

Indigenous speaker series coming to Caledon Public Library

First speaker is Darin Wybenga of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation

By Zachary Roman

Caledon residents will have the privilege of learning about Indigenous history and culture thanks to a new speaker series coming to the Caledon Public Library (CPL).

On June 1, CPL Communications and Community Development Manager Mary Maw announced the Library had received a grant from the Brampton and Caledon Community Foundation for the series.

She said it will put Indigenous speakers, artisans, Elders, knowledge holders, lecturers and authors in the spotlight.

Maw explained in her announcement that the series has been developed as a means of advancing and implementing meaningful discussion with the community surrounding reconciliation.

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations has called public libraries to action on reconciliation, and the speaker series is one way the CPL is responding.

"Our 2021-2024 Strategic Plan goal of 'celebrating culture and inclusion' directs CPL to develop and grow our programs to reflect Caledon's diversity, increase opportunities for cultural activities, and grow our partnerships with cultural organizations," said CPL's CEO and Chief Librarian Colleen Lipp. "CPL firmly believes this series will support the Caledon community's need and desire for artistic, cultural, and educational events and programs."

Jim Boyd, President and CEO of the Brampton and Caledon Community Foundation, said the Foundation is pleased to be supporting the CPL in their new initiative.

"We wish the Caledon Public Library and their guest speakers much success in bringing these stories to life for us to understand, respect and appreciate," said Boyd.

The speaker series' first event is coming soon; it will be held on Tuesday, June 14 at 7 p.m. While the speaker is presenting virtually, attendees are welcome to attend the Southfields Village branch of the CPL to watch and listen on a big screen that will be set up there.

The speaker that evening will be Darin Wybenga, the Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Coordinator of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Maw explained he will be speaking about the history of Indigenous people in Peel Region, as well as the importance of land acknowledgements.

Maw said the CPL is proud to help the Caledon community learn and discover as members of the Indigenous community share their knowledge, experience, and culture.

She explained other events under consideration to be included in the new speaker series are: Learning about Indigenous Treaties; Dreamcatcher Making and Teaching; a Beading workshop; Grandmother's Voices; and an Indigenous language workshop.

Maw said to check CPL's website and social media accounts to stay updated on future events.