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JOSHUA DRAKES PHOTO

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS: Jimmy, Stefanie and Raff Cerasani were recognized with awards during Shelburne council's March 23 meeting for their consistent and dedicated support for the Shelburne Food Bank as well as other initiatives across town. Medals were presented by Shelburne Mayor Wade Mills and members of council, including Walter Benotto, Len Guchardi and Dan Sample. Read a full story on Page 2.

Local educator launches national initiative on science literacy, Canadian space legacy

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

A new nation-wide education initiative aimed at improving science literacy and celebrating Canada's role in space exploration is set to launch on April 1, bringing together local leadership and national institutional partners in a two-year program focused on students and classrooms across Canada.

Out of This World 25 (OOTW25) is being led by Canadian Historical Education Services (CanHist), founded by local historian and educator Neil Orford, in partnership with McMaster Children & Youth University, with further support coming from the federal Ministry of Canadian Identity and Culture.

The project is also marking the 25th anniversary of Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield's historic 2001 spacewalk, and connecting that milestone to Canada's future role in space exploration, including the upcoming Artemis II mission.

"It made sense to propose to the federal government that we do a commemoration of what I consider to be a really important defining moment in our space history," Orford said. "One might even argue it's a really important defining moment in our national history – and that is the 25th anniversary of the first Canadian spacewalk."

Orford continued by explaining that the initiative is rooted in the idea that Canada's contributions to space science and international collaboration are often underrecognized, despite decades of involvement in

major global space projects such as the International Space Station.

"Space history is not a story that is either well told or understood in the country, except by very few organizations," he said. "Twenty five years ago, they were assembling the Canadarm, which was part of the incredible international collaboration, of which Canada is a part of... and has been a part of for over 50 years."

By looking back at key moments in space history, organizers are seeking to highlight Canada's influence while making those stories more accessible to younger generations.

At its core, OOTW25 focuses on strengthening science communication – as in how complex scientific ideas are shared, understood, and discussed by the public.

The program seeks to address growing concerns about misinformation and gaps in scientific understanding, particularly among youth navigating an increasingly digital, information-saturated world.

The project is set to roll out in two phases over the next two years.

The first year focuses on commemoration and better access, bringing together existing resources from organizations such as the Canadian Space Agency, the National Research Council, and the Canada Aviation and Space Museum. These resources will be brought into classrooms as school-ready materials, along with new tools that allow students to explore topics like space technology, astronomy, and Canadian innovation.

The second year will shift toward deeper engagement with science communication skills.

Students will be encouraged to take a more direct and active role in interpreting and presenting scientific information through a framework described as curatorial thinking. This approach emphasizes evaluating sources, organizing information, and communicating ideas clearly – skills seen as increasingly critical in the modern information landscape.

A key feature of the program is the use of geographic information systems (GIS) and digital story mapping, developed in partnership with Esri Canada.

These tools allow students to create interactive projects that combine storytelling with scientific data, helping to translate initially abstract concepts into more tangible learning experiences.

Through partners like the Canadian Space Agency, the Dominion Observatory and the Canada Aviation and Space Museum, classes will use existing learning modules and toolkits to explore everything from Hubble and Webb images to how the Canadarm works.

Orford said that the program is designed not only to teach science, but to change how it is taught. By giving students greater agency in their learning and encouraging hands-on, inquiry-based approaches, OOTW25 aims to foster curiosity and critical thinking rather than passive information absorption.

Continued on Page 3

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Local grocers honoured for outstanding community support

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Three local grocery leaders have been formally recognized for their exceptional support of food security initiatives and community programs in Shelburne, each receiving the Shelburne Community Excellence Award.

The Town of Shelburne honoured the charitable efforts of local grocers Jimmy and Stefanie Cerasani, alongside Raff Cerasani, for their ongoing contributions to community support, particularly in addressing food insecurity.

Nominated by the Shelburne Food Bank, the group received the Community Excellence Award from Mayor Wade Mills and council during its March 23 regular meeting. Ardith Dunlop, coordinator for the local food bank, said they have been supporters from almost day one.

“Soon after Jimmy & Stef and Raff started in this community, they notified us of their interest and intention to support us,” she said. “They came for a visit to the foodbank, asked questions and then became more involved.”

Over the past two years, Dunlop said that the Cerasanis have become key partners of the Shelburne Food Bank and a wide range of community organizations.

After an initial visit to better understand the food bank’s operations and needs, they established consistent support through regular food donations, food rescue efforts, and active participation in charitable initiatives. They also helped champion projects for the food bank as well.

“They were one of the first sponsors of the Shelburne Foodbank’s Food Rescue Van,” Dunlop said. “Through consistent generosity, many seasonal food drives that engage the community and a deep sense of social respon-

sibility, Jimmy and Stef have demonstrated what it means to be community leaders. Raff provides exceptional weekly support. He ensures that the food bank orders go in and organizes them all for pickup, ensuring that our shelves are full and ready each week.”

Their contributions have supported numerous local efforts, including the EDC golf tournament, Halloween community events, Rotary Club projects, school breakfast and snack programs, and youth sports organizations. Their store has also become a central hub for community giving, hosting multiple food drives each year and organizing in-store donation collections at the tills.

In addition to donating substantial quantities of food, the group plays a hands-on role in local events such as charity runs, seasonal fairs, and youth activities.

Dunlop said that they also work closely with the food bank to integrate food rescue

into daily operations, adjusting orders to prioritize high-need items and coordinating consistent weekly donations. Surplus and near-dated products are redirected to reduce waste while increasing available supplies for residents in need.

Their combined efforts reflect a sustained and coordinated commitment to strengthening food security and supporting the well-being of the Shelburne community.

As demand for food support continues to grow, the recognition highlights the important role local businesses play in sustaining community services.

Through their ongoing partnership with the Shelburne Food Bank and broader community involvement, the Cerasanis have strengthened the town’s capacity to respond to food insecurity, set a standard for local leadership and giving, and helped build the town’s capacity to respond to food insecurity.

Royal Canadian Legion offers free 2026 membership to bring new faces and supporters

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Royal Canadian Legion is marking its 100-year anniversary in 2026 with an ambitious recruitment drive that offers free memberships for the year, aiming to bring new people into the organization and reintroduce it to the wider community.

Legion representatives from Branch 220 in Shelburne have been setting up displays at events such as the Orangeville Gun & Militaria Show on March 22, where they collected donations and signed up new members using a QR code system that allows visitors to join on the spot. The branch plans to appear at several more events throughout the year to maintain momentum.

Chris Skalozub, Deputy Zone Commander with the Legion, said that the push for new members comes at a time when the Legion’s traditional base is shrinking. Many older veterans are passing away, and fewer younger members are stepping in to carry the organization forward.

“Veterans are passing, and we’re getting to the end of our Korean veterans now, which was from ‘51 to ‘53, that conflict,” he said. “Then we got the Cold War guys like myself... that’s all we got left, really.”

Veterans of more recent conflicts, such as Afghanistan, often face different challenges and are sometimes less inclined to participate in branch life, even as their need for support remains high.

“There’s the Afghanistan war veterans now, but they don’t like coming out,” Skalozub said. “They’re a different breed, those boys and girls. So trying to get them to come out, it’s been pretty tough. They’ve been through a much different war from the veterans before them. It changes you in so many ways.”

This demographic shift has placed pressure on the Legion to reach out to the community more actively and explain its role to the next generation.

While the Shelburne Legion’s membership based has declined over the years, there are currently 300 members. Of those members, there are a dwindling number of veterans, with just 20 remaining.

Despite these challenges, the Legion continues to operate as a critical support system for both veterans and the broader community. It assists veterans and their spouses through Department of Veterans Affairs programs, the poppy fund, and educational bursaries for post-secondary students.

Skalozub said that initiatives such as “Leave the Streets Behind” focus on helping homeless veterans, connecting them with branches that can coordinate assistance once their service status is confirmed.

“If you’re traveling and you see someone laying on a bench, and it just doesn’t look right, all you have to do is ask them, are you a veteran,” he said. “You find out this guy, this individual, is a veteran, and you give us a call, the nearest branch, and we’ll make sure they get help. We’ll find their service history, and see if we can’t get a pension moving for them among other things.”

Beyond direct veteran support, the Legion donates to food banks and shelters, and sustains youth programs like local air cadet squadrons, often stepping in where government funding falls short.

It also sponsors school-based remembrance posters, poetry, and story contests, as well as public speaking competitions that can carry winners all the way to national recognition in Ottawa.

The organization also remains deeply involved in remembrance activities, from street



FILE PHOTO

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE: The Shelburne Legion Branch 220 is looking to sign up new members, as the Royal Canadian Legion is celebrating its 100-year anniversary by offering free membership through 2026.

banners honouring the fallen to ongoing efforts to keep the history and sacrifices of past conflicts visible amid rapid social change.

To keep that support, however, the Legion needs support now more than ever.

“There’s no one else that’s going to be there,” Skalozub said. “We’re reaching out to keep our society going, to make sure that someone is there. We’re here for the community and we’re here for events, and that’s what we want to keep doing.”

Branch 220 will be operating more booths at the upcoming Gun and Militaria shows at the Orangeville Fairgrounds. Those dates are May 10, July 26, Sept. 27 and Dec. 6.

Skalozub said that the Legion represents far more than stereotypes suggest.

