

Successful family picnic event kicks off Pride Month

Caledon Pride and IDEA Caledon came together to host June 2 event

By **ZACHARY ROMAN**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Caledon residents celebrated Pride last Sunday.

On June 2, Caledon Pride and IDEA Caledon came together to host a Pride family picnic event at Caledon East Park. It featured live music, vendors and activities, and food and drinks, and was a day where many community partners came together.

Jules Bertola, an organizer with Caledon Pride, said the picnic event was a great success. They said what was originally planned as a small picnic event soon became "a full-on Pride fest."

Bertola said it was a testament to the amount of people and organizations in the Caledon community that want the opportunity to be visible and show their support for Pride Month, which is celebrated each June.

"Pride should be accessible and it should be in your backyard," said Bertola. "All of the partners here today that have worked with us, we couldn't be more thankful for their time and resources."

Bertola first started Caledon Pride in 2019 when they were an intern with Caledon Community Services. There was great support for the group right away and despite a slowdown caused by the pandemic, Caledon Pride has continued to grow and support the local 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

"You shouldn't have to leave your community, you shouldn't have to struggle in your community to find inclusivity and acceptance," said Bertola.

Bertola said their favourite part of the picnic event was meeting people from all the different community organizations that came.

"I have just been really touched by the generosity of people willing to put their time and resources into this event," said Bertola.

Caledon Pride is hosting another event during Pride Month. At 5 p.m. on June 20 at GoodLot Farmstead Brewing, Caledon Pride will host "Queers and Beers".

It's going to be a laid-back social event with board games, live music, and of course, craft beer.

"It focuses on bringing people together, celebrating local business, and sustainability," said Bertola. "It's a good way for people to come out and meet each other."