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FREE Thursday, July 3, 2025 Volume 45, Issue 25



Gabriel Hansraj is pictured flipping pancakes at the annual Canada Day Strawberry Festival, a task he's taken on since he was a high school student. INSET: The Kavanagh family celebrates Canada Day with their Strawberry Pancakes. PHOTOS BY RILEY MURPHY


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Stacked with Syrup & Spirit: Strawberry Festival serves up Canada Day cheer

BY RILEY MURPHY
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The sweet, sticky smell of strawberries flooded the Caledon Fairgrounds as the annual Strawberry Festival and Canada Day Celebration was held. Run by the Caledon Agricultural Society, the event featured pony rides and petting zoos, a classic car show, an agility dog show, live music, multiple vendors, and one of the highlights of the day: the pancake booth.

The booth, filled with volunteers, doled out hundreds of pancakes throughout the day, topped with strawberries that had been painstakingly cleaned and sliced by volunteers the day before, a process that took almost seven hours. Downey's Farm had donated eighty flats for the day, and every last strawberry was used. Gabriel Hansraj and his family have been working at the pancake booth at the strawberry festival for the past twenty years, starting when he was 10. Hansraj shared

that he can't imagine doing anything else for Canada Day. "I started to do it to get hours for high school. But after that, our town needs assistance with this. It's really the family, you've got my dad here, my aunt, everyone. We've got to make sure that people get their pancakes on Canada Day," said Hansraj. He shared that they owe it all to the Agricultural Society, because without them, the batter wouldn't get made.

Continued on Page 11

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Celebrated poet Gimaa R. Stacey Laforme reflects on Grief, Hope, and Reconciliation

BY RILEY MURPHY
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

During National Indigenous History Month, residents were invited to join in a night of words and reflection by celebrated poet and storyteller Gimaa R. Stacey Laforme. The event, hosted by the Town of Caledon and IDEA Caledon, allowed attendees to gain insights into the power of poetry as art, as told by Laforme. Laforme, previously Chief of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN), has been serving his community for more than 20 years.



PHOTO BY RILEY MURPHY

Continued on Page 6

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Province puts Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board under "supervision"

BY BROCK WEIR

The Dufferin-Peel District School Board (DPCDSB) was among four Ontario school boards to be placed under "supervision" of the Ministry of Education last week.

The move came following an investigation into the finances of the DP-CDSB, along with the Toronto District School Board, the Toronto Catholic District School Board, and the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.

The Boards in question will now be subject to a Provincially-appointed supervisor to, according to the Ministry of Education, "address concerns regarding growing deficits, depleting reserves, and ongoing cases of mismanagement."

"As part of its plan to protect Ontario and ensure students are prepared for the jobs of tomorrow, these actions will help the Province restore sound financial management at these school boards and ensure that every dollar invested is preparing students with practical skills for good-paying, stable careers," said the Ministry.

In a statement, Minister of Education Paul Calandra said the Boards in question "failed in its responsibilities to parents and students by losing sight of its core mission – ensuring student success."

"We're strengthening oversight and accountability so that parents can have the confidence that every dollar is spent responsibly to directly benefit students," Calandra's statement continued. "I have made it clear that if a school board veers off its mandate, I will take action to restore focus, rebuild trust, and put students first."

According to the Ministry, the DPCDSB is at risk of financial default by August 31, "which would lead the Board to default on payments and financial obligations."

The report notes the Ministry-led investigation into the DPCDSB began June 5 and is the second investigation related to the Board within two years that has recommended supervision.

The DPCDSB did not elaborate on the announcement, but confirmed it was under supervision effective June 27.

"Earlier this month, the Minister of Education appointed Ministry staff as a financial investigator, who recently submitted their final report to the Minister of Education recommending supervision," said the Board in a statement. "Under supervision, the powers of trustees are vested in the Minister of Education who can then appoint a supervisor. A supervisor has been appointed, Mr. Rick Byers, and his mandate is to work with staff to develop and implement a plan to return the Board to a balanced financial position."

Per the Ministry, supervisors are intended to "bring extensive experience in government, financial management and public accountability" to the table and were chosen as a reflection of their "strong track records of leadership and oversight."

"These supervisors will represent the Ministry's vested control, overseeing and managing the administration of the boards, including financial management, policy implementation and operational oversight," they said. "They will provide the Ministry with regular updates on their work, focus on addressing the deteriorating financial positions of the boards and identify where they can implement savings measures and improve operational efficiencies."

"These actions reflect the government's continued focus on upholding public trust in Ontario's publicly funded education system and are a part of the government's plan to build a strong, accountable and well-supported public education system with a back-to-basics approach that is focused on improving student outcomes."



PHOTO BY RILEY MURPHY

Meet Caledon's 2025 Senior of the Year: Ed Taccone

BY RILEY MURPHY
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Ed Taccone remembers sitting in his kitchen after church, surrounded by half a dozen families while his mother made big plates of pasta.

Taccone's family immigrated to New Brunswick in the early 1950s from Italy, and his parents immediately became involved in the church, often inviting other families over for meals.

Taccone shared that these families were extremely grateful, as they often didn't have a lot of money.

"Being younger back then, I didn't realize at the time what they were doing. But later on in life, of course, I did. And I wanted to follow suit, so I volunteered," said Taccone.

Taccone shared that volunteering has always been in his heart, and before becoming President of the Agricultural Society, he volunteered in numerous other areas, including hockey teams, car clubs, and more, before he found himself and his family moving to Caledon almost 40 years ago.

Taccone wanted to see how they could help the community after moving, and having friends in the Caledon Agricultural Society, he attended a couple of meetings.

"After that, I thought to myself, these people are wonderful. To get their time and not expecting any favors in return, I thought this is for me. So, I joined in 1989, and from there, it just escalated," said Taccone.

Taccone currently sits as President of the Society and says he has no plans of stepping down until the new community centre is finished.

"The community really needs something in North West Caledon. We don't have a community building,

per se, and for me, it's important that we're able to. We're not asking for any money. This is the Agricultural Society that wants to put the building up, but at the same time, something that the town can use too," said Taccone.

He hopes that the centre will also act as a way of putting Caledon on the map.

"People moving here need a place to stay. We kind of have to open our arms a little bit," said Taccone.

He reflected on how his parents immigrated to Canada, and the country gave his family a home.

"Canada gave my parents and my family, my uncles, aunts, cousins, an opportunity to be part of a beautiful country," he said. "Canada is home. I was five years old when we came here. It's always great to come home."

Part of home for him is being involved and volunteering.

Not only is he a part of the Agricultural Society, but also the Headwaters British Car Club, where, for the past ten years, he has transformed part of his backyard into a Super 8 track to enhance the club's cohesion.

"Just being with people is wonderful. You know, at the end of the day, regardless of what you hear, people need people," said Taccone.

"All the years I've been a volunteer, I've never thought of being recognized. I just did," he said.

Taccone shared that for the rest of his life, he feels that nothing will compare to the honour of Senior of the Year.

No time for rest for the Senior of the Year, shortly after his award, he jumped right back into the busy world of volunteering, with the annual Strawberry Festival and Canada Day festivities ensuring residents of all ages can come together in celebration and community spirit, much like his own.

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(LEFT) Departing CCS Board Members were honoured with gifts and flowers. Pictured here, left to right, are Connie Stevens, Gurvinder Chopra, and Wanda Buote. (RIGHT) Councillor Christina Early, Captain (Ret'd) Kevin Junor, and Geraldine Aguiar.



(RIGHT) Councillor Christina Early, Captain (Ret'd) Kevin Junor, and Geraldine Aguiar. PHOTOS BY RILEY MURPHY

Caledon Community Services celebrates Community Impact at 2025 AGM

BY RILEY MURPHY
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Caledon Community Services (CCS) held its annual general meeting last week, celebrating incoming board members, saying goodbye to departing members, and recognizing all their accomplishments from the 2024-2025 year.

Geraldine Aguiar, Chief Executive Officer at CCS, opened the meeting, remarking they were celebrating the impact that their collective work had on advancing their mission of prioritizing community well-being.

“The mission cannot be done in isolation and your presence here is a testament to our shared goals and commitment to make our community stronger. Truly, together we can,” said Aguiar.

The room was packed roof to rafter, which MPP Sylvia Jones noted is a testament to what CCS means to the community.

Regional Councillor Christina Early, Board Chair of CCS, recognized all those on the Board and in the room that day.