“The Legion is not a place where people get drunk, old people get together and have their yap sessions. That just... that doesn’t exist anymore. We look after each other. Every branch looks after each other... because we have to, and because it’s the right thing to do. That’s who the Legion is.”

For 100 years, the Royal Canadian Legion has supported veterans, their families and the wider community across Canada. Now they’re asking for some community support to carry the Legion forward into the next generation.

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Town of Shelburne launching week-long cleanup ahead of Earth Day

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

In the lead-up to Earth Day on April 22, the Town of Shelburne is introducing a coordinated, week-long community cleanup initiative to involve more residents and local groups in caring for public spaces.

Running throughout Earth Week, the program invites volunteers to help tidy parks, trails, and other municipal green spaces.

Jessica Hanzel, recreation program development and special events coordinator for Shelburne, said that, unlike previous years, the town is now centralizing the campaign.

"We've had in the past, different businesses and other community organizations that have kind of coordinated their own cleanup efforts each year, and they've reached out

to us, and we've kind of provided support by grabbing the bags and sometimes giving supplies," she said. "So this year, we're just trying to make it more of a coordinated and supported effort and hopefully encourage more participation with other residents and groups within town."

The municipality will provide cleanup kits, including garbage bags and a safety information sheet, and will coordinate where filled bags should be left for collection.

Public Works staff will then travel to those locations to pick up the collected waste, allowing volunteers to focus on the actual cleanup rather than logistics.

Safety is a key focus of the initiative. Volunteers are encouraged to clean only on municipal property and to avoid busy roads and highways.

"Cleanup should take place only on municipal property, so ideally on parks or trails or green spaces," Hanzel said. "Obviously we want everyone to be safe, so we'd ask them not to clean by roads and such, and we'll have a safety sheet that we give out, and essentially it would say that if you find anything unsafe, document the location, and then we'll have public works attend and clean up that stuff."

The week-long format is intended to concentrate efforts around Earth Day while allowing flexibility.

Groups can choose times that work best for them, whether during the weekday, in the evening, or on weekends. Several local organizations have already expressed interest earlier in the year and are awaiting final details.

"So far, we had some groups inquire earlier in the year that they would be interested in participating once the spring comes," Hanzel said. "We've just started promoting this, so we don't have anyone signed up yet, but we probably have at least four or five groups that are just kind of waiting for the details."

Residents and groups who want to participate are encouraged to contact the town to register, receive their cleanup kits, and coordinate drop-off locations for collected garbage.

The town hopes this new, centralized approach will make it easier than ever for people to get involved and make a visible difference in their community.

To learn more and to register, go to calendar.shelburne.ca/default/Detail/2026-04-16-0000-Community-Clean-Up.

Initiative spearheaded by local educator marks 25th anniversary of Hadfield's spacewalk

Continued from Front

"It's really important to give students agency over how they express their science communication," Orford said. "We need to invite them into a safe space where they can express in a very cutting edge, innovative, technological way their understanding for themselves."

"When they do that, of course, there is ownership over it... and they also become their own editors. That's part of what is so important with curatorial thinking... we have to get them to exhibit their own learning and demonstrate their own learning in the richest, best ways that we can."

Another key component is the emphasis on what Orford calls STEAM education, which incorporates the arts alongside science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

The initiative promotes a broader understanding of learning that includes creativity, storytelling, and historical context as essential tools for scientific literacy.

"Our best astronauts are also musicians," Orford said. "They're very well read. In many cases, they speak more than one language. They are very artistically inclined and our best scientists also are great advocates for the arts and arts education."

"The more that we see music disappearing from the school or history disappearing from the school, or art classes or drama disappearing from the schools, that does a disservice to the ability to think scientifically and communicate scientifically. So it's very important to have a better conversation about STEAM learning, as opposed to STEM learning," Orford added.

Through a mix of digital programming, classroom resources, and community-based learning opportunities, the initiative is expected to reach students nationwide. Planned offerings include interactive activities for schools, opportunities to engage with experts in space and research fields, and accessible online content for families and educators.

The program is also intended to serve as a model for national collaboration, bringing together academics, government agencies, and private partners to support education.

In addition to McMaster and CanHist, partners include the Canadian Space Agency, Esri Canada, and several scientific and other historical organizations.

With its dual focus on history and future exploration, OOTW25 arrives at a moment when Canada is once again set to play a visible role in space, particularly through astronaut Jeremy Hansen's participation in Artemis II.

"Artemis II should be the big story we talk about in 2026, and god willing, it will be successful," Orford said. "They will take their 10 days and go around the Dark Side of the Moon and see things that no human has ever seen before, and record things that have never been recorded before, and then return to Earth and be those modern-day explorers that we have always imagined astronauts should be."

"We have at our fingertips this incredible story that's going to take place, and that's the thing we should be talking about."

By linking past achievements with upcoming missions, the initiative aims to inspire a new generation of learners while reinforcing the importance of science in



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

OUT OF THIS WORLD: From left, Rebecca Young, Dr. Kim Dej (vice provost, teaching and learning, McMaster), Dr. Sandeep Raha, Dr. Rebecca Collins-Nelsen, and Neil Orford hold up a McMaster Children and Youth University banner. Combining the educational expertise of McMaster University with the historical knowledge and storytelling of CanHist, Out of This World 2025 (OOTW25) is set to bring the very best of Canadian science directly into the classrooms of students across the country.

everyday life.

"We want our young people to aspire, we want them to dream," Orford said. "We want them to imagine. We want them to have curiosity, and more importantly, we need them to find joy in their learning."

Alongside the online learning portion of the education initiative, unique learning experiences will also be available locally.

McMaster, as well as surrounding schools and communities in the Hamilton area, will have Interactive learning experiences made available to them through this program.

Ultimately, the program's goal is to make science more engaging, understandable, and relevant - ensuring that students not only learn about discovery, but are equipped to take part in it.

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OPINION

A cashless society

When you were a kid, you likely received an envelope from an older relative on your birthday or at Christmas.

Usually, it had a few dollars inside, although these days it's probably more like a \$50 bill.

It was an easy way to give a kid a chance to buy something they want, rather than trying to guess what a 10-year-old would like to receive for a special day.

It's a lot more fun for a kid to find money in an envelope rather than to receive a gift of new socks or underwear.

Our society is moving dangerously close to a cashless society. I can't remember the last time I put gas in my vehicle and paid with cash.

I still carry some cash in my pocket. It seems ridiculous to pay for a \$1.95 coffee with a debit card.

It seems the goal is to move to a strictly cashless situation.

However, with that cashless system comes some very serious issues that must be examined.

The thing is, with a cashless society, money is no longer tangible. It just becomes digital numbers on a screen.

On the lower end of the problem, no more piggy banks for your kids to learn how to save money, and forget the birthday card with the cash gift.

No more Craigslist or Facebook Marketplace transactions, unless you happen to own and carry a debit machine in your car.

No more opportunities for a kid to earn \$20 by shovelling snow in the winter or cutting grass in summer.

You won't be able to save that \$20 a week you stuff in an envelope because you are saving up for a new Johnson Rod accessory for the hot rod you store in the garage.

No more yard sales, garage sales, or charity sales, unless everyone goes back to a barter-type system.

You may want to buy that fancy trinket at a yard sale, but with no cash available, you may have to bring a chicken from your backyard chicken coop to trade.

Those are just the little annoyances that will plague a cashless society.

The real issue is the absolute control the state will have over you. And this is a very scary thing to think about.

A cashless society means someone else will have absolute control over your life. A

bank will have full control of every single cent you have.

Bank robber Willie Sutton was asked, 'Why do you rob banks?' His notorious reply was, 'because that's where the money is.'

The banks don't have the money anymore. Try withdrawing several thousand dollars in cash from your bank account.

Most likely, you will be politely asked to come back in a couple of days because they will have to source the cash for you.

In a cashless society, every transaction you make will be recorded. Someone will be able to track your spending habits and your income.

Someone will be able to track your location and follow you across the country if you're on a road trip.

Every time you buy something, someone else can know exactly where you are.

It's a scary thought to think that a total stranger will be able to follow your every move.

If you are on Facebook, you know you are already being observed. Try looking for an item online, and sure enough, your Facebook page will suddenly start sending you ads for similar products because it has been

watching your every online move.

A cashless society reduces your wealth to nothing more than numbers on a screen.

If the power goes out, so does your money.

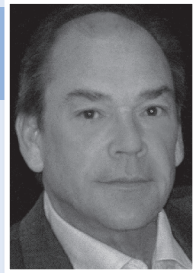
Those numbers on the screen are not backed by anything. There is no gold standard anymore; there is nothing to back up those numbers as tangible assets, other than the fact that people have faith they mean something.

I'm not sure of the high-level security measures surrounding online banking and control, but I have wondered what stops a computer genius with access to computer systems from simply moving a decimal point to another spot on a bank account?

A cashless society will create a whole new way of life where everything you do, everything you buy, everywhere you go, will be recorded.

I'd rather carry a few \$20 bills in my pocket, rather than have it known that I'm currently sitting in Tim Hortons having a coffee by some unseen person tracking my movements.

BRIAN LOCKHART
FROM THE SECOND ROW



War on Iran: A series of miscalculations

Still not four full weeks into the war, and already Donald Trump's "short-term excursion" – decapitate the Iranian regime with a surprise attack and impose harsh terms on the defeated survivors – has morphed into a global economic crisis and a region-wide war that could destroy the wealth of all the countries on both sides of the Gulf. At the very least.

