservation area. “This project goes back to 2016 when we did our upper credit management plan for the conservation area,” Cafarella said. “We had always envisioned a bridge across the credit river here to connect the two halves of upper credit conservation area, and then also our Credit Valley Trail strategy envisioned this connection that would link the section of the Credit Valley Trail in Orangeville at Island Lake and link it with the rest of the trail.” The \$745,000 bridge was funded as part of a larger \$3.1-million trail infrastructure project supported through the federal and provincial Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. Dufferin County also played a key role in approvals, construction logistics and establishing the trail easement. Once complete, the Credit Valley Trail will stretch approximately 100 kilometres from Dufferin County to the Mississauga shoreline, connecting communities with the Credit River watershed’s natural, cultural and Indigenous heritage. For now, however, the CVC now has a complete, ready-to-use bridge finally linking its two halves as one.

Shelburne council proclaims September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Shelburne council has proclaimed September 2026 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, recognizing children and families affected by childhood cancer and the community organizations supporting them. The proclamation recognized the broader impact cancer can have on families, emphasizing the need for medical, financial and emotional support. It noted that families rely on support from relatives, neighbours, teachers and the wider

community, while siblings may require additional consideration at home and school. Mayor Wade Mills read the proclamation during council’s Aug. 24 meeting. “This month we recognize the dedication and hard work of all the scientists, health-care professionals, parent organizations and volunteers who are working to overcome childhood cancer and assist these families,” Mills said. “We admire and support the courageous youth and parents who struggle with this disease, and we applaud and commend the dedicated volunteers at Candlelighters Simcoe Parents of Children with Cancer for

the work they do for families of children with cancer in our region.” Mayor Mills noted from the proclamation that approximately 10,000 children are currently living with cancer in Canada, with about 1,500 new cases diagnosed each year. The proclamation states that, because of advances in treatment, 82 per cent of children diagnosed with cancer will survive five years or more. Despite those advances, childhood cancer remains responsible for more deaths from disease among children from one year through adolescence than any other disease,

according to the proclamation. The proclamation encourages the community to support young cancer patients and their families, while recognizing the courage of children and parents dealing with the disease. As part of the recognition, Shelburne will hold a public flag-raising ceremony at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 1 at Jack Downing Park. Mills encouraged residents who are available to attend. Council formally proclaimed September 2026 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month on behalf of the Town of Shelburne.

Library CEO shares gratitude for community’s continued and growing interest in literature

I read an article in *The Atlantic* recently titled, “The End of Reading is Here,” where the author Rose Horowitz examined how society has entered a postliterate age. Where people still look at words daily on screens, but deep and sustained reading for pleasure has collapsed, threatening independent critical thinking and cultural memory. Although I am deeply concerned about the amount of screen time – particularly the consumption of polarizing content – and the evident impact on our attention spans, I don’t want to believe the end of reading is here. It certainly isn’t the case at Shelburne Public Library, where month over month

we are seeing an increase in membership and circulation. July, for example, was a very busy month:

- We welcomed 48 new members
- We had 5,178 visits to the library
- We circulated 6,089 physical books

 (that’s 2,100 more books than in June, thanks to all the families stocking up on summer reading). And last week was lively with literary events! On Friday, we hosted our TD Summer Reading Club finale where over 75 people came to celebrate a summer of reading with pizza, prizes, and a bird of prey show. On Sunday, we helped a wonderful team

of volunteers host the annual Author in the Hills of Mulmur event,, which sold out a month early and drew over 150 people. As I listened to best-selling authors Linwood Barclay, Terry Fallis, and Heather Marshall share their passion, dedication and the extensive research that went into crafting their compelling stories, I was reassured that the end of reading is not here. In fact, I believe we will see an increase in reading as I can’t think of a better act of resistance to the rapid rise of AI (particularly in the arts), algorithms, and inauthenticity than reading a real story crafted by a real human. So, thank you. Thank you to those read-

ing this column, to those who attend our programs, those with library cards and stacks of library books (whether they be on your coffee table or downloaded to your device). Thank you for helping us foster a love of literacy and lifelong love of learning. And lastly, thank you to Nancy Frater of Book Lore for connecting our community with authors like Barclay, Fallis and Marshall, whose powerful storytelling thrills us, educates us, moves and inspires us, and most importantly connects us – both to the written word, and to each other. *This week’s column was written by Shannon McGrady, CEO of the Shelburne Public Library.*

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