“All of these individuals work their day job, and this is above and beyond,” said Councillor Early, motioning around the room. “The board is a strictly volunteer position, and there’s a lot of hours that go into it, but we do it with passion, care, and we do it for a community and an organization that we love so very much.”

The guest speaker for the evening was Captain (Ret'd) Kevin Junor, a 2025 King Charles III Coronation Medal honoree.

Junor has over 40 years of service in the Canadian Armed Forces Reserves, and was appointed to the Order of Ontario with demonstrated commitment to community well-being, diversity, inclusion, and preserving military history.

Junor shared the story of Mark, a story CCS had once shared with him.

Mark was the neighbour who always helped out, driving his friends’ kids to practice and dropping off groceries when someone was going through a rough patch.

But when he lost his job, Mark skipped meals so his kids wouldn’t go hungry.

Junor shared that for Mark, one of the hardest parts was being unable to buy his daughter her favourite snack.

“I’m here to tell you that there are a number of individuals like Mark in our community who don’t have the privilege to go out for coffee to deal with this. Can you imagine? You have to decide between paying your rent or mortgage or utilities or buying food for your family,” said Junor.

“I always say that it’s my responsibility to extend the privilege to those who are in need. My late mom’s favorite [quote] was, ‘if I can help somebody, as I pass along, that my living shall not be in vain.’ I can assure you that the team at CCS is not living in vain,” he said. “I can assure you that the funds donated are used to help those who do not have the necessities of life. Individuals like Mark, can find their way at CCS for the support needed. This results in improved quality of life.”

CCS noted in their 2024-2025 community impact report that their food bank reached a historic record high.

Over 1,200 people accessed food and es-

sential items through more than 5,000 food bank visits.

455 children received healthy snacks, access to recreation, and school supplies.

CCS also reported over 20,000 hours of direct service for seniors.

Recognized at the event were the 2024-2025 Honorary Life members, who have embodied CCS’s values and commitment to the community for more than 10 years, and each has contributed to the agency’s success with their time, resources, and skills.

These members were Melodie Belusa, Tracy Smale, and Stephen Julian.

CCS said goodbye to three board members at the AGM: Wanda Buote, Connie Stevens, and Gurvinder Chopra.

With three members leaving, CCS also celebrated those joining the board: Lesley Kennedy, Carine Strong, and Simran Viridi.

As CCS moves into its next year, its 2024-2027 Strategic Plan focuses on operational and service excellence, partnership growth, sustainability, and advocacy for equitable opportunities.

Caledon RibFest sizzles back to Bolton this weekend

BY RILEY MURPHY
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Caledon RibFest is back this weekend, so be sure to bring your family and an empty stomach!

The three-day event will include award-winning ribbers, local food and merchant vendors, a beer tent, live music, and a fun-filled kids zone.

This year, the event will be held in Downtown Bolton, at the Ann & Samuel Sterne Municipal Parking Lot, located at 7 Timothy St, Bolton.

Rib Fest runs from Friday to Sunday, with the following hours: 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Saturday, and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Sunday.

Instead of an admission price, Rib Fest is accepting donations for Bethell Hospice and Meghan’s Music Room.

Anthony Caputo from The Caputo Group, the hosts of Ribfest, shared that having no admission while accepting donations to these organizations is the perfect way to give back to the community.

He shared that he feels no event in Caledon should have a price tag, ensuring that everyone can come out and enjoy.

Caputo said they decided to bring back Caledon RibFest during the COVID-19 years to help people return to a sense of normalcy.

“It was so successful, not only because the attendance was amazing, but the money that we were able to raise for different charities was really nice,” he said

This year there will be three ribbers in attendance: The Hogfather Canada, Ribs Royale, and Dinosaur Smokehouse.

Bands this year will include; Highway Kings, The Nobodies, and The Screaming Riffs, as well as DJ Good Vibes the entire

weekend.

All ages are welcome at the event.

There will be no shuttle services available.



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OIL SPILL UPDATE, MAYOR'S STATEMENT

Officers from the Caledon Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) have identified a vehicle of interest and continue to investigate an oil spill in a stormwater pond in Bolton.

"Investigators from the Caledon OPP continue to work alongside the Town of Caledon and the Ministry of Environment,

Conservation, and Parks, to investigate an oil spill in a stormwater pond in the area of Coleraine Drive and George Bolton Parkway," say Police. "The site has been secured, and the oil spill has been contained to the stormwater pond. At this time, investigators are unable to confirm the cause of the oil spill.

"Investigators have identified a vehicle of interest and are encouraging the driver, any passengers, or anybody with information about this vehicle to come forward and speak with investigators regarding this incident."

Residents can expect to see an increased volume of traffic in the area. As the investigation continues, the Caledon OPP is encouraging residents to avoid the area until the situation is resolved.

Additional information will be provided as it becomes available.

Anyone who may have information regarding the oil spill is asked to contact Caledon OPP at 1-888-310-1122. You can also provide information anonymously by contacting Peel Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or online at www.peelcrimestoppers.ca. When you contact Crime Stoppers, you stay anonymous, and you never have to testify.

In the meantime, Mayor Annette Groves has issued a statement to the community on the matter.

"As you may be aware, there was an oil spill last week at one of our stormwater ponds in Bolton near Coleraine Drive and George Bolton Parkway," said Mayor Groves in a June 27 statement.

"Our staff have been working with the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), Peel Spills and Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks to assess the area and contain the spill. The site is secure and remediation efforts are underway.

"On behalf of myself, Council and the entire Caledon community, I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude to all our staff for their continued dedication and professionalism in managing the spill. Their swift response, hard work, and dedication have been crucial in mitigating damage and ensuring continued public safety."

grounds that the driver's ability to operate a motor vehicle was impaired by drug."

Following the investigation, Donald Drysdale, 22, of Alliston, was charged with:

- Operation while impaired – drug;
- Drive vehicle with cannabis readily available.

The charges have not been proven.

"Later that same day, Caledon OPP officers received a report of a single vehicle collision on Olde Base Line Road, near Kennedy Road, in the Town of Caledon. Shortly after 11:30 p.m., officers arrived on scene and subsequently formed grounds that the driver's ability to operate a motor vehicle was impaired by alcohol."

As a result of the investigation, Lori Wood, 61, of Caledon, was charged with:

- Operation while impaired - blood alcohol concentration (80 plus).

The charge has not been proven.

"The following day, on June 23, 2025, at approximately 8:30 p.m., Caledon OPP officers responded to a report of a single vehicle collision on Rolling Hills Lane, near Station Road, in the Town of Caledon. Shortly after, officers arrived on scene and subsequently formed grounds that the driver's ability to operate a motor vehicle was impaired by alcohol."

Following the investigation, James Price, 35, of Bolton, was charged with:

- Fail to surrender licence;
- Operation while impaired - blood alcohol concentration (80 plus).

The charges have not been proven.

All accused parties are scheduled to appear at the Ontario Court of Justice in Orangeville on July 10, 2025, to answer to their charges. The vehicles were also impounded for a period of seven days, and their driver's licences were suspended for a period of 90 days.

"Drivers continue to take chances," say Police. "It's simply not worth the risk. Motorists are reminded that no amount of alcohol or drugs in your system is safe when driving. If you plan on drinking or consuming drugs, plan to not drive. Instead, arrange for a designated driver, take a taxi or public transit, or come up with another plan that takes impaired driving out of the picture. If you suspect that someone is driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs, it is important to call 9-1-1 to report it.

For more information about the penalties of driving impaired, visit: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/impaired-driving>.