Back in January Trump was high on his success in changing the regime in Venezuela (just a bit), so he was an easy mark for Israeli prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu's suggestion that he could do the same to Iran. Netanyahu probably knew better than that himself, but his life's goal has been to inveigle the United States into a joint attack on Israel's greatest enemy.

Trump swallowed the plan hook, line and sinker, and they cobbled together a story about a new nuclear threat from Iran.

Nobody really believed it, maybe not even Trump. His Director of National Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, wrote last week that "Iran's nuclear enrichment program has been obliterated. There have been no efforts since (US air strikes last June) to

rebuild their enrichment capability," and she probably tried to tell him that herself.

Even if untrue, the Israeli-American allegations and threats were grave enough to frighten the Iranians back to the negotiating table, and this time they surprised the American team by offering major concessions. The new offer didn't meet every US demand in full, but it certainly warranted further discussion and the next meeting was fixed for 3 March.

Oman's foreign minister Badr Albusaidi, who was mediating the talks, explains what happened then: "It was a shock but not a surprise when on 28 February – just a few hours after the latest and most substantive talks – Israel and America again launched an unlawful military strike against the peace that had briefly appeared really possible."

Even then, US foreign secretary Marco Rubio says Israel had to push Trump into the war by telling him that otherwise it would launch the surprise attack alone. (The US would still have to follow, but the Iranians would then be on the alert and there would be more American casualties.) The Israeli tail was definitely wagging the

American dog at this point.

So the 'decapitation' strike went in as planned and killed Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and most of Iran's other senior leaders – but it made no difference whatever to Iran's long-planned responses. Khamenei knew from past experience that Trump favoured surprise attacks during negotiations and had taken the appropriate precautions.

If you fear decapitation, turn yourself into a Hydra, a many-headed monster. In the jargon of the regime, which in the 1980s survived an eight-year war of attrition against a far better armed invader (Saddam Hussein's Iraq, which had strong support from the United States), the strategy is known as the doctrine of 'the fourth successor.'

That is why the regime was not destroyed by the initial 'decapitating' strike and has not crumbled under the relentless bombing of subsequent weeks. Khamenei ordered each senior official and officer to designate, in order of preference, up to four potential successors capable of replacing him. Knock off one, up pops another.

Iran's system has been created to endure and outlast the superior weapons technologies that its enemies will bring against it, and so far, it is doing very well. The stockpile of missiles is doing havoc to the economies of America's Gulf allies, the Strait of

Hormuz is blocked to international shipping (although Chinese and Indian tankers pass through), and time is on Iran's side.

In effect the initiative has passed into the hands of the Iranians, and they only have to go on doing what they are already doing to keep it. Their enemies have to figure out what to do next, and their choices now diverge: the Israelis want to go on bombing until the remaining Iranians overthrow their government (good luck with that!), and Trump just wants to get out.

His usual strategy (in business) has been to declare a victory and leave, but in this case his own pride gets in the way. His attempts to shift the blame for pulling out to the 'cowardly' Europeans or assorted other bystanders fall flat, and the escalation that would be required to bring the regime to its knees is so big and dangerous that it even frightens him.

So Trump runs back and forth in fury and confusion, changing his story twice a day. Obviously this cannot go on forever, but it may last long enough for me to write another article in which I calmly expound his viable remaining options. None come to mind right now except 'Boots on the Ground' or a small nuclear weapon (both highly undesirable).

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COMMUNITY VOICES

Monthly Message: FTP marks International Women's Day with empowering event

International Women's Day (IWD) – celebrated annually on March 8 – is always meaningful for us at Family Transition Place (FTP). It's a time to reflect on the service we provide to women, children, and families and on the collective responsibility we all share in creating a community where safety, hope, and equality are possible.

This year's theme, Give to Gain, resonates deeply within our work and agency culture. Working in social services, we see every day how our values and giving align; compassion creates safety and trust, equity helps people receive what they truly need to move forward, social responsibility strengthens our collective well-being, and integrity guides us to act with care and accountability.

The IWD 2026 Give to Gain campaign focuses on fostering a mindset of generosity and collaboration. Living and working in our ever-growing rural community, we see firsthand how deeply connected we are and how progress happens when we show up for one another.

We know that you, our community and supporters, understand how powerful "giving" is and the ripple effect it has. The fundraising support we've received from the community to operate our Youth Education program since 2001 has helped us reach thousands of students each year. Hearing feedback from

a grade 5 student who talks about her classmates being more accepting and inclusive of her cultural clothing speaks to the power of encouraging this young girl to be proud of who she is and, at the same time, teaching others about respecting differences.

At FTP, giving takes many forms. It's the generosity of our donors who share their resources to make a difference, especially at a time when our services remain chronically underfunded and operating costs continue to rise in 2026. It's community partners who collaborate with us to strengthen and streamline services. It's the time, care, and expertise our staff and volunteers bring to their work that help the people we serve move forward in their lives. It's the courage of survivors who share their voices and help shape better systems.

Each of these acts contributes to something larger: a ripple effect where support multiplies, barriers can be reduced, and women and children are better positioned to thrive. When we give in these ways, through time, resources, and commitment, we all gain as we become stronger individuals, healthier families, and a more connected community. Thank you for being part of this movement.

To learn more about any of the ways you can support our work and the families we serve, please contact Brennan Solecky at



MEGHAN BOND PHOTOGRAPHY

GIVE TO GAIN: Family Transition Place's International Women's Day event was held on March 8 with the theme, "Give to Gain."

brennan@familytransitionplace.ca or at 519-942-4122 ext. 240.

Call 1-800-265-9178. If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

If you or someone you know needs support, compassionate staff are available to help 24/7.

This week's Community Voice submission was written by Lynette Pole-Langdon, executive director of Family Transition Place.



Streams Community Hub hosts crochet workshop for Tumbler Ridge victims

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A Shelburne-based initiative is bringing the community together through creativity and compassion to support those affected by a recent school shooting in British Columbia.

'Crochet for a Cause,' set for April 2 at Streams Community Hub, invites knitters and crocheters to contribute handmade squares that will be assembled into comfort blankets for students and staff at Tumbler Ridge Sec-

ondary School.

The gathering will run from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. and is free to attend, though participants must register in advance.

Attendees are asked to bring their own yarn – specifically four-ply acrylic, smoke-free – as well as their tools, and create 12-by-12-inch squares in any design, from classic granny squares to personalized patterns.

The effort was launched by organizer Mary Marguerite Gee, who lives about an hour from Tumbler Ridge Secondary School. Earlier this

year, a shooting at the secondary school resulted in the death of eight people, including six children. The shooting left the community shaken, prompting an outpouring of support from across the country.

Gee turned to social media to rally fellow crafters, quickly gaining traction and inspiring the upcoming in-person workshop in Shelburne. Squares created during the event will be collected, assembled into blankets by Gee and her team, and shipped to the school.

Shipping costs are being covered by Town

Tees, one of the local partners supporting the initiative.

For participants, the event is about connection and community support. By creating together in a shared space, participants can contribute to a larger act of kindness, offering warmth and comfort to a community navigating the aftermath of tragedy.

Registration is available online through a posted form, available here on the Streams Hub Facebook page: facebook.com/streamshub

Shelburne recognizes Autism Awareness Day with proclamation and flag raising

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Town of Shelburne will mark April 2 as Autism Awareness Day, joining communities across the globe in recognizing World Autism Awareness Day and promoting a more inclusive society.

Mayor Wade Mills formally proclaimed the day on behalf of council, highlighting the need for autism awareness and support.

"Autism impacts more than 135,000 individuals in Ontario, representing 1 in every 50 Canadian children and youth," Mills read from the proclamation. "It not only influenc-

es the lives of autistics but also their friends, families, and communities. It's crucial for us to raise awareness and acceptance, provide support and promote a more inclusive society."

Autism is widely understood as a spectrum, meaning each individual experiences it differently from another. Needs, strengths and challenges can vary significantly and may change over time.

This diversity underscores the importance of tailored support and a broader public understanding of autism.

Research consistently shows that early and ongoing support can significantly improve

outcomes and quality of life.

Many individuals require long-term access to specialized programs and community services to support their development, health and safety, while also helping families manage the emotional and financial pressures that can accompany care.

Concluding the proclamation, Mills encouraged all Shelburne residents to observe the awareness day and do their part to be more informed.

"I, Mayor Wade Mills, on behalf of Council, do hereby proclaim April 2, 2026, as Autism Awareness Day in the Town of Shelburne, and urge all residents to participate in Autism

Awareness activities, in order to become better educated about autism and create a better community for individuals and families affected by autism."

Globally, World Autism Awareness Day was established by the United Nations to highlight the importance of acceptance, inclusion and advocacy for autistic individuals. Communities are encouraged to host events, share information and promote understanding.

In Shelburne, residents are invited to attend a flag-raising ceremony at 10 a.m. on April 2 at Jack Downing Park, marking the community's commitment to awareness and inclusion.

Big Brothers Big Sisters OF DUFFERIN AND DISTRICT

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Contact Us: (519) 941-6431

Visit Our Website: www.bigbrothersbigsisters.ca/dufferin

Spring Into Style!

CLOTHING SWAP & SHARE

Saturday, April 25, 2026
10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Sunday, April 26, 2026
12:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Grand Valley Public Library
4 Amaranth St. E, Grand Valley

Bring your unwanted spring and summer clothing/accessories to the event and look for something new to wear for free! Don't have anything to bring? Stop by anyway! All are welcome.

