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FREE | Thursday, February 25, 2021 | Volume 41, Issue 8



NATIONAL RECOGNITION: Caledon resident Carol Williams, leader of Peel's 4-H Club, has been recognized by the organization as the 2020 National Volunteer Leader of the Year. The honour recognizes the leaders who have demonstrated a dedication and passion for engaging and empowering youth. For more, see Page 3.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Council approves 1.13% tax increase in 2021 Budget following Feb. 16 meeting

BY ALYSSA PARKHILL
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Caledon residents can expect to see a 1.13 per cent tax increase as part of the 2021 Budget, following Council's approval of the 2021 Budget on February 16.

The Town states they worked at organizing the Budget to focus on impacts being faced by residents and local businesses stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and, at the same time, preparing for future growth.

"Our focus this year is on people, community and recovery. This means that the best thing we can do for residents and businesses is maintain service levels and keep our infrastructure in a state of good repair," Mayor Allan Thompson.

The first draft of the budget was put together on January 4 following online surveys which took place between November 30 and December 11.

Presentations were made by local organizations such as Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) Caledon Detachment, Caledon Fire Department, and Caledon Public Library.

Town staff were given a budget target of two per cent, which they were able whittle down to an even lower number.

Continued on Page 15

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New firearms measures to combat crime and increase public safety

BY MARK PAVILONS

Municipalities like Caledon will be given the opportunity to ban handguns.

The move comes as the Federal government passed new firearms rules, aimed at keeping innocent people safe, and keeping guns out of the hands of dangerous people.

Governments at all levels have identified firearm-related violence as an area of concern.

According to Statistics Canada, firearms were used in over 40 per cent of homicides in Canada in 2019.

This violence must stop.

Last May, the Government of Canada banned more than 1,500 models and variants of assault-style firearms and some of their components. The government is continuing to take every step necessary to combat gun violence and keep Canadians and communities safe.

Continued on Page 6

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Phase One of vaccination rollout expected to be completed by March



FILE PHOTO

BY ALYSSA PARKHILL
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

COVID-19 case numbers continue to remain steady as the province continues to lift the lockdown and move regions back in to the COVID-19 Response Framework.

Ontario has reported 975 cases, with the hotspots reporting 343 in Toronto, 89 in York Region and 186 in Peel Region.

Peel has seen a total of 59,821 cases with 2,179 still active, 57,042 resolved and 600 deaths. Caledon has a cumulative total of 2,251 cases with 12 deaths.

27 regions were released last week from the lockdown and stay-at-home order that began on January 14 and put back into an amended COVID-19 Response Framework.

York Region was lifted into an updated Red (Control) Zone on February 22, following advice from the Region's Medical Officer of Health.

Since the announcement on February 12, the Provincial government has announced Toronto, Peel and North Bay-Parry Sound will remain in the shutdown and stay-at-home order for another two weeks until March 8 at the earliest.

The Province states that although both Peel and Toronto have seen lower numbers of COVID-19 cases, rates are still too high for them to move back into the framework.

"Our government's number one priority is the safety of all individuals and families, and that's why we are taking a gradual, cautious approach to returning regions to the Framework," said Minister of Health Christine Elliott. "These are difficult but necessary decisions, in order to protect against COVID-19 variants and maintain the progress we have all made together. Until vaccines are widely available, we continue to urge all Ontarians to follow public health advice and measures, and stay home, stay safe, and save lives."

Every two weeks, each public health region will be assessed to determine if they will remain in their current level, including Red, Orange, Yellow, Green and Grey, or if they are to move in a more strict or lenient level.

"While the health indicators have improved enough to allow us to return an additional region to the Framework, we are not yet at the point where we can safely transition back the remainder of the province," said Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health. "Everyone is strongly advised to continue staying at home, avoid social gatherings, only travel between regions for essential purposes, and limit close contacts to your household or those you live with regardless of which level of the Framework you are in."

The COVID-19 vaccine rollout continues ahead as the Province has announced over 500,000 doses have been administered across the province through the Phase one. The vulnerable population were put at highest priority, including residents and staff at long-term care and retirement residences.

Public health agencies are planning to complete the Phase One vaccinations to be completed by early March.

The second phase is to being in April where an increase of vaccine supply is said to be provided and available for older adults, those in high-risk settings as well as other at greater risk, along with frontline essential workers.

The vaccine will be available for the rest of the Ontario population in Phase Three which is aimed to begin in August.

Until then, the Province is encouraging Ontarians to continue following the necessary safety guidelines provided by public health agencies as well as staying home, wearing a mask and practicing physical distancing.

"We know Ontarians are eager to receive this layer of protection, and we are ready to ramp up our efforts as we receive more doses from the federal government," said Elliott. "This upcoming increase in vaccine supply will allow us to expand our vaccination efforts for Phase One priority groups further as we prepare for Phase Two."

Ontario states they have a capacity of providing 40,000 vaccinations daily which is expected to dramatically increase depending on the supply provided from the Federal government.