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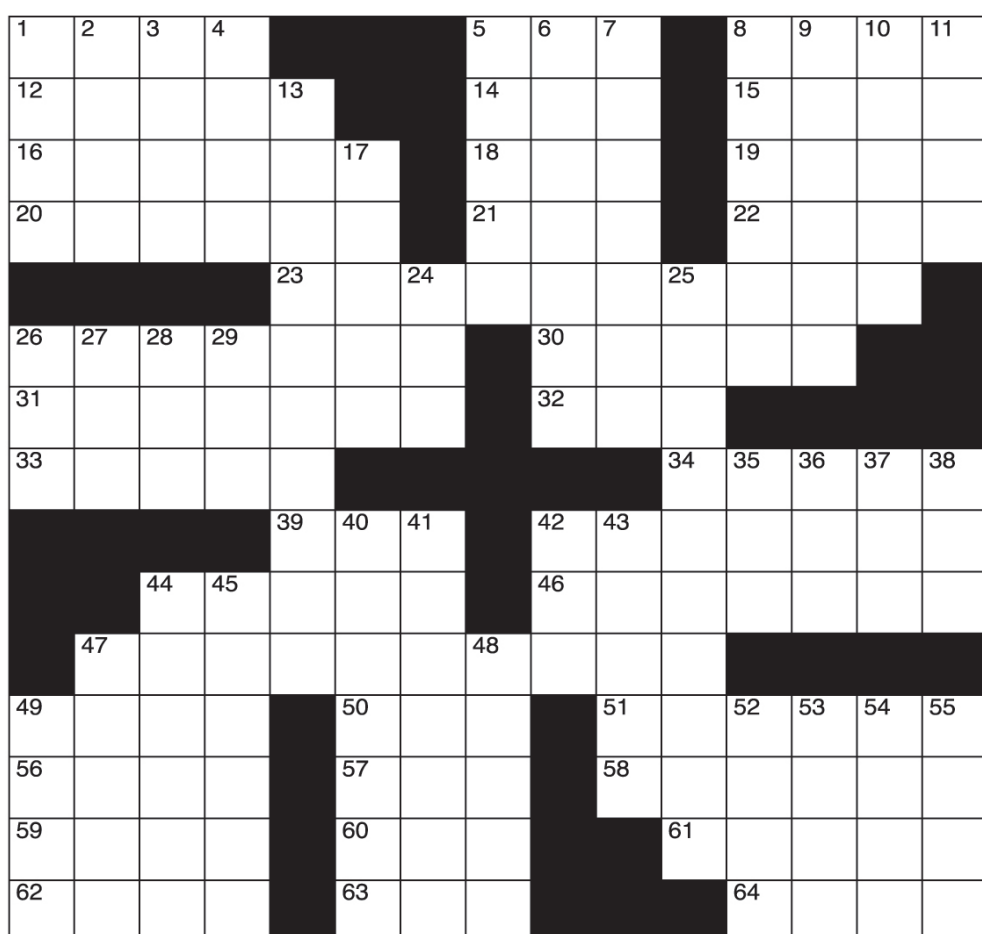
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IMPAIRED CHARGES

Officers from the Caledon Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) have charged three individuals with operation while impaired offences.

"On June 22, 2025, at approximately 3:30 a.m., Caledon OPP officers responded to a traffic complaint regarding a vehicle displaying poor driving behaviour," say Police. "Shortly after, officers located the vehicle on Albion Vaughan Road, near Caledon King Townline, in the Town of Caledon. Investigating officers conducted a traffic stop upon the vehicle and formed

The Citizen CROSSWORD



CLUES ACROSS

- 50 percent
- Records electric currents
- Charlize Theron flick "___ Flux"
- More frosty
- Disfigure
- Sky color
- A thoroughfare in a town or city
- Actress de Armas
- Spend time in a relaxed way
- California peak
- Lodging option
- Small amount of a thing
- Expresses sorrow
- Keeps an ear warm
- Babies (Spanish)
- A conceited and self-centered person
- No seats available
- Pouches
- Hip joints
- A place to bathe

- Evading
- Minute, one-celled unit
- Losing one's hair
- A country in W Africa
- One point north of northeast
- Pointed end of a pen
- Extreme
- Norse personification of old age
- Doctors' group
- Member of U.S. Navy
- Mens' fashion accessories
- A way to allow
- Gloomy
- Grads wear one
- Between south and southeast
- Jaguarundi cat

CLUES DOWN


- Snakes do it

- Hormone interstate commerce
- The standard monetary unit of Turkey
- Fixed charges
- Electronic communication
- Artilleries
- "Strangers on a Train" actor Farley
- Burning
- Makes ecstatically happy
- Greek liqueurs
- Tropical Old World tree
- Someone who takes vengeance
- Style of cuisine
- Select
- Immunized against disease
- Old world, new
- Honorable title (Turkish)
- Court case: ___ v. Wade
- Supervises
- Two
- Twelve
- Commentator Coulter
- Encourage
- Plumbing fixtures
- Early
- One point north of due east
- King of Thebes
- Short-tailed martens
- Impose a penalty on
- Consort of Poseidon
- A way to lessen
- Brooklyn hoops team
- Female of a horse
- Do as one is told
- A way to prepare meat
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Celebrated poet Gimaa R. Stacey Laforme reflects on Grief, Hope, and Reconciliation



PHOTO BY RILEY MURPHY

Continued from FRONT

Laforme shared poems from his books, *Living in the Tall Grass* and *Love, Life, Loss, and a Little Bit of Hope: Poems from the Soul*. His poetry collections invite non-Indigenous people to see through the eyes of Indigenous people, exploring topics such as peace and humanity, grief, trauma, and hope, while also drawing from his own life experiences.

“There’s things within the books that I write that are about raising consciousness, not just living in the moment. Enjoy your moments, life is made up of moments. But we have an obligation to the future and you can’t always meet

that obligation by living in the moment,” shared Laforme.

He began writing poetry in Grade 8, and after that, picked it back up after his mother passed when he was only 29.

“I don’t know why I chose poetry, but I chose poetry instead of writing about it. And then from there, I just kept writing,” said Laforme.

Laforme shared that he feels he can do good things more broadly through his work now than he could during his time as chief.

“I always felt constrained by the role of being a political leader in a First Nation because I always wanted to do more for more people,” said Laforme. “I enjoy this side of it better, interacting with many different people from many different backgrounds.”

“One of the greatest things that we need to remember is we’re all in this together,” shared Laforme. “But sometimes we’re asking the wrong questions. Because we’re thinking of the moment. We’re not thinking of the big picture. We should be asking those other questions, those hard questions. And that’ll change the dynamic in how we see other people.”

Standing at the front of the room, Laforme wore a red ribbon shirt with an eagle and ribbons along the back and sides.

Red symbolizes missing and murdered indigenous women, the eagle represents one of the most important animals in the Anishinaabe indigenous world view, and the ribbons are a symbol of remembrance and support for Indigenous residential school survivors and those who did not return home.

Laforme read his poem titled Reconciliation.

*“I sit here crying
 I don’t know why*

*I didn’t know the children
 I didn’t know the parents*

*But I knew their spirit
 I knew their love*

*I know their loss
 I know their potential*

*And I am overwhelmed
 By the pain and the hurt*

*The pain of the families and friends
 The pain of an entire people*

*Unable to protect them, to help them
 To comfort them, to love them*

*I did not know them
 But the pain is so real, so personal*

*I feel it in my core, my heart, my spirit
 I sit here crying and I am not ashamed*

*I will cry for them, and the many others like them
 I will cry for you, I will cry for me*

*I’ll cry for the what could have been
 Then I will calm myself, smudge myself, offer prayers*

*And know they are no longer in pain
 No longer do they hurt, they are at peace*

*In time I will tell their story, I will educate society
 So their memory is not lost to this world*

*And when I am asked
 what does Reconciliation mean to me*

*I will say I want their lives back
 I want them to live, to soar*

*I want to hear their laughter
 See their smiles*

*Give me that
 And I’ll grant you reconciliation.”*

“We all know there were children left behind. But it’s one thing to know that. It’s another thing to have the TV come on and slap you right in the face with that information. I was sad. I was hurt. I was angry. I felt someone’s love and sympathy for the family. And so, I sat down and wrote, Reconciliation,” he shared.

“Because these aren’t just indigenous children. These are the children of this country. These are our children.”

When people ask Laforme what they can do, whether by donating or raising awareness, Laforme tells them to get together with their community.

“Do something in your own backyard that means something to you, something that you won’t forget.”