Clothing Drop-Off Options at Grand Valley Public Library:
Wednesday, April 22nd (5pm - 8pm)
Thursday, April 23rd (5pm - 8pm)
Friday, April 24th (10am - 6pm)
Saturday, April 25th (9am - 10am)

All clothing must be clean and in good condition.
Event guidelines: dufferincounty.ca/waste

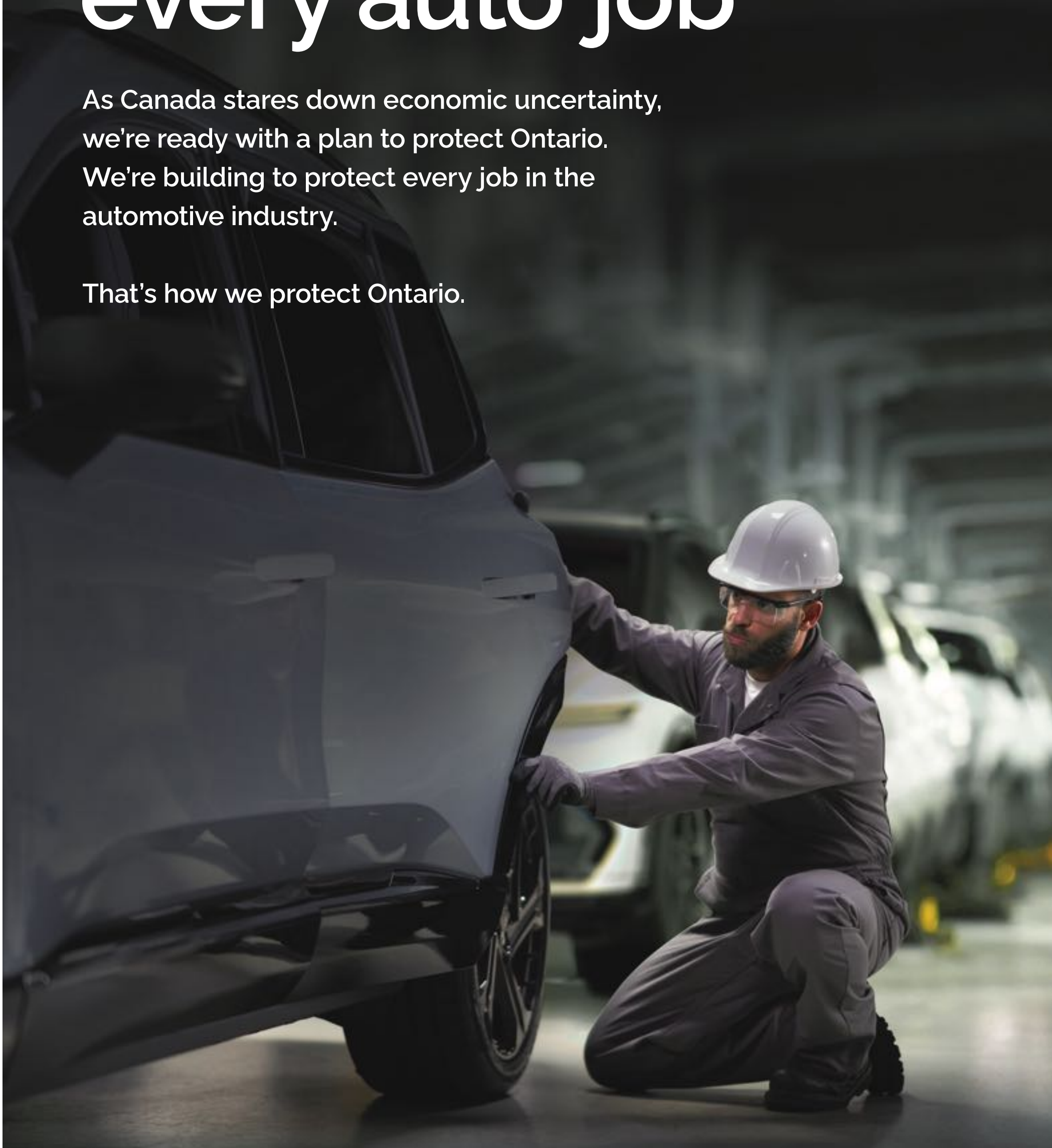
This is a FREE event. Light refreshments will be served. Plus, get a chance to win prizes!

Dufferin county | GVPL | dufferinwaste

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ontario.ca/ProtectOntario
Paid for by the Government of Ontario



Shelburne Library encourages participation in free writer's workshop

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

A new writing group at the Shelburne Public Library aims to bring together local writers of all backgrounds and experience levels on March 29 in a collaborative setting.

The initiative, led by organizer and facilitator Brian Burns and hosted at the library, will serve as a forum for writers to connect, share their work, and engage with others with similar creative interests. The group is open to any writer interested in attending.

"The writing group is going to be a forum for local writers (whether they are poets, writers of fiction or writing their memoirs) to

come together and share their work," Burns said. "They can receive feedback if they like and discover others with similar interests from their community."

While the long-term plan includes developing more structured workshops, the initial focus is on building connections within the local writing community. Organizers hope the group will highlight the depth of creative talent in the area while encouraging new and emerging writers to take part.

Shelburne Library CEO Shannon McGrady said that the program reflects a broader effort to expand services through partnerships with residents and community contributors.

"Libraries partner with the municipalities

they serve, local organizations, and residents, and it is these strategic partnerships that enable us to greatly expand our services," she said. "One of the best ways a resident can support their library is to contribute as much as they consume."

The writing group is also intended to strengthen the library's role as a community hub, creating opportunities for residents to engage with one another in meaningful ways. Organizers believe initiatives like this help transform the space into more than just a place for books.

"When members of the community like Brian offer to share their expertise for free, we are able to connect with residents in ways

we wouldn't be able to otherwise," McGrady said. "Community partnerships help transform the library from a building of books to a community hub where there is something for everyone."

Participants are encouraged to attend regardless of their level of experience, with an emphasis on inclusivity and community building.

The program is free and offers a low-pressure environment for writers to explore their craft, gain confidence and connect with others who share a passion for storytelling.

For more information, go to calendar.shelburne.ca/default/Detail/2026-04-26-1300-SPLs-Writers-Workshop.

Project Lifesaver helps to rapidly locate missing elderly woman in Melancthon

Written By **SAM ODROWSKI**

Dufferin the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers successfully located a missing elderly woman in Melancthon, just one hour after deploying Project Lifesaver.

Officers received a call for service on March 24 at roughly 3:15 p.m., reporting that an elderly woman hadn't returned home after going for a walk.

The elderly woman was registered for Project Lifesaver, which provides participants with a bracelet that emits a unique radio frequency signal OPP officers can track to rapidly locate a missing individual.

Upon arrival at the scene, Dufferin OPP officers quickly deployed Project Lifesaver tracking equipment and located the individual safe.

The missing woman was found approxi-

mately two kilometres from her residence, within one hour of being reported missing.

"This incident highlights the effectiveness of Project Lifesaver and its critical role in safeguarding vulnerable members of our community," reads a March 25 statement from Dufferin OPP.

"The technology significantly reduces search time, which is vital in minimizing risk for individuals with cognitive vulnerabilities."

The statement added, "Project Lifesaver continues to be a valuable resource in Dufferin County, offering peace of mind to families and enhancing community safety."

Project Lifesaver is run through Caledon Meals on Wheels, which is generously supported by the Orangeville Lions Club, helping ensure accessibility for residents in need.

For more information or inquire about eligibility, email: andrew.fines@opp.ca

Province to permit 'bring-your-own' alcoholic beverages at municipally approved public events

Written By **BRIAN LOCKHART**

The Ontario government is expanding 'bring-your-own' event permits for municipally designated cultural or community outdoor public events, including farmer's markets, movie screenings, art exhibits and neighbourhood festivals.

The expanded permit will allow attendees of these events to bring their own alcohol for consumption in designated areas.

It's important to note that the permitting expansion does not mean patrons of any event can bring their own alcoholic beverages from home. This permit is only eligible in municipalities that approve it and at events where the organizer applies for it.

The province says this will help support local tourism and drive economic growth.

"Starting this spring, Ontario is giving communities more flexibility to safely and responsibly enjoy cultural and outdoor events," said Attorney General Doug Downey. "The 'bring-your-own' event permits will help save attendees money, lower overhead costs for event organizers and contribute to local economies."

Municipalities will be required to pass a bylaw authorizing the use of alcohol in pub-

lic if they do not already have one in place. A municipality must establish a local process to determine whether an event qualifies as a community or cultural event and is therefore eligible for the 'bring-your-own' permit.

Beginning April 30 of this year, event organizers in participating municipalities will be able to apply for bring-your-own permits through the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.

"Our government is always working to find new ways to empower local communities, boost economic activity and increase tourism," said Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance. "By giving Ontario municipalities the choice to make use of this new initiative, our government is directly contributing to their economic well-being while ensuring adults can continue to safely and responsibly enjoy their favourite products."

The 'bring-your-own' permit change will be enabled by an amendment to a regulation under the Liquor Licence and Control Act, giving community and cultural organizations greater flexibility ahead of the spring and summer event season.

Previously, only organizers of live sporting events could obtain this type of permit, typi-

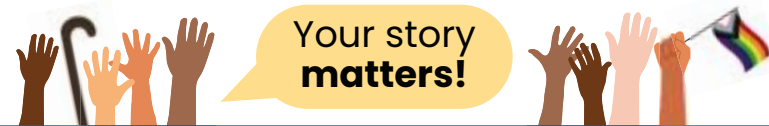
cally used for tailgating.