For more information, please visit covid-19.ontario.ca.



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Region of Peel
working with you

Province supports Greenbelt Foundation

The Ontario government is investing $12 million over the next three years to support the Greenbelt Foundation's ongoing work to protect, promote and improve the Greenbelt in the Golden Horseshoe region.

The projects delivered through this funding will focus on planting trees to increase natural cover, enhancing recreational opportunities for people to experience nature, and maintaining and enhancing green infrastructure and climate resilience.

"The Greenbelt is an important part of our province consisting of farmland, forests, wetlands and watersheds, it is a natural treasure," said Jeff Yurek, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. "It's important to support the ongoing work of the Greenbelt Foundation so it can protect and enhance this vital area - for the benefit of Ontarians today and for future generations."

The investment will enable the Greenbelt Foundation to continue its work by offering grants, supporting research, and providing information, knowledge and awareness about the Greenbelt. The funding will support the delivery of four key programs:

Funding for projects and activities such as native tree, shrub and other vegetation plantings to increase natural cover, along with projects that create opportunities to experience the Greenbelt.

Research to improve knowledge and understanding of the Greenbelt and its benefits.

Developing partnerships with community groups and organizations to help support projects that protect and restore the Greenbelt.

Public outreach to increase knowledge, awareness and understanding of the Greenbelt, and its social, rural economic and recreational opportunities.

"The Greenbelt Foundation welcomes funding from the Government of Ontario and will invest in projects, programs, and outreach initiatives that encourage people to engage with, experience, and enjoy everything the Greenbelt region has to offer," said Edward McDonnell, CEO, Greenbelt Foundation. "We look forward to working with the Province and our partners to build on previous work and successes and ensure the Greenbelt's natural and agricultural landscapes remain protected and continue to support thriving communities and rural economies."

Protecting the Greenbelt for future generations, protecting and recovering our natural spaces and species, and supporting conservation efforts to preserve Ontario's rich biodiversity are key commitments in the government's Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan.

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Williams named 4-H Canada National Volunteer Leader of the Year

BY ALYSSA PARKHILL
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

On February 22, 4-H Canada held their Leadership Awards where a Caledon resident was awarded the 2020 National Volunteer Leader of the Year Award.

Carol Williams has been involved with Ontario's 4-H Peel Club for the past 31 years where she has dedicatedly worked to provide opportunities and positive impacts to Peel youth.

4-H Canada has been working with youth members for over 100 years with organizations all across the country and are in over 7 countries internationally. With almost 24,000 members and 8,700 volunteer leaders, their goal has been to provide a safe, inclusive and positive environment through various programs to motivate young leaders.

The programs focus on four pillars, including community engagement, science and technology, environment and healthy living, and sustainable agriculture and food security.

The 4-H club begins accepting participants from six-years-old until the age of 21. From age six to eight, members are known as clover buds, those age nine to 21, are 4-H members.

Williams became a leader back when her daughter became a member, where previous 4-H leader in Palgrave, Lois Downey, then retired and Williams took over.

"The time has flown by and the kids are amazing," stated Williams. "The opportunities that 4-H itself, provides to the leaders to train them and be an organization, it gives all kinds of opportunities for the kids to try just about anything they want."

Williams was nominated for the National Volunteer Leader of the Year Award by two Peel members for her dedication, passion and work she has put in to make a positive impact on the 4-H members in the Peel club.

"It was such a surprise. I received an email saying that two of my members had nominated me. I read the letter and then went back to the 4-H website to read about what the award actually was, what it was being given for," explained Williams. "I was reading down and it said the award was going to be a hundred dollars, I thought that was strange because I'm sure my letter said one thousand dollars. Then realized that a thousand dollars meant that I had won the national award. That's when it sunk in that it wasn't for Ontario; it was for Canada."

Williams plans on using that money given from the award and putting back into the 4-H club.

"Anybody who has had any involvement with 4-H would understand it is an amazing program for young people," she continued.

The Leadership Awards were held virtually due to COVID-19 this past Monday where Williams as well as other recipients were honoured.

The event was hosted by comedian and television personality Rick Mercer who facilitated the awards and the hour-long event.

Williams explains that being able to contribute and be there for the 4-H youth motivates her to continue her work with the club.

"It's the kids," she said. "Knowing that by being there for the kids, that this kind of opportunity for them is going to continue on to the future. It was important for me to encourage other adults to become leaders, so the kids would have the best change ever."

New members are always welcome to the Peel 4-H club and are encouraged to reach out to learn about the opportunities provided.

To learn more, or to become a member, please visit 4-hontario.ca, or 4-h-canada.ca.