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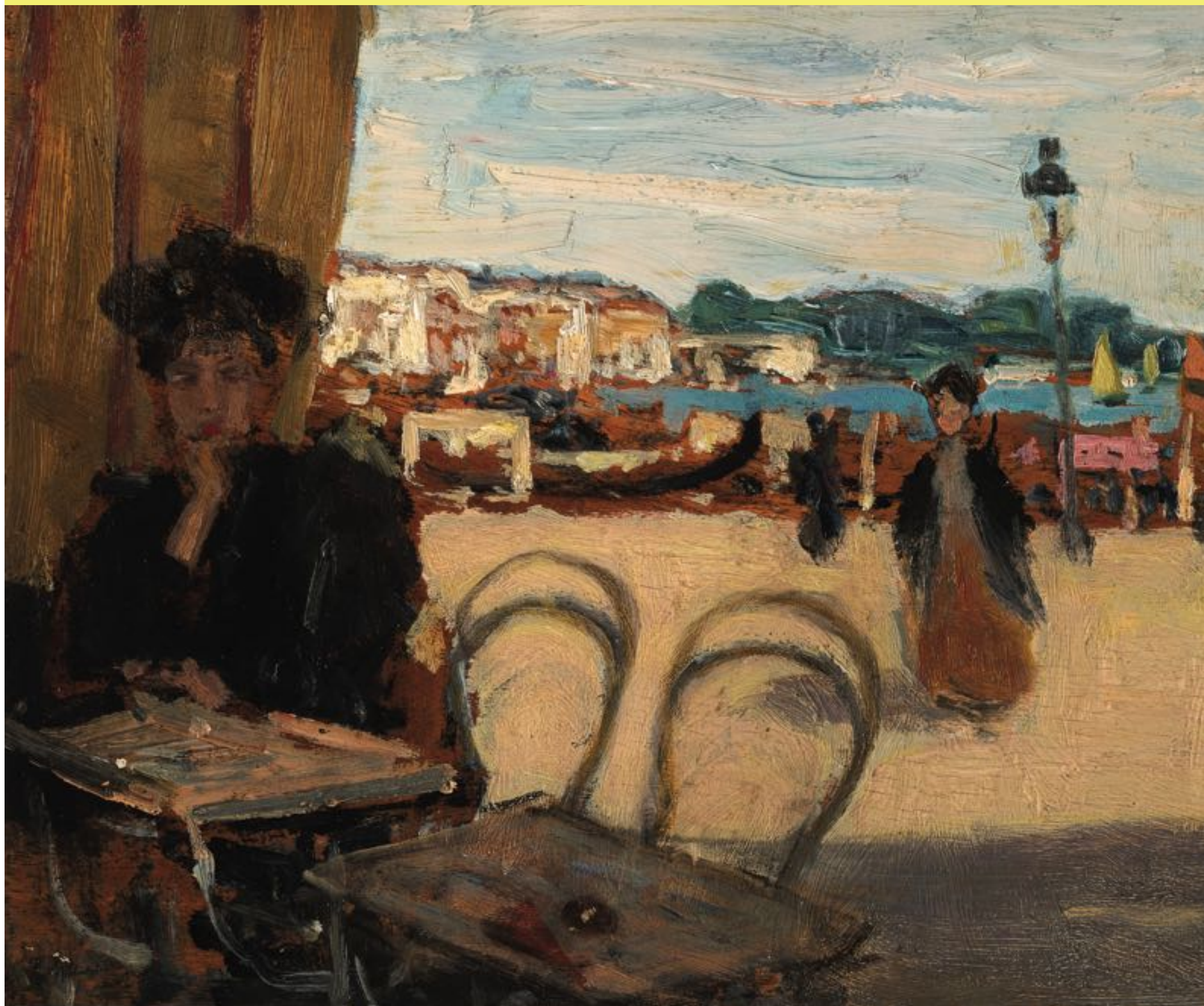
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BROCK WEIR
BROCK'S BANTER

Brain Drains?

How often do you climb up to shake a few branches of your family tree?

Maybe I'm something of an outlier, but just who came before me, and whose ingredients, no matter how diluted, now flow through my veins has always fascinated me.

It's trivial, to be sure, but as far as trivia goes, it often does spark the imagination. Even if some people like to pre-emptively throw cold water on your findings!

Genealogists in the know, for instance, often say that if you have just a single ancestor of English descent, no matter far back, chances are more than likely you're descended from Edward III, who reigned between 1327 and 1377. If, by any chance, your branches somehow missed Edward, you can most likely claim regal descent, whatever your background, from either Charlemagne or Genghis Khan – two very well-travelled and apparently busy men.

With that in mind, how can anyone not find the topic at least marginally interesting?

When I was a university student with a negligible social life, I took the opportunity to trace the branches of my family in earnest – and, thanks to the work of people who were bitten by the bug far earlier than me, I could trace some of my relatives back to the 1400s.

Some of my favourite findings were of the regal variety, but others were just plain neat – such as a 15th century female forebear on my paternal grandmother's side who was apparently imprisoned in a Swiss castle for alleged witchcraft... and subsequently made a daring escape, rappelling down the side of a turret at the stated age of 98... a claim that surely didn't lend any gravitas to those witchcraft accusations, but I digress... I was heartened that even back then sisters – or, in this case, x-times great-grandmothers – were doing it for themselves!

While my interest waned somewhat in the years since my university days, there was one nagging question about a matter on my paternal side I was never able to answer – and rekindled a near-cold research ember last month.

It relates to a family story which was passed down strictly through oral tradition rather than with any written record. With no paper trail, I've often wondered whether it was a true tale, or a tall tale spun to cover for something that might have been – well, socially less acceptable at the time.

This latest climb up my family tree revealed little in either direction, but it did yield another x-times-great grandmother with the unlikely name of "Mary Christmas" back in the 1600s, so it wasn't an entirely fruitless mission.

Yet, despite no evidence, it's a story that endures, and it's really a testament to the power of oral tradition.

Last week, I happened upon an interesting podcast on how our language – and our use of it – has shifted over time. The first installment that caught my attention took a deep dive into Queen Elizabeth II's first televised Christmas Message in 1957 compared to her final broadcast in 2021. The focus was how her vowels, word selection, and general communication style evolved over time, and why certain inflections endured over 60-odd years while others did not.

In the first broadcast, one commenter pointed out, the monarch in this pre-teleprompter era had a copy of the speech close at hand, which she glanced at from time to time, but the vast majority of the script was clearly committed to memory.

"Just a totally different time," they wrote. "70 years ago, it was just a little more normal to speak to our history of oral storytelling and that's one of the many things we've lost for the most part with modernization. Reading, memorizing, reciting used to be a huge part of Western culture. When I think about it, I believe we're giving up something very tragic there to the convenience of modern technology. It's like language and proper grammar. To employ it requires a certain amount of respect and a standard of education. It means something, it promotes a higher culture, one that considers such things. And now, we just offload that [integral] part of our entire history to Grammarly and spellcheck."

While I'd hate to ever be considered a luddite, here was one gem of wisdom found in the cesspool that is so often the comments section of YouTube.

Don't get me wrong, there's very little value in recitation and memorization within education just for memorization and recitation's sake; there has to be some sort of practical volume or demonstrable reason why this bit of knowledge needs to be permanently etched into our grey matter, but perhaps the simple act of doing so is the most basic brain exercise we have.

It's not even a matter of recitation and memorization of facts, figures, and poetry.

Not too long ago, my grandmother, who died in 2012, took exceptional pride in her ability to remember telephone numbers of friends and acquaintances going back decades, regardless of whether or not the person assigned to the number was still alive to pick up. Useless knowledge, particularly where the deceased are concerned, or so I thought.

Nowadays, with the ability to store numbers, handles, and email addresses in devices we always have ready, accessible wherever we happen to be or whatever we happen to be doing, the number of people who can spout off any number other than their own with complete confidence without looking at their screen are, in my experience, few and far between.

In the time since the Global Pandemic, people have said the passage of time feels just slightly different than it did in the "before times."

I can't say I disagree. It often feels like time is going by just a little bit faster than it did, with special occasions like Canada Day, creeping up with accelerating speed each year. But maybe it's a factor that we don't need to be as conscious of time in the ways we once were.

We're automatically reminded of the big stuff. We don't have to be clock conscious because we know there's one in our pocket ready at a moment's notice; we don't have to drum appointments into our heads before we forget because we'll get automatic reminders. Heck, we often don't even need to enter them into a calendar ourselves, all done automatically and with barely a thought.

Even reminiscences are something we don't really need to worry about. Instead of sharing some nostalgia with friends, family or other loved ones on a special anniversary, or even when something inconsequential triggers some unexpected recollections, we have the Memories feature on any number of platforms to do the heavy lifting for us.

But, how many memories, skills, and mental muscle flexes are we leaving behind us in the process, confident that all of our devices, apps and programs will have our backs? How do we safeguard them in the event of any number of glitches?

Rote memorization? Stories around a campfire? A good, old-fashioned diary or journal?

What are you doing?



Can government really solve our housing ills?

by Mark Pavilons



Is it too much to ask for a government that means, and does well, on behalf of the people?