Only individuals 19 years of age and older will be allowed to bring alcohol to events holding a 'bring-your-own' event permit.

The province will continue to work closely with the AGCO to uphold existing rigorous standards for licensing, regulation and social responsibility, ensuring events are safe and reflect community priorities.



Do you live with multiple sclerosis?



Dr. Ruth Ann Marrie is doing a research study to find out how genes, diversity traits and life experiences affect multiple sclerosis.

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Yard waste collection season approaching in Dufferin County

Yard waste is collected seasonally between April and November in Dufferin County. As the beginning of yard waste season approaches, the county would like to remind residents of some tips to ensure they're ready for collection.

Collection routes

- Collection for Week A in Orangeville will begin the week of April 6.
 - Collection for Week B in urban areas of Grand Valley, Shelburne and rural subdivisions, begins the week of April 13.
- Not sure if you live in a rural subdivision? Visit dufferincounty.ca/waste-services/yard-waste for a list of neighbourhoods.
- Collection in rural areas begins the week of April 6. Yard waste is collected on a monthly call-in basis. To be added to the list, contact GFL at 1-888-941-3345 ext.1 one week in advance of the scheduled collection each month.

You can also check out the Yard Waste Collection Map at dufferincounty.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Yard-Waste-Map.pdf to determine your route.

For Weeks A and B, collection starts on Monday at 7 a.m. and continues throughout the week until the area is completed.

Please note that your yard waste collection may not be the same day as your regular collection day.

Only include acceptable items in yard waste

- Acceptable items for yard waste include:
- Fallen fruit from trees
 - Grass clippings
 - Hedge trimmings
 - Leaves
 - Tree prunings (sticks, twigs and small branches)
 - Weeds
 - Yard and house plants (no soil)

- Yard and garden trimmings
- Bags or bins?**

Place yard waste in paper bags, open labeled containers or bundles. Dufferin Waste also provides yellow yard waste stickers for personal containers. Contact the team at 519-941-2816 ext. 2620 or email dufferin-waste@dufferincounty.ca.

At the curb

Label yard waste containers. Plastic bags are not permitted.

Each bag/container should not exceed 125 litres (33 gallons), 20 kilograms (44 pounds).

Bundles should not exceed 1.25 metres (4 feet). Secure bundles with twine.

Mow it, then leave it!

Did you know grass clippings help nourish your lawn? Grass clippings are made up of 80 to 90 percent water and decompose quickly, allowing the soil to receive nutrients, such as nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus. This helps avoid the use of synthetic fertilizers. Grasscycle this season for healthier grass, plus less raking and bagging.

Properly dispose of noxious weeds

Noxious weeds like giant hogweed, wild

parsnip, garlic mustard and more are not accepted in the County's green bin or yard waste collection programs and should be handled with care.

Noxious weeds are considered garbage and have additional rules for disposal:

- Material must be double-bagged in clear garbage bags
 - Once bagged, please leave bags in the sun for at least a week
 - After a week, set it out for curbside collection or take it to the GFL Transfer Station
- For curbside collection: any bags of noxious weeds that exceed the one bag limit will require a garbage bag tag.
- For a complete list of bag tag vendors, visit dufferincounty.ca/waste-services/garbage.

For safety reasons, please notify GFL prior to collection: 1-888-941-3345 ext.1.

Drop-off at GFL transfer station: a per bag disposal charge will apply. Please call the GFL Transfer Station (519-943-0101) to notify them of the disposal. Residents are asked to bring the material first thing in the morning. The GFL Transfer Station is located at 473051 County Road 11, Amaranth.



NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Application to Amend County of Dufferin Official Plan
 April 15, 2026 at 6:00 pm
 Mel Lloyd Centre, Entrance F, New Horizon's Room
 167 Centre Street, Shelburne

County File No: COPA2-25

Location: 476420 3rd Line, Melancton (Chipwoods Park)

TAKE NOTICE that the County of Dufferin will hold a Public Meeting pursuant to subsection 22 of the *Planning Act* to hear public comments on a privately initiated County official plan amendment prior to the County making any decisions at a future meeting.

THE PUBLIC MEETING will be held in-person on Wednesday, April 15, 2026 at 6:00 pm in the New Horizon's Room at the Mel Lloyd Centre, Entrance F, 167 Centre Street, Shelburne. The agenda for the meeting will be posted on the County's website on the Friday prior to the meeting. As this meeting is for the purpose of receiving feedback from the public on the proposed official plan amendment, no decisions will be made by Council at the meeting.

Any person or public body may participate in this process by attending the meeting to speak in-person or by providing written comments on the proposed official plan amendment. Those who attend in-person to speak will have 3 minutes for comments during the meeting.

Written comments received prior to the meeting will be circulated to Council as part of the agenda package for the meeting. Written comments will also continue to be accepted by staff until a decision has been made by Council. Written comments can be sent to the attention of the County Clerk by email or by regular mail to the address listed at the end of this notice.

All information submitted to the County is subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information Act and Protection of Privacy Act. Personal information collected at the public meeting will be used to support Council in their decision making. Names and comments will form part of the public record.

Please note that this meeting will not be recorded or livestreamed.

THE PURPOSE AND EFFECT OF THE OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT is to redesignate the subject lands from *Countryside Area* (Schedule B) and *Prime Agricultural* (Schedule C) to *Community Settlement Area*. The redesignation is to permit the establishment of a permanent, year-round, affordable leasehold community consisting of 222 residential units, recreational areas, and a defined commercial area.



FOR MORE INFORMATION about this matter, including information about appeals rights, visit the County's website. A copy of the proposed official plan amendment is also available online. <https://www.dufferincounty.ca/planning-development/application-process-fees/>

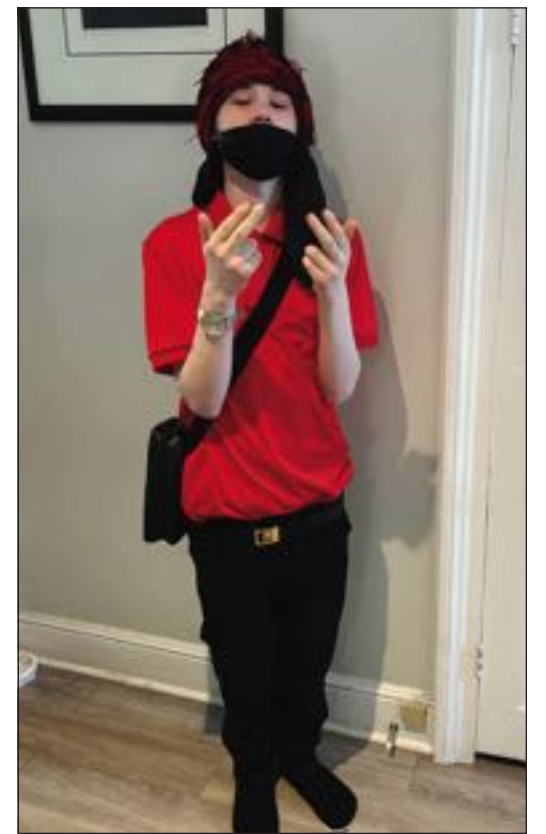
Local police seeks the public's help in locating missing 17-year-old

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers are asking the public for assistance in locating a missing 17-year-old male.

The missing male is William Pimentel, described as white, with a small build, approximately 80 pounds, 5 foot 1 inches tall, brown hair, and brown eyes, wearing black jeans, a black hoodie, and a brown winter hat.

William was last seen on March 13, at approximately 10:45 a.m., at the Bramelea GO station in Brampton.

If you live or work in the area, please check surveillance video. Investigators are asking that anyone with information regarding the whereabouts of William to contact Police at 1-888-310-1122 (Reference #E260346776).



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MISSING YOUTH: Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers are seeking the community's help in locating 17-year-old William Pimentel, who was last seen on March 13, at approximately 10:45 a.m., at the Bramelea GO station in Brampton. Pimentel is described as white, with a small build, approximately 80 pounds, 5 foot 1 inches tall, brown hair, and brown eyes, wearing black jeans, a black hoodie, and a brown winter hat.



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SPORTS

Provincial Junior Hockey League division finals underway

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

The Provincial Junior Hockey League has moved into the division championship series as teams from across the province battle it out to see who will be the top team this season.

Division champions will move on to the provincial Schmalz Cup playoffs to determine the top Junior C team in Ontario.

In the North Carruthers Division, the Alliston Hornets and Stayner Siskins are tied after the first two games.

The Hornets won Game 1 of the series with a huge 6-1 win. The Siskins blasted onto the ice in Game 2 and won 4-2 to even the series.

In the Pollock Division, the Fergus Whalers and the Hanover Barons are tied after two games.

Fergus won the opener 6-0. The Barons fought back in Game 2 and won 3-2 to even the series.

The Uxbridge Bruins and the Clarington Eagles are tied in their Orr Division championship series.

Uxbridge won Game 1, 6-1. Clarington responded with a 4-3 win in Game 2 of the series.

After the weekend, the Frankford Huskies are leading 1-0 over the Lakefield Chiefs in the Tod Division final.

The Huskies won Game 1, 4-2 on Saturday, March 21.

In Niagara, the Dundas Blues moved to a 1-0 lead over the Niagara RiverHawks in their Bloomfield Division final.

Dundas won the first game 5-2.

The Doherty Division has the Tavistock Braves leading the Woodstock Navy Vets 2-0 in their series.



BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

TIED: The Provincial Junior Hockey League is now in the Division playoffs as Junior C teams across the province battle it out for division championships. The Alliston Hornets took on the Stayner Siskins in the North Carruthers Division championship series at the New Tecumseth Recreation Centre in Alliston on Friday, March 20. The Siskins won this game 4-2, and the series is now tied 1-1.

The Braves won Game 1 with a score of 5-1, then followed up with another 5-1 win in the second game of the series.

In the Yeck Division, the series is tied after the first two games between the North Middlesex Stars and the Mt. Brydges Bulldogs.

Mt. Brydges won Game 1, 4-3. North Middlesex took Game 2 by a score of 3-0.

In the southwest area of the province, the Essex 73s are leading the Lakeshore Canadiens 2-0 in their final series.

In Game 1, the Canadiens won the shut-

out, 1-0.

Essa responded in Game 2 with a 4-1 win. All division championships will wrap up by Apr. 2.

Winning teams will move on to the provincial Junior C championship playoffs.

North Dufferin Baseball League hosts annual awards presentation in Lisle

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

The North Dufferin Baseball League celebrated a successful 2025 season at its annual awards presentation held at the Lisle Legion on Sunday, March 14.

The awards recognize championship teams and individual excellence across the junior and senior divisions.

Provincial success was also highlighted during the event as the Ivy Rangers captured the Senior A Ontario Baseball Association Championship. The Midland Mariners claimed the Senior C OBA title.

At the junior level, the Orillia Royals won the 22U OBA championship.

In the regular season, the Creemore Padres finished first in the junior division with a 15-2-1 record, earning the Sunnydale Service and Variety Trophy.

In senior play, the Ivy Rangers topped the East Division at 13-7-2 to earn the North Dufferin Baseball League Trophy, while the New Lowell Knights finished first in the West Division with an improved 17-4-1 record and received the Ross Houston Memorial Trophy.

Coaching honours in the senior division went to Pete Kinghan of the New Lowell Knights, who was voted Bud Anderson Memorial Award winner as Coach of the Year, continuing his reputation as a perennial recipient.

Junior division individual awards were

highlighted by Aidan Farrow of Innisfil Cardinals 1, who earned the Reg Westbrooke Memorial Trophy as best batter with a .533 average and also led the division with a .583 on-base percentage.

Nic Guthrie of the Creemore Padres led the division with 19 runs scored, while Michael Dawe of Innisfil Cardinals 1 paced juniors with three home runs.

Wyatt Thompson of the Orillia Royals was named best pitcher and most valuable player, while teammate Reese Boyle received the Vice-President's Trophy as most sportsmanlike player.

In the senior division, Brett Chater of the Bolton Brewers captured the Creemore Star Trophy as best batter with a .524 average and earned his second consecutive Bruce Jenkins Memorial Trophy as most valuable player.

Adam Shaver of the Owen Sound Baysox led the division with a .644 on-base percentage to win the Bob Doner Memorial Trophy and also topped the league with seven home runs to earn the Bill Lennox Memorial Trophy.

Blake Faulds of the Orillia Majors led the senior division with 24 runs scored and received the Evan Jamieson Memorial Trophy.

Pitching and defensive awards went to Ryan Bartley of the Owen Sound Baysox, who was named best pitcher and received the Lloyd Patton and Bill Gowan Memorial Trophy, and Parker Walker of the Ivy Rang-

ers, who earned his first Carl Gowan Memorial Trophy as best catcher.

The Tom Anderson Memorial Award for most sportsmanlike player was presented to Anson Dupuis of the Creemore Padres.

A service award was presented to past president Chris Fafalios in recognition of his three-year term as president of the executive board.

The league's annual meeting followed the awards presentation.

There are three new junior entries to bring the division to eight teams. New teams

include the Aurora-King Jays, Caledon Nationals and Owen Sound Baysox, joining returning teams Barrie Baycats, Creemore Padres, Innisfil Cardinals 1 and 2, and the Orillia Royals.

Richmond Hill will not return this season.

The senior division will remain at 12 teams: Barrie Angels, Bolton Brewers, Caledon Cardinals, Clarksburg Blues, Creemore Padres, Ivy Rangers, Lisle Astros, Mansfield Cubs, Midland Mariners, New Lowell Knights, Orillia Majors and Owen Sound Baysox.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MVP AWARD: The North Dufferin Baseball League held its annual awards presentation at the Lisle Legion on Sunday, March 14. Championship teams were recognized, as well as individual player achievements. Wyatt Thompson of the Orillia Royals was named junior division most valuable player and received the Statistician's Trophy from statistician Chris Fafalios. Thompson also won the best pitcher title in the division.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

WRESTLING CHAMPIONS: The Centre Dufferin District High School wrestling team competed at OFSAA at the Peterborough Memorial Centre on March 3 and 4 with good results. The team includes, from left, Musa Mangat, Brayden McInroy, Abigail Amond, Ava Dresar, and Kaitlyn Walker. All Centre Dufferin wrestlers won matches in the highly competitive provincial championship event.

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i'm lovin' it



ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

BROOK BAIRD

With two brothers who played hockey and the opportunity to try the 'first shift' program, CDDHS left wing, Brook Baird was inspired to start playing hockey when she was eight years-old.

"I love the people and I love the coaching," Brook said of why she likes playing hockey. "You can't play it alone, you have to rely on your team."

Outside of school, Brook plays hockey with the Orangeville Tigers U18 BB team.

A well rounded athlete, Brook also plays rugby, field lacrosse, box lacrosse, volleyball and field hockey.

TEAM: CENTRE DUFFERIN DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL ROYALS GIRLS VARSITY HOCKEY

POSITION: LEFT WING

Town of Shelburne to recognize National Dental Hygienists Week in April

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Town of Shelburne has officially proclaimed April 4 to 10 as National Dental Hygienists Week, highlighting the critical role oral health plays in overall well-being and the professionals who support it.

Mayor Wade Mills issued the proclamation on behalf of council, pointing to widespread oral health concerns across Canada.

"Fifty-nine per cent of Canadian children and 96 per cent of adults have experienced cavities, and 21 per cent of Canadian adults have experienced periodontal (gum) issues," Mills read from the proclamation.

"Research shows a direct link between oral health and overall health and well-being, such as periodontal disease being linked to several serious illnesses, including lung disease, diabetes, and heart disease."

These findings have increased the focus on preventative care and early intervention as key strategies to improve overall health outcomes.

In Canada, dental hygiene is one of the country's largest regulated health professions, with more than 34,000 practitioners working in clinics, schools, and community settings.

These professionals provide care to patients of all ages, helping to prevent and manage oral health issues before they be-

come more severe.

The proclamation underscores the importance of regular dental visits and proper daily hygiene practices, especially for children and seniors who may be more vulnerable to oral health complications.

National Dental Hygienists Week is led by the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association and is celebrated annually across the country.

The initiative aims to raise awareness of the importance of oral care while recognizing dental hygienists' contributions to healthier communities. It is hoped that the designation will encourage residents to prioritize oral health and take advantage of preventative care services.



SCOTT MARTIN PHOTOS

FRIENDLY BATTLE: Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police officers competed against members of the Orangeville Fire Department in an annual Charity Hockey Game on March 21. The stands at the Alder Recreation Centre were packed as fans of both teams cheered them on. Tickets were sold for \$10 each, and all proceeds are being donated to the Orangeville Food Bank and Dufferin Child & Family Services.



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Fire at Fur-Ever Farm Canada destroys equipment, sparks donation drive

Written By JOSHUA DRAKES
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A fast-moving fire has destroyed a key outbuilding at a joint farm animal sanctuary and dog rescue in Mono, resulting in significant equipment losses and prompting an urgent appeal for community support.

The blaze broke out in Fur-Ever Farm Canada's garage and workroom on March 8, quickly consuming the structure and its contents. Embers from the farm's maple syrup evaporator managed to slip out of the machine, igniting a blaze that completely destroyed the workshop and everything inside.

Ashley Andrews, founder of Fur-Ever Farm-Canada, said that it was a freak accident that produced a blaze unlike anything she had ever seen.

"Everything in the garage went up like a dried Christmas tree; it was horrible," she said. "The flames were so big and so hot. It's nothing like I've ever seen in my whole 40 years of being alive, I've never seen a fire like that."

In an online statement on March 9, the organization informed its supporters that the damage was severe but that no one was injured, and it could have been much worse.

"Our garage and workroom caught fire, and we lost almost everything inside," Fur-Ever Farm Canada and Fur-Ever Able Dog Rescue & Rehab said in a joint statement. "This space held our tools, lawn maintenance equipment, standby generators, and many of the items we rely on to keep the farm running every single day."

While all people and animals were safely accounted for, the not-for-profit organization estimates more than \$70,000 in losses related to tools and supplies alone, not including the building itself.

The destroyed building had recently undergone upgrades, including a new roof and hydro installation completed two years ago. The fire also damaged the hydro line and destroyed a puppy transport trailer.

Several essential pieces of equipment used in daily operations were lost, including tools, lawn maintenance machinery, and standby generators.

Thankfully, by luck, some heavy machinery was spared.

"We were incredibly lucky in one way," the statement said. "Our tractor had been taken out earlier in the day for chores, otherwise it would have been lost as well."