That's a question my son asked me the other day. Whatever happened to putting people first?

I mentioned that in the preamble to the U.S. constitution, the opening line is "We the People ..."

In the beginning, the people not only mattered, they created change and they established the laws and rules of the land.

Our Canadian Charter notes we have the freedom of conscience and religion; freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication; freedom of peaceful assembly; and freedom of association.

I should point out that many countries around the world do not provide such fundamental rights to their citizens.

Many promises were made during the recent elections in this province. What of the carbon tax? Why do gas prices keep fluctuating if some taxes were removed?

Everyone knows there's a housing "crisis" in this province, but we've let it go unchecked for too long and I'm not sure if there's any equitable solution.

Even at the local council table, our elected representatives struggle with the term "affordable housing." Just what does that mean? In York, affordable is north of \$700,000. How is that any way affordable? How are young people in our community, who work hard, perhaps earn a degree or diploma, supposed to afford the payments, even if they make a little over \$100k?

Data from 2023 noted given York residents' average household income of just over \$150,000, an affordable home would be a maximum of \$536,000. News just last week said to afford a home in Toronto, couples would have to earn \$206,000.

King Mayor Pellegrini made the point again at Council. He prefers the term "attainable," meaning that couples, with decent, stable jobs and a down payment may be able to "attain" housing. But again, at what "entry level" price?

Even with low interest rates and 30-year amortization, the costs of paying a mortgage and maintaining a home are high. Ever-rising utility costs, insurance, taxes and groceries, make the Canadian dream of owning a home a challenge.

My son also asked why the government can't step in and tell developers to build homes in the \$400,000 range. They offer incentives but they can't tell private enterprise what to do.

During and after the Second World War there was government subsidized housing on a large scale but all that changed when the country prospered again in the 1950s.

We are also not in isolation and the recent tariff

war shows clearly how dependent we are on our trading partners.

We can't just legislate low prices across the board to help our citizens. Nice idea, though.

A draconian government could and would do just that.

I'm gonna take a brief look at the Cuban government to show some interesting extremes.

Cuba dissolved political parties in the 1960s and created one national Communist Party.

In 1992 modifications in the electoral law permitted direct elections of members of the National Assembly. About half of the elected members now also serve on municipal councils, while the remainder serve at large and are therefore not beholden to a designated constituency. There is no party slate and candidates need not belong to the official Cuban Communist Party. Delegates receive no compensation for their political service. There is considerable competition for elected office, despite the low opinion that many Cubans hold for delegates and government in general.

Wow, no pay for politicians? And they're still looked down upon?

The government closely oversees home ownership and real estate transactions. Few people can easily change their places of residence because the government's system of enforced home "exchanges," or trading, prevents housing sales. The Urban Reform Law of 1960 prohibited landlords from renting urban real estate, and families soon began buying homes by paying the current rental sum for between 5 and 20 years. Many families have acquired titles to houses and apartments in this way, and the rest pay a small percentage of their salary as rent to the state.

Now there's an interesting idea, my apologies to all realtors in our midst.

So here we have a Communist regime looking after its citizens' best interests. Sure, life is hard in Cuba and there are many shortages, but the Cuban people are resilient and innovative. Heck, they even keep 1957 Chevys running as taxis!

My point is one of priorities. Our society believes home ownership is the number one priority, regardless of the cost. We want to be better than the Joneses. We want more.

Therein lies the dilemma. "More" comes with a huge price tag – housing shortages, rising prices for consumer goods, massive bureaucratic salaries and more. Bottom line is we get mediocre returns on our taxes.

Today, municipalities are struggling to meet provincial mandates for, you get it, more. It's easy to tell everyone to build more, and go higher, but it doesn't solve the problem or come anywhere near affordable.

Just two generations ago (my parents, for example), you could buy a house for roughly \$30,000 and make payments spread out over 30 or more years. Even with relatively low salaries, families made it because taxes, groceries, gas and consumer goods were all affordable.

Now, a home, car, appliances and even A/C are only "attainable."

What's wrong with this picture?

I'm not suggesting we turn to the Commies for relief. Maybe we should bring back land grants, homestead rights and dower rights.

Where are we headed? Your guess is as good as mine.

Godspeed everyone!

Our Readers Write

Reader shares columnist's views on environment

I write in support of Sheralyn Roman's column "Environmental degradation at its finest" (June 26).

Making this beautifully rehabilitated former gravel pit in Ward 1, now graced with a 44-acre lake and meadows, teaming with wildlife, into a dumpsite for contaminated fill from GTA construction sites would be an outrageous abuse of this property.

If a fill permit were to be issued – somehow, who knows how, since doing so would contravene Caledon's fill by-law – it would set a dangerous precedent.

If this property goes downhill with construction spoils, what about other so-called holes in the ground around Caledon as GTA land developers scramble to find places to dump their dirty dirt? Sure, urban development will and has to happen, but not at the expense of our green space and

well water.

As a Ward 1 resident of many years, I have to wonder if either Mayor Annette Groves or developer and owner of the property Nick Cortellucci has ever actually visited this beautiful place. Has either of them ever talked with neighbouring farmers and rural residents whose well water would become contaminated for years to come by toxic fill?

It's not too late to save this well-rehabilitated and lovely green property. No fill permit has been issued by the Town of Caledon. If Mr. Cortellucci truly cares about his good standing in the land development business, he will abandon all plans to destroy this nature refuge. And a majority on Town Council will stop trying to make it easy for him to destroy it.

LINDA PIM
 INGLEWOOD

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SHERALYN ROMAN
TALK CALEDON



Canada Day is every day

Sure, I'm a day or two late, but who's counting when we're talking about the greatest country on earth? Not me, and I say it's ok to still be talking about Canada Day even a few days after it happened because, well, we're Canada and Canada Day is every day! In fact, this year it might even be more important to talk about Canada Day after the fact because of what happens tomorrow. It'll be the fourth of July, when the bombastic one will brag, boast and bore us to death with how great "his" country is. Safe to say Canadians, usually quietly patriotic, have had more than enough of our neighbour's invitation to become the 51st state, and have spent not just this most recent Canada Day, but the last six months or so, finding polite ways to say "Sorry, not sorry," we're PROUD to be CANADIAN!

From comedians sporting "Elbows Up" hockey jerseys on SNL and in commercials with now Prime Minister Mark Carney, to TV personalities, singers/songwriters, current and former politicians and us average, everyday Canadians, there has been no shortage of folks singing the praises of this great land of ours. Heck, even "Molson Joe" came out of retirement to update the great beer rant of the year 2000, to remind us all that while we are many things, one thing we will never be is American. Saying "They mistake our modesty for meekness, our kindness for consent, our nation for another star on their flag," he follows these points with an emphatic, "we are not the 51st anything." It may be a commercial, but I couldn't agree more and while a Canadian flag always flies high outside my home on Canada Day, this year I might just have been one of those people who went a little overboard on the Canadiana to show how proud, privileged and pleased I am to be a citizen of this great nation.

Canada is the country of choice for people from around the world. My own family represents a blend of six different European and Baltic countries, successive waves of generations who specifically chose Canada as the place they wanted to live in, start families in, and work hard in, because here, they knew they could prosper, thrive and live freely. Here, there was potential, a future, and a kinder more welcoming community. In Canada we celebrate diversity while embracing uniquely Canadian values. In Canada we are blessed to know that we are largely safe. Safe from school shootings and gun violence in general, and safe in the principles of democracy being upheld, and safe surrounded as we are by a social security net that endeavors to protect everyone, in good times and bad. These are all things our neighbours to the south likely haven't been feeling for quite some time now.

Canada is known around the world as moderate, the peacekeeper, a calming presence on the world

stage. We were part of the origin story for the UN Peacekeeping Forces, having played a key role under then Secretary of State for External Affairs Lester B. Pearson, "in creating the concept of UN peacekeeping." He was later awarded the Nobel Peace Prize "for his leadership in helping establish the United Nations Emergency Force in Egypt during the Suez Crisis of 1956."

Other famous Canadians include Banting and Best, working out of the University of Toronto in the early 1920s, who discovered insulin, saving without a doubt, millions of lives worldwide. In what might be considered a "typically Canadian" move, the two chose not to patent their discovery in order not to profit from it, "assigning the patent instead to the University of Toronto, ensuring it would be available for the benefit of all."