Andrews extended her sincere thanks to the fire departments that responded to the

fire. "We are so grateful," she said. "Rosemont fire came out, Alliston, Orangeville, Shelburne, like everybody, there were so many fire trucks. The firefighters, they were just so sweet. They were so nice. They were working so hard, and focused on saving the buildings from not going up that had animals in them."

In the aftermath, the organization is working to replace critical items needed to maintain daily operations.

While insurance claims are underway, many essential tools are required immediately to continue caring for animals and maintaining the property, so the farm is seeking any excess equipment in the community.

"We know times are tough for everyone, so we are not asking anyone to go out and buy anything new," the farm said. "But if you happen to have items sitting in your garage or shed that you no longer use, they would help us tremendously as we rebuild."

The group has issued a public request for donated items, particularly used tools and equipment. Immediate needs include toolboxes, hand tools such as hammers, wrenches, and screwdrivers, as well as power tools like drills and saws.

Farm and yard equipment, including wheelbarrows, shovels, rakes, pitchforks, hoses, and extension cords, is also needed.

Larger items such as a portable generator, pressure washer, air compressor, and lawn maintenance equipment are also being sought.

For now, Fur-Ever Farm-Canada is focusing on recovery, meaning some upcoming programs and events may be put on hold, but Andrews stressed that doesn't in the slightest mean the farm will ever be closing. The mission hasn't changed.

"We're not stopping at all, that was never even remotely on our minds," she said. "We can't do our events because it's just very dangerous right now with the cleanup, and the building's smack dab in the middle of our property. But everything else can be fixed and rebuilt. It's just going to take some time to get there."

Fur-Ever Farm Canada is an animal rescue that provides shelter and care for animals, relying on equipment and community support to sustain its operations. The loss of its garage and workroom represents a major operational setback as it continues its recovery efforts.

For more information on how to help, go to facebook.com/fureverfarmcanada.

Shelburne Public Library invites patrons to read 'Meet the Neighbors' until April 9

Shelburne Public Library invites readers to join Libby Reads, the global digital book club from Libby, the library reading app. From March 26 to April 9, library card holders can enjoy "Meet the Neighbors," a heartfelt and unique look at the inner life of animals, by Brandon Keim as an ebook or audiobook for free with no waitlists or holds through Libby.

In this wide-ranging, wonder-filled exploration of animals' inner lives, Keim takes us into courtrooms and wildlife hospitals,

under backyard decks and into deserts, to meet anew the wild creatures who populate our communities and the philosophers, rogue pest controllers, ecologists, wildlife doctors, and others who are reimagining our relationships to them.

Library staff invite you to join them for a watch party. Tune into the live Q&A with author Brandon Keim and Book Lounge by Libby podcast host, Joe Skelley on Thursday, April 9, at 12 p.m. in the Community Room at the library.

"Like great books, animals have a way of bringing us together. Almost everyone has a story about a special animal whether it was a beloved pet, a backyard bird, or the adorable but annoying bunny that always finds a way to sneak into your garden and steal your tulips. The Libby Reads initiative helps libraries connect with their community over a shared love of reading and we look forward to meeting more of our neighbours as we discuss Keim's great book," says Shelburne Public Library CEO Shannon McGrady.

Libby Reads is available through more

than 22,000 libraries worldwide. Formerly known as Big Library Read, Libby Reads continues the same beloved program that has connected millions of readers worldwide for more than a decade.

Readers can access "Meet the Neighbors" on all major devices through Libby or OverDrive, including iPhone®, iPad®, Android™ phones and tablets. The title will automatically expire at the end of the lending period (April 9).

This article was written by the Shelburne Public Library staff.

adopt a cat



Magic is 7 years old and head of the greeting committee. He loves to get his pets and runs to meet the volunteers. Magic is very playful and will spend hours with a wand toy. This handsome stud has a best buddy Rufus, who although isn't as outgoing, also loves his pets (yes you can adopt both!).

Magic is neutered, microchipped, dewormed, flea treated and vaccinated.

Adoption price: \$275

Check our facebook page to see the other kitties looking for their forever home. Donations always needed to help care for the cats as we are not funded at all, and rely on donations and fundraisers. If you would like to volunteer as well we are always appreciative.

Magic

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Fetch a life-changing prize in the Ontario SPCA's Spring Draws for Paws 50/50 Lottery

The Ontario SPCA and Humane Society's Spring Draws for Paws 50/50 Lottery is back, giving Ontarians the chance to win a major cash prize while making a meaningful difference for animals across the province.

The Grand Prize draw takes place May 7, when one lucky winner will fetch a life-changing cash prize. The winner of the fall Draws for Paws 50/50 Lottery took home more than \$144,000 – the largest jackpot yet – showing just how powerful community support can be.

Tickets start at just \$10 and are available online at ontariospcalottery.ca. Supporters can multiply their chances to win with bundle options:

- \$10 for 10 tickets
- \$20 for 40 tickets
- \$40 for 200 tickets
- \$75 for 500 tickets
- \$100 for 650 tickets

And don't paws – buying early means even more chances to win. Four Early Bird prizes of \$2,000 are also up for grabs.

"When you buy a ticket in the Ontario SPCA's Draws for Paws 50/50 Lottery, you're directly supporting programs that keep pets healthy and families together," says Stephanie Miller, vice president of development at the Ontario SPCA and Humane Society. "And, of course, there's the thrill of knowing you could be the one to walk away with a life-changing jackpot."

Funds raised through the Draws for Paws 50/50 Lottery support the Ontario SPCA's Community Access to Resources, Education, and Support (CARES) Fund – a grant program that helps SPCAs and humane societies across Ontario. The CARES Fund provides financial support for initiatives that enhance animal welfare, including spay/neuter programs, veterinary care, and shelter improvements.

Don't miss your chance to win big and help animals today. It's a win-win that's sure to have tails wagging.

Purchase tickets and learn more at: ontariospcalottery.ca

VENDOR APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

ORANGEVILLE CITIZEN

HOLLYFEST

A holiday artisan shopping experience



We're decking the halls once again and inviting unique, passionate vendors to join us in making HollyFest even more magical in its second year. After an incredible inaugural event, we're excited to welcome new businesses and continue growing Orangeville Citizen's signature holiday shopping experience.

If you're ready to showcase your products, connect with an engaged community, join a festive tradition in the making, we'd love to have you at HollyFest and share in the magic!!

Saturday, November 21, 2026 - 9am to 4pm; and
Sunday, November 22, 2026 - 10am to 3pm

Indoors at the Orangeville Fairgrounds, 247090 Side Rd 5, Mono

orangevillehollyfest.ca



To apply to be a vendor at the show, scan the QR code, visit our website or email shows@lpcmedia.ca for a vendor application form. Apply before June 1, 2026 and be eligible for early acceptance on June 26.

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- APR 17TH** – The Canvas, Carvings & Keepsakes Sale
- APR 24TH** – The Springtime Tool & Equipment Sale
- MAY 1ST** – The Locked & Loaded - Handgun Auction
- MAY 8TH** – May 8th – Toys, Toys and more Toys.
- MAY 15TH** – Strike It Rich: The Coins & Currency Auction
- MAY 26TH - 30TH** – Straight Shooter Sale
- JUN 13TH** – Antiques and Collectibles Auction



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Township of Melancthon NOTICE OF OPEN HOUSE FOR A NEW OFFICIAL PLAN

Date and Time: Wednesday, April 22, 2026 – 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Location: Township of Melancthon Municipal Office, 157101 Highway 10

Please visit the Township's website for the official notice:

<https://melancthontownship.ca/planning/official-plan-and-zoning-by-law-conformity-exercise-update/>

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Dufferin OPP respond to fatal collision, conduct commercial vehicle enforcement

One person dead after head-on collision in East Garafraxa

One individual has been pronounced deceased following a head-on collision in East Garafraxa.

On Thursday, March 19, 2026, at approximately 5:15 a.m., members of the Caledon Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) responded to reports of a collision involving two passenger vehicles on Caledon/East Garafraxa Townline.

The driver of one of the vehicles was pronounced deceased at the scene. The driver of the second vehicle was transported to hospital with non life threatening injuries.

The identity of the deceased has not yet been confirmed.

Caledon/East Garafraxa Town-Line remains closed between Shaws Creek Road and Winston Churchill Boulevard for the ongoing investigation with the assistance from the OPP Traffic Incident Management

& Enforcement (TIME) Team.

Anyone with information or video footage of the incident is asked to contact OPP at 1-888-310-1122, or report anonymously through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or online at ontariocrimestoppers.ca.

Dufferin OPP and MTO deem six vehicles as unsafe, taken off road

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers, in partnership with the Ministry of Transportation (MTO), recently conducted a targeted traffic enforcement initiative focused on commercial motor vehicle compliance and road safety.

During the initiative, officers conducted a total of 30 inspections, including both Level 1 and Level 2 commercial vehicle inspections.

As a result, six vehicles were found to be unsafe and were placed out of service due to significant mechanical or safety-related

deficiencies.

Officers also issued 14 Provincial Offence Notices for various violations identified throughout the enforcement period.

In addition, six Approved Screening Device (ASD) tests were administered to drivers, all of which resulted in zero blood alcohol concentration readings.

The OPP remains committed to ensuring the safety of Ontario's roadways through proactive enforcement and continued collaboration with its policing partners. This joint initiative with the Ministry of Transportation contributed to increased compliance and enhanced road safety for all road users.