Space shuttles and now, the International Space Station, would be significantly less operationally efficient without the contribution of Canadians and the Canadarm. Perhaps it's a bit cliché to roll these contributions out now, on Canada Day, but with a surge in patriotism happening across the nation since both the US and Canadian elections, any day is a good day to remind ourselves of our successes. These three are just the top of the highlight reel out of a possible list of hundreds of things Canadians have developed, built, invented or created, contributing to making not just Canada, but our world, a better place to live in.

While there is a long way to go, Canada continues on its journey toward truth and reconciliation with Indigenous communities from coast, to coast, to coast. This is happening even as our southern neighbours forget all about their Indigenous heritage, attempt to strip some of their birthright citizenship and are deporting thousands of others, in some cases to countries from which they did NOT come. This isn't a comparison - nor a competition - but if it were, we ARE better, period.

We provide medical care to those who need it, not those who can afford it. We have a social security safety net for those who experience economic hardship and we provide accessible public education for every child. We provide maternity and parental leave to parents so they can actually enjoy and bond with their baby (and because it's the right thing to do!). We celebrate Pride, don't force people to hide. We are nice, not afraid of a federal agency called ICE. We are Canada. We might say "sorry" a lot but none of us are sorry to be living here in this big, beautiful, amazing country that I am so incredibly proud (and lucky enough) to call home. I really, really, really hope you agree. Happy Canada Day - everyday!

School's away, it's time to play! Caledon offers something for everyone this summer

BY RILEY MURPHY
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Schools are out for the summer, and for many, that may mean looking for ways to fill their days.

Lucky for them, Caledon has many activities and camps to fill up even the hottest of summer days.

The Town of Caledon itself offers a plethora of camps every summer.

The camps range for ages 4-16.

Every week, the Town offers up to 26 camps covering the following areas: Active Living and Sports, Arts, Dance, Drama, Baking and Cooking, Leadership, Science, Technology, and Support and Inclusion.

A Town of Caledon official shared that, based on feedback received, campers have enjoyed a safe and fun environment where they meet new friends and gain new experiences.

Their Summer Camp Team is excited to provide an unforgettable summer for all.

New camps available this summer include Skateboard Camp; Get Active; and Learn to Skate Camp.

Beyond camps, the Town of Caledon offers a wide range of activities to choose from, including sports drop-ins, public swimming, lessons, rock wall drop-ins, and access to fitness centers for individuals aged 11 and above.

Another option for summer programming resides at the Caledon Public Library (CPL).

Jill Jambor, Manager of Communications & Cultural Development, CPL, said if there is another hot spell, the Library is the perfect place to hang out to stay cool and comfortable.

Programs this summer include family story time, foam party fun, bubble fantasy show, teen cuisine

around the world, and virtual superhero trivia.

They will also be offering the Around the World Kids Club.

This summer, CPL takes children "Around the World" where every week they will highlight a different country with themed crafts, STEM activities, challenges, and games.

The drop-in program is open to all ages.

In addition to programs, Jambor shared CPL's Library of Things has much to offer.

People can borrow a wide variety of items for free, including instruments such as drum machines, guitars, and ukuleles, nature backpacks, Ontario Parks and PAMA passes, Yoto Mini Players, puzzles, board games, and bocce ball sets.

If the weather takes a turn and it's looking less than favourable outside, CPL's digital Library is available 24/7.

Here, you can stream movies, music, and access your favourite books in eBook and audiobook formats, plus find online learning resources if you find yourself missing school.

There is also the Write Around the World Contest and the TD Summer Reading Club for kids, teens, and adults, as well as more featured on the Summer at CPL page Summer at CPL - Caledon Library.

For those looking to head out and about, be sure to check out the Caledon Trailway, the Trans Canada Trail, and the over 260 km of trails available for your use.

If you're looking to stay closer to home, local parks such as Caledon East Park or Bolton Mill Park provide the perfect escape.

The Farmyard Play Area is also open at Downey's Farm daily.

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SPORTS

Lisle Astros edge Bolton Brewers 3-1 in a pitchers' duel at North Hill Park



Righthander Chris Fafalios provided a 1-2-3 inning of relief versus Lisle, but Bolton's rally fell short in a 3-1 loss.

PHOTO BY JIM STEWART

BY JIM STEWART

In a good, old-fashioned pitchers' duel at North Hill Park, the Lisle Astros used a three-run outburst in the fourth inning and a complete game by lefty starter Eric Jones to subdue the Bolton Brewers 3-1 in NDBL action on Thursday night.

It was a quick game for both teams—the contest was completed in less than two hours—but it was also a quiet night for the Brewers' league-leading offence.

Bolton's Player Coach Mike Wallace—who is leading the team in hitting with a .566 average – gave credit where credit was due.

"Jones threw really well tonight. He mixed speeds and had us off-balance. We have a lot of really good hitters in our lineup

so sometimes you just have to tip your cap."

Coach Wallace was gracious in defeat and praised Jones's complete game effort for the Astros, but he was quick to applaud the efforts of his own pitchers, too.

"I thought Carson [Burns] gave us a quality start tonight and Faf [Chris Fafalios] threw really well in relief. Our pitching was good and when you hold the other team to three runs, it's rare that we lose a ballgame like that."

Rare, indeed. The Brewers have a high-powered offence that is averaging almost nine runs a game, but on Thursday night, it was the green-clad Astros from Lisle that had the big inning—stealing a page out of the home side's modus operandi.

The green-and-gold clad visitors, in their Oakland A's vintage jerseys with an As-

tros logo juxtaposed on the sleeve, broke a scoreless tie in the fourth inning when four consecutive hard hit balls by Zach Scragg, Dan Morningstar, Ryan Young, and Gavin Mikaczo off Brewers' starter Carson Burns accounted for all three of the Astros' runs. Scragg's lead-off single was followed by Morningstar's ringing double.

Young's ensuing two-run double plated both Scragg and Morningstar from third and second, respectively. Mikaczo's RBI single plated Young and spotted Jones all the offense the southpaw would need versus the Brewers.

Bolton's bats woke up in the sixth inning after Jones faced the minimum number of batters at the bottom of the fourth and fifth. Drew Volkey led off the bottom of the sixth with a ringing triple in the left-centre gap

that clattered around on the warning track.

Ben Sterritt drove a ball to deep centre to cash in Volkey on a sacrifice fly RBI, but Jones quelled the comeback by getting Burns to ground out, yielding a bases-empty single to Jack Larmer, and striking out Fafalios to limit the Brewers' potent offense to one run.

After Fafalios induced a 1-2-3 inning in relief at the top of the seventh, the table was set for a walk-off win, but Jones had other ideas. He struck out lead-off hitter Greg Keenan looking. On the next ball in play, the Lisle lefty 'put a little mustard on the hot dog,' as Vin Scully used to say, when he fielded Daniel Accardo's comebacker, glanced into the Brewers' dugout, and still threw out the runner—raising the hackles of the home side and suggesting some future bad blood should the squads meet in the playoffs. Jones garnered the last out of the game by shattering Carter Burnside's bat and generated a slow roller down the first base line. Impressively, the Astros' southpaw chalked up an efficient complete game in what is often an inhospitable ballpark for visiting pitchers.

The schedule doesn't get any easier for the Brewers as they host their long-time nemesis, the New Lowell Knights, on Thursday, July 3 at North Hill Park. First pitch against New Lowell is 7:30 p.m. and Coach Wallace discussed the keys to beating the Knights: "You can't give a good team like that any free runs. We'll have to play good defense and get good pitching to beat a very good ball team."

On Sunday, July 6 at 4 p.m., the Brewers will face the expansion, crosstown Caledon Cardinals for the second time this season at North Hill Park. The Brewers beat the Cardinals 5-2 in their inaugural meeting.

Baysox take over top spot in NDBL senior league

BY BRIAN LOCKHART

The Owen Sound Baysox have taken over first place in the senior division of the North Dufferin Baseball League after going on a four-game winning streak.

The Baysox have a 10-2 record for the season. Their only losses have been to the Bolton Brewers and the New Lowell Knights.

The Baysox have a low runs against average of 4.3 runs per game.

Owen Sound is the defending Strother Cup champion team from 2024.

The Baysox replaced Bolton as the top seed in the league, and Bolton has now dropped down to third place with five losses after 14 games.

In second place, the Lisle Astros have a 9-6-1 record after 16 games this season. The Astros always put in a good effort and have always been a strong team in the NDBL.