Dufferin OPP encourage motorists to be mindful of farm equipment

Dufferin Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers supported National Agricultural Week, which ran from March 15 to 21.

This week highlighted the vital role agriculture plays in local communities and serves as an important reminder that safety on rural roadways and farms is a shared responsibility.

"With spring approaching, motorists can expect to see an increase in farm equipment travelling on local roads. These vehicles are often large, slow-moving, and may make wide turns or sudden stops. Drivers are reminded to remain patient, reduce speed, and only pass when it is safe and legal to do so," reads a statement from Dufferin OPP.

"Farm safety is equally important. Farmers and agricultural workers are encouraged to remain vigilant when operating machinery, ensure proper maintenance of equipment, and take regular breaks to avoid fatigue. Wearing appropriate protective gear and keeping children away from active work areas can significantly reduce the risk of injury."



OBITUARIES - FOREVER IN OUR Hearts

In Loving Memory of

KENNETH EDWARD ROY YOUNG

Peacefully with family by his side at Headwaters Health Care Centre on Saturday, March 21, 2026 at the age of 88. Loving father of Laurie (Scott), the late Randy & Linda and the late Kevin. Proud grandpa of Jordan (Nicole), Conner (Kate), Jessie, Curtis and Miranda (Adam) and great-grandpa of Sadie and Wyatt. Stepdad of Tracy Gray (Alan Gorrie) and the late Greg Corbett. Step grandpa of Taylor Gray and Paxton Gray (Mike). Dear brother of Eldon (Diane), Verral (Linda) and Ron. Ken will be greatly missed by his many nieces, nephews, friends and extended family.



A Celebration of Life will be announced at a later date. Spring interment at Shelburne Cemetery. If desired, donations to the Canadian Cancer Society, Heart & Stroke Foundation or a local charity of your choice would be appreciated as expressions of sympathy. Online condolences may be placed at www.jackandthompsonfuneralhome.com.

Remembering your loved one

Placing an obituary in one of our newspapers is a meaningful way to honour the life of your loved one and share their story with the community that helped shape them — including friends, neighbours, and colleagues from every chapter of their life.

An obituary becomes a lasting tribute, preserving memories, values, and accomplishments for future generations. It offers a moment to reflect on a life well lived and the love left behind. Most of all, it invites a community to remember together, to grieve, and to offer comfort and connection during a time of loss.

If you would like to place an obituary in the Shelburne Free Press, or one of our affiliate newspapers, contact Debbie at debbie@ipcmedia.ca or 519-925-2832

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<p>INCREDIBLE PRICE 9⁹⁹</p> <p>SAVE \$3</p> <p>Maple Butter Pork Chops 4 PIECES 500 g</p>	<p>NEW!</p> <p>SAVE \$4</p> <p>INCREDIBLE PRICE 8⁹⁹ each</p> <p>Mini Red Velvet Cheesecakes 6 PIECES 300 g</p> <p>Also available, Mini Raspberry Cheesecakes 6 PIECES 300 g \$8.99 save \$4</p>	<p>SAVE \$4</p> <p>INCREDIBLE PRICE 8⁹⁹ each</p> <p>Mini Chocolate Peanut Butter Cakes 6 PIECES 300 g</p> <p>Also available, Mini Apple Crisp Cheesecakes 6 PIECES 360 g \$8.99 save \$4</p>	<p>INCREDIBLE PRICE 19⁹⁹ each</p> <p>SAVE \$10</p> <p>Deluxe Meat Lasagna 1.81 kg</p>

<p>SAVE \$3 16⁹⁹</p> <p>WING NIGHT. TONIGHT.</p> <p>No reservations needed. Fully Cooked Chicken Wings Choose from 8 varieties.</p>	<p>INCREDIBLE PRICE 29⁹⁹</p> <p>SAVE \$10</p> <p>Boneless, Skinless Chicken Breasts 8-12 BREASTS 1.36 kg</p>	<p>SALE 4⁴⁹ each</p> <p>Bistro Chicken[®] 114 g</p> <p>Swiss, Ricotta & Spinach, Broccoli and Cheese</p> <p>Stuffed, Breaded Chicken 142 g</p> <p>Other varieties to choose from: • Parmesan • Kiev • Swiss</p>
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<p>SAVE \$3 9⁹⁹ each</p> <p>Salmon Wellington 150 g</p>	<p>SAVE \$2 14⁹⁹</p> <p>Seasoned Breaded Cod 4-5 PIECES 400 g</p>	<p>SAVE \$2 24⁹⁹</p> <p>Potato Crusted Cod 4-5 PIECES 620 g</p>

SEAFOOD APPS

<p>Sauce included 12⁹⁹</p> <p>Shrimp Tempura 13-15 PIECES 340 g</p>	<p>14⁹⁹</p> <p>Garlic Shrimp 12-13 PIECES 340 g</p>
<p>14⁹⁹</p> <p>Jumbo Coconut Shrimp 16-19 SHRIMP 340 g</p>	<p>19⁹⁹</p> <p>Bacon Wrapped Scallop Medallions 9-13 PIECES 300 g</p>
<p>SAVE \$5 14⁹⁹</p> <p>Shrimp Ring 42-48 SHRIMP 454 g</p> <p>Cocktail Sauce included</p>	<p>12⁹⁹</p> <p>Lobster Mac & Cheese Bites 14 PIECES 252 g</p>

PREMIUM ENTRÉES

850 g - 1.02 kg 5 VARIETIES **SAVE \$2**

<p>17⁹⁹ each</p> <p>Stuffed Pasta Shells</p>	<p>17⁹⁹ each</p> <p>Braised Beef Pappardelle Pasta</p>	<p>17⁹⁹ each</p> <p>Supreme Stuffed Peppers 4 PIECES</p>
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SINGLE SERVES

275 g - 340 g **4⁹⁹ each SALE**

<p>4⁹⁹ each</p> <p>Homestyle Shepherd's Pie</p>	<p>9⁹⁹ each</p> <p>Spanakopita 12 PIECES 340 g</p>
<p>4⁹⁹ each</p> <p>Cabbage Rolls</p> <p>CHOOSE FROM 20 VARIETIES.</p>	<p>9⁹⁹ each</p> <p>Mini Franks in Pastry 15 PIECES 279 g</p>

Seniors Day Every Tuesday 10% off Regular Priced Items!

INDULGENT DESSERT

<p>17⁹⁹ SAVE \$2</p> <p>Chocolate Lovers Variety Pack 850 g</p> <p>Also available, Dessert Bar Variety Pack 675 g \$17.99 save \$2</p>	<p>15⁹⁹ SAVE \$2</p> <p>Chocolate Dipped Cheesecake 600 g</p> <p>NEW!</p>	<p>8⁹⁹ SALE</p> <p>Mini Chocolate Torte Duo 2 CAKES 160 g</p> <p>NEW!</p>
<p>4⁹⁹</p> <p>Blossoms 2 PORTIONS 230 g 3 Varieties</p>	<p>4⁹⁹</p> <p>Apple Crisps 2 PORTIONS 228 g</p>	<p>17⁹⁹ SAVE \$2</p> <p>Key Lime Pie 800 g</p>

WEEKNIGHT WINNERS

SAVE \$2 each

<p>27⁹⁹</p> <p>Turkey Breast Roast 875 g</p> <p>INDIVIDUALLY PACKAGED IN OVEN-READY POUCH</p>	<p>12⁹⁹</p> <p>Pork Schnitzel 5-7 PIECES 650 g</p>
<p>10⁹⁹ each</p> <p>Gratins 500 g</p> <p>Broccoli, Cauliflower</p>	<p>12⁹⁹</p> <p>Pork Osso Buco 600 g</p> <p>NEW!</p>
<p>14⁹⁹</p> <p>Supreme Scalloped Potatoes 907 g</p>	<p>4⁹⁹</p> <p>Apple Crisps 2 PORTIONS 228 g</p>

To view the full flyer, scan the QR code or go to mmfoodmarket.com

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\$1,026,990*

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- Main floor guest suites offer added flexibility for family or visitors
- Ravine lots provide scenic views and a connection to the surrounding natural landscape

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- ✓ Hardwood On Main Floor
- ✓ Double Sinks in Ensuite

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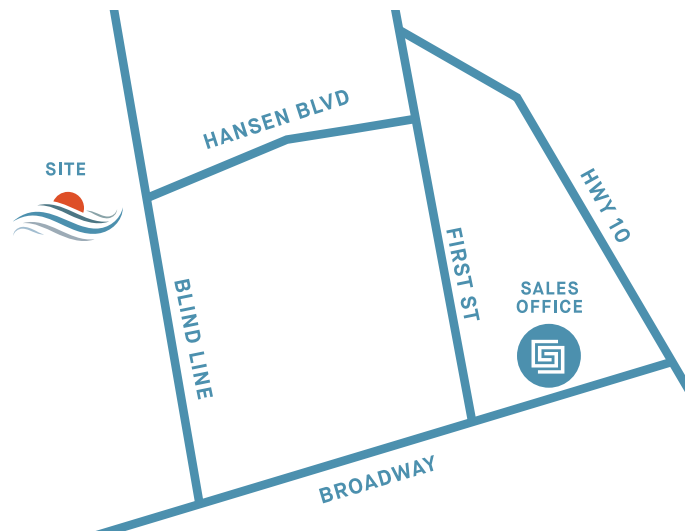
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