In fourth place, the Ivy Rangers are on the plus side with an 8-5-1 record. The Rangers had a

five-game winning streak in June which moved them up in the standings.

The Midland Mariners are in fifth place in the League. They currently have a 7-5-1 record.

The Mariners are in a bit of a slump after losing their last four games.

In the number six spot, the Barrie Angels are barely on the plus side with a 6-4-3 record.

The New Lowell Knights are in the middle of the pack in seventh place with a 7-4 record after 12 times on the diamond.

In order, the rest of the teams in the standings are the Creemore Padres, Orillia Majors, Clarksburg Blues, Mansfield Cubs, and the Caledon Cardinals.

It is a 22-game regular season schedule this year so most of the teams are at the halfway mark in the season.

The regular season will wrap up at the end of July with qualifying teams going into the playoffs to determine this year's Strother Cup champion.

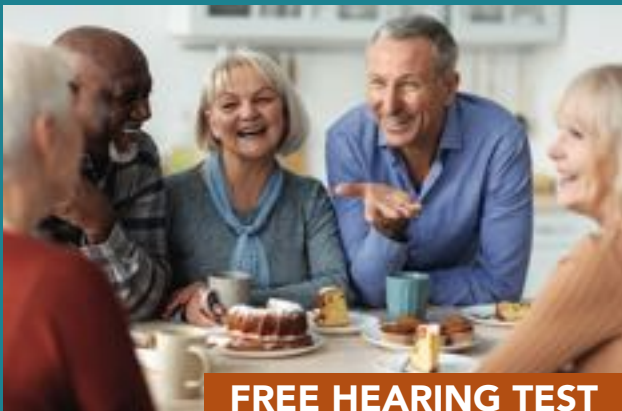


The Mansfield Cubs hosted the Lisle Astros on the diamond in Mansfield during a recent game. The senior division of the North Dufferin Baseball League is now halfway through the regular season schedule.

PHOTO BY BRIAN LOCKHART

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Stacked with Syrup & Spirit: Caledon's Strawberry Festival serves up Canada Day cheer

Continued from FRONT

"If we don't have a good batter, it doesn't matter how well I can cook the pancakes," laughed Hansraj.

Families and more lined up past dozens of booths to get a taste of the classic Strawberry Festival treat.

MPs and dignitaries also celebrated Canada's 158th birthday at the celebration.

Dufferin-Caledon MP Kyle Seebach shared that Canada is "unequivocally the best country in the world."

"I came here at 9 o'clock to help flip pancakes for this event, but there have been people here since five. This event does not happen without the amazing hard work of the Caledon Agricultural Society," said Seebach.

Councillor Christina Early for Wards 1, 2, and 3 shared that every year they see more vendors and more crowds, and that it stands as an excellent day for the community.

"The Agricultural Society and all the volunteers that put this together work so hard to make sure that you can get in that gate for free today and enjoy everything here to offer. So, please meet your neighbors, buy some pancakes, enjoy the day, and Happy Canada Day," said Councillor Lynn Kieran for Ward 1.

The crowd joined together to sing O Canada as Derek Saxton, Sergeant-at-Arms, Legion Branch 449, Alton, raised the Canadian Flag.

Councillor Mario Russo for Wards 4, 5 and 6 said July 1 is a day to acknowledge the Legion.

"I want to make sure that we all acknowledge our veterans that allow us, and allowed us, to do this on a yearly basis" he said.

Ed Taccone, President of the Caledon Agricultural Society, spoke on Canada's History.

"As we celebrate 158 Canada Day years, we stand on a land with a rich and complicated history. While we take pride in the beauty of our country and the strength of our people, we must also acknowledge the difficult truths of our past. Particularly, the experiences of Indigenous peoples. This is a day not just for celebration, but for reflection and recommitment," said Taccone. "Canada Day is a day for all Canadians. It is a day to celebrate our diversity, our unique perspectives, and the many



Dignitaries and members of the public alike looked on as the flag was raised at Canada Day celebrations.

PHOTO BY RILEY MURPHY

voices that make up our nation. Let us strive to create a future where every Canadian feels a sense of belonging and pride. In our shared home, let us build a Canada where respect, understanding, and justice are not just ideals, but realities for all."

He said it is a journey and requires the participation of all to move forward with open hearts and a

willingness to listen, learn, and grow together.

"This Canada Day, let us renew our commitments to building a better, more inclusive Canada for all," said Taccone.

As attendees left with baskets of strawberries, Canadian memorabilia, and full stomachs, this will surely be a Canada Day to remember.

Local healthcare workers recognized for contributions at Headwaters

BY PAULA BROWN
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Headwaters Health Care Centre (HHCC) honoured the contributions of staff members and their commitment to service at the local hospital by presenting several awards during its annual general meeting on June 24.

"It is truly inspiring to be part of such a dedicated and talented team — individuals who bring their best to Headwaters every day in service of our patients, families, and community. Our hospital is a trusted place of care, and that trust is built on the deep relationships we have nurtured with those we serve," said Kim Delahunt, CEO and president of HHCC.

"It is a privilege to be part of a team that continues to honour that trust through kindness, respect, accountability, and teamwork. As we look to the future, we remain committed to advancing patient-centred care through innovation, collaboration, and investment in the tools and technologies that will shape tomorrow's healthcare," she added.

The first award presented was the Chair's Award, which was given to the Headwaters Health Care Foundation and the Smart Headwaters Campaign Team.

The Chair's Award honours individuals, teams or organizations affiliated with Headwaters who have made an outstanding contribution to the hospital or who have supported the hospital during this past year.

Headwaters Health Care Foundation and the Smart Headwaters Campaign Team were recognized for their work in helping raise \$18 million to bring the hospital its first magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machine, as well as other vital equipment, in an effort to transform healthcare services at the hospital.

The second award from HHCC was the annual Dr. David Scott Award, presented to Dr. Karen Sandhu.

The Dr. David Scott Award is given to individuals and groups who have gone above and beyond to improve overall health and wellness for residents in the Dufferin-Caledon area and promote links between the local hospital and the community.

The award is named after the late Dr. David Scott, who in 1962 became the town's first specialist in general surgery. He practiced as a general surgeon between the years 1962 and 1997. Dr. David Scott served as chief of staff at the local hospital from 1983 to 1989. He passed away in 2020.

Dr. Sandhu was honoured for her leadership in community health, health equity promotion, and her work with the Primary Care Network and Community Palliative On-Call Program.

The Above and Beyond Leadership Award is presented to an individual who is a positive role model, demonstrates excellence in leadership, and inspires others to work collaboratively and creatively.

The 2025 recipient of the Above and Beyond Leadership Award was Shawn Galea, HHCC's supervisor of environmental services, who was

celebrated for his leadership, dedication to patient experience, and contributions to emergency preparedness and hospital operations.

The Outstanding Physician Award recognizes a physician who has consistently demonstrated excellence in delivering patient care, promoting the hospital's vision and making measurable, positive contributions to the hospital.

Dr. Shreyas Gandhi, from Headwaters' Surgery Department, was acknowledged for advancing the Urology program and introducing innovative procedures like green light laser surgery.

The Quality & Safety Improvement Award celebrates a team or individual who has contributed to quality and safety initiatives that improve the delivery of patient care at HHCC.

Charlene Rogers, Dr. Naqvi and the CT Team at Headwaters were recognized for their work in reducing CT wait times by 60 per cent through improvement in workflow and benchmarking initiatives.

The Rising Headwaters Hero Award recognizes a frontline employee, physician or volunteer with less than five years of continuous service at the hospital. They must demonstrate great achievements with early success and a commitment to going above and beyond every day in their role.

Graeme Jones, a physician's assistant, was the 2025 recipient of the Rising Headwaters Hero Award and was praised for his exceptional work ethic, teamwork approach, compassion, and impact in the Emergency Department.

This year, HHCC introduced a brand-new award called the Volunteer Hero Award. The award celebrates a Headwaters volunteer who demonstrates dedication to its volunteer programs, is a positive role model who inspires others to provide an exceptional patient experience, and shows a commitment in promoting the hospital's vision, values, and purpose.

The first recipient of the Volunteer Hero Award was Pat Spencer, who was honoured for her dedication as a volunteer in Ambulatory Care and her role in the Patient and Family Advisory Partnership program.

"These awards celebrate the exceptional contributions and achievements of our dedicated team members who go above and beyond in their roles every day," said Headwaters Health Care Centre in a press release announcing the awards.

To conclude the award ceremony, Headwaters announced the recipients of the Headwaters Health Care Foundation's Nursing Education Fund, which includes the Jean White Fund and the RBC Education Fund. A total of 14 nurses received grants to support ongoing learning and professional development.

The 2025 recipients include Alexa Wiedemann, Alyse Soloman, Cathleen Burton, Charlotte Brown, Daniel Reimer, Deepthi Sam Jayaraj Samuel, Jessica Dickie, Jessica Hentsch, Kayla Flores, Lely Perlas, Paula Horton, Rachel Russo, Sophia-Rose Bezant, and Vienna Riddle.

Community Support Network gears up for second annual BBQ Picnic

BY RILEY MURPHY
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Get your barbecue bibs ready!

The Community Support Network is hosting its second annual BBQ Picnic on July 20.

The network is dedicated to fostering a community where every individual, regardless of ability, is valued and supported.

They work to advocate for children and adults with differing abilities.

Mike Brunetto, the leader of community partnerships and collaboration with the Community Support Network, says he hopes to build a network of like-minded and dedicated families who are invested in one another, not just part-time, but full-time, through events like the BBQ.

"There's nothing part-time about what we do as advocates; we need the strength to support and we need people that want to be a part of a network of families that lean on each other," said Brunetto. "Healthy and supportive relationships take time and compassion, and if you're willing to offer both then this is the group to join."

He said part of the reason they host these events is that transitions can be extremely hard for all students, but especially those who need caregivers or are young adults with differing abilities, as well as those who are facing the transition out of schools, where support systems may be lacking.

"We are constantly trying to find a place where we belong, and so, given that our options are somewhat limited, it's important for us to make sure that we create those avenues, create those situations and remove those barriers so that they have a place to go and they are integrated to the best possibilities into the community," said Brunetto.

Apart from building connections and relationships, the BBQ will be filled with activities, games, music, and of course, lots of food.

Brunetto said registration has so far exceeded last year's amount at this time.

The number of volunteers has also grown from last year, and Brunetto shared he can't thank them enough, as it serves as an indication of people wanting to be part of something special.

"Everybody needs a place to belong, and especially those with multiple exceptionalities and special needs, it's always a struggle to figure out where can you go on a Friday night or what's out there that we could join. I think what we're trying to establish here is a group that comes together that has a lot of things in common. We talk about good times, we talk about struggles, and then we share information and then the next thing you know you end up building lifelong friendships and that's the goal," said Brunetto.

Brunetto also shared the network is looking to partner with and design daytime programs for young adults with differing abilities once they move into community living.

"It's time for us to utilize the passion of advocates like myself who want to work with others and create something, create a legacy, so that our family members use the services that we create," said Brunetto.

He encourages every family to attend the Community Support Network Picnic and said the worst that can happen is that you make a new friend.

"We have to keep in mind that in the midst of all the celebration, there are a lot of tough and intentional conversations that we need to have. Whether that would be with families and each other or also with our local agencies and the town in order to put things together for our families, I'm committed to doing that and it's great to know that a lot of people are willing to help," said Brunetto.

The BBQ will be held at Cold Creek Conservation Area from 12 noon to 5pm.

Pre-registration can be completed at caffpicnic.eventbrite.com.

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<p>IF YOU or a FAMILY MEMBER are struggling with gambling, Gamblers Anonymous is there to HELP. Call: 1(855) 222-5542 or visit www.gato-ron.to.ca.</p> <p>ALZHEIMER SUPPORT GROUPS meet monthly for spousal & family support. Call (519) 941-1221.</p> <p>LA LECHE LEAGUE Orangeville offers breastfeeding support. For more info call Erin at 519-943-0703.</p>	<p>ORANGEVILLE OVER 65 – Single Social Club. A place to meet and make new friends. We meet every Thursday at 5:30pm. Many activities. For information call Ken 519-278-6341 / Betty 519-942-3090.</p> <p>PLEASE RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER!</p>

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COMING EVENTS

Centre Dufferin New Horizons Seniors Club - A day in Niagara, Wednesday August 27 2025. Price includes Luxury motorcoach transportation, lunch, visit to floral show – house, visit to Butterfly Conservatory, wine tour & tasting at Chateau des Charmes. Departs CDRC, Fiddle Park Lane, Shelburne at 8:45am. Grand Valley Community Centre, 90 Main St north at 9:15am. Call Diane Vanderkolk at 905-460-7548.

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The LORD DUFFERIN CHAPTER IODE holds their meetings at the Lord Dufferin Centre on the 4th Tuesday of every month. We are looking for women who would like to help in the Community. Call 519-941-1865.

IF YOU WANT to keep drinking, that's your business. **IF YOU WANT** to stop drinking, that's our business. **Call Alcoholics Anonymous Hot Line, 1-866-715-0005.** www.aanorthaltoner.in.org.

DRUG PROBLEM? We've been there, we can help! Please refer to georgianheartlandna.org for a complete list of Narcotics Anonymous meetings. Call anytime 519-215-0761.

ARE YOU A WOMAN living with abuse? For safety, emergency shelter, and counselling call Family Transition Place, (519)941-HELP or 1-800-265-9178.

FOR INFORMATION regarding **HEART and STROKE**, call Dori Ebel (519)941-1865 or 1-800-360-1557.

MORRIS ALBERT HOPPER

JULY 21, 1941 - JUNE 22, 2025

Morris Albert Hopper was a devoted family man who found joy in the simple things, from spending time outdoors to fixing tractors and working with his hands. Loving husband of Dorothy Bryan (predeceased) and Karen Kaake. Devoted father of Heather and Tom French, Lisa and Bruce Cameron, Andrew and Dana Hopper, Mark and Vivian Hopper. Dearly loved grandfather of Colin, Julie (Robert Matson), Nicole (Connor Craig), and Allison (Dave Cherry); Draedon and Bennett; Brynn and Kelton; Connor and Matthew. Son of the late Albert and Ann Hopper. Predeceased by sisters Helen and Donna (Robert Ford). Beloved uncle of Shelby and Geoff Horton, Robert and Jen Ford.



Private family funeral to be held at Laurel Hill Cemetery.

If desired, memorial donations may be made to Laurel Hill Cemetery, c/o 203 Queen Street S., Bolton L7E 2C6 or Caledon Community Services.

Condolences for the family may be offered at www.EganFuneralHome.com

BETTY ANN WILSON

DECEMBER 8, 1954- JUNE 23, 2025

It is with profound sadness and broken hearts that we announce the passing of Betty Ann Wilson on June 23, 2025. Betty Ann was born and raised in Dufferin County, and married to the love of her life Wayne Squirrel - you might say, the boy just down the road on the 3rd Line. They were married for 47 years, where they made 30 Sideroad, Melancthon as their home farm, where Betty Ann and Wayne raised their 4 children; Ainsley (Chris St. Laurent), Brendan (Megan), Brett (Otis Webb), and Aidan. This is where she spent many hours in her "fun" grandma role to her precious grandchildren, Emery, Maryn, Briar, Kai and Mason.



She is predeceased by her parents Harold and Ina (Lavery) Wilson and brother Bert Wilson. She is survived by her loving siblings Bruce (Mavis) Wilson and Cathy Wilson (Mark) Pinkney. Betty Ann was a special sister-in-law and she was deeply adored by many nieces and nephews.

Betty Ann was loved and meant a lot to many friends she had met through her work at Dufferin Oaks as Registered Nurse for 30 years, through her ladies hockey journey of over 55 years – known to close friends as "Mamacita," Take a Break ladies, as well as the Honeywood and Badjeros Church.

Betty Ann was a farm girl, loved her "Dang" cows - as the grandkids would say - and was an avid collector of antiques. She also looked forward to the summer months at the Wilson family cottage on Kahshe Lake. She enjoyed adventures with friends and family camping, snowmobiling, traveling, Atving, and hockey tournaments. You might say "what happened on these adventures will always be a secret never to be revealed."

We extend a special thanks to the caring nurses and Dr. White at RVH Barrie, and Bayshore Home Care.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the Horning's Mills Community Hall (14 Mill Street, Melancthon, Ontario L9V 3G6) on July 4, 2025 from 1-4 p.m. with a memorial service taking place at 2:00 p.m. Betty Ann's resting place will be at the Honeywood Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Dufferin Oaks or "My Honeywood" (Arena). Online condolences may be placed at www.jackandthompsonfuneralhome.com

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