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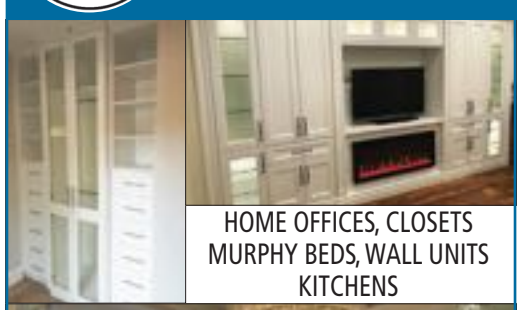
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CALEDON OPP WELCOMES 8 NEW RECRUITS

The Caledon Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) welcomes eight new officers to their ranks. They graduated on February 4, 2021 and come from various walks of life.

PC Dawn Martin

PC Martin is a mom of three is a registered massage therapist. Policing is now a second career for her. She's a sports enthusiast and plays/coaches basketball and soccer.

PC Jesse Nobleman

PC Nobleman is a recent graduate of the Police Studies program at Georgian College. He's passionate about soccer and rugby. He enjoys supporting his community by volunteering his time with Meals on Wheels, Arthritis Society, and other local events.

PC Helena Beck

Prior joining the OPP, PC Beck was a Municipal By-Law Officer. She's a recent graduate from the Police Studies program at Georgian College. In her free time, she coaches/plays soccer. She loves baking, hiking, and mountain biking.

PC Jessica Jones

PC Jones played hockey professionally, which took her all over Europe and the US. She also coaches hockey. She enjoys spending time with her dog and loves being outdoors.

PC Jonathan Shane

PC Shane comes from the military. He's a fitness enthusiast. He plays the drums and enjoys the outdoors.

PC Samuel Wurfel

PC Wurfel comes from the military. He is of French and Indigenous (Oneida) heritage. He loves the outdoors, is an avid hunter, and enjoys football and rugby.

PC Jamie-Lee Davison

PC Davison was a police dispatcher for the Orangeville Police Service for the past three years. Previously, she was a volunteer firefighter. She's an avid baseball player and enjoy riding around in her ATV.

PC Cole Wright

PC Wright is a recent Police Studies graduate at Georgian College. Previously, he held positions in the field of security and Municipal By-law enforcement. He volunteered his time by being a member of the OPP's Auxiliary program prior to being hired as a full-time officer. He's also a scuba diver.

"Their diverse life and work experience will greatly benefit the safety of our growing Caledon communities," said the Detachment. "Please join Caledon OPP in wishing them a safe and successful policing career."

FATAL COLLISION IN AMARANTH

On Saturday, February 20, at approximately 8:26 a.m., officers from the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) Dufferin Detachment responded to a motor vehicle collision that occurred on County Road 12 and 20th Side Road in the Township of Amaranth.

The collision involved two motor vehicles - a silver and a red sedan.

"Initial investigation revealed that the silver sedan was travelling southbound on County Road 12 and the red sedan was going eastbound on 20th Side Road. The silver sedan failed to stop at its stop sign and collided with the red sedan.

"The driver and passenger from the silver sedan suffered non-life-threatening injuries as a result of the collision and were transported to a local hospital."

The driver of the red sedan was the sole occupant of the vehicle and suffered fatal injuries as a result of the collision. The deceased driver has been identified as Scott Hambleton, 60, of Grand Valley.

"The OPP›s Technical Collision Investigation Unit and Reconstructionist were deployed to the scene to assist with the investigation. Dufferin OPP continues to investigate the collision and is appealing to the public for additional witnesses. Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to contact Dufferin OPP detachment at 1-888-310-1122.

"You can also provide information anonymously by contacting Crime Stoppers

at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477). When you contact Crime Stoppers you stay anonymous, you never have to testify, and you could receive a cash reward of up to $2,000 upon an arrest."

If you had witnessed the collision and wish to speak to victim services, Caledon/Dufferin Victim Services can be reached at 905-951-3838.

IMPAIRED DRIVING CHARGES

On February 22, at approximately 12:03 a.m., a motorist contacted the Caledon Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) to report a possible impaired driver on Mayfield Road, in the Town of Caledon. With the assistance of the caller, an officer located the vehicle and conducted a traffic stop.

"As part of the investigation, the driver was asked to provide a sample of their breath into an Approved Roadside Screening Device, which resulted in a 'fail' reading," said the OPP. "The driver was then placed under arrest for Operation while Impaired - Blood Alcohol Concentration over 80 mg, and transported to the Caledon OPP Detachment, where further breath tests were conducted."

As a result, Rayona Raymond D'Cruz, 26, of Waterloo, was charged with:

- Operation while impaired - blood alcohol concentration (B.A.C.) over 80 mg;
- Have care or control of vehicle with cannabis readily available; and
- Fail to have insurance card.

The accused is expected to appear at the Ontario Court of Justice in Orangeville on May 6, 2021, to answer to the charges. The charges have not been proven.

"Caledon OPP would like to thank the member of the public for making the call and reporting the above impaired driver and by doing so, making our roadways safer."

How to spot an impaired driver:

- Quick acceleration or deceleration
- Weaving across the road
- Almost striking an object, curb, or vehicle
- Stopping without a cause or erratic breaking
- Drifting in and out of traffic lanes
- Turning abruptly or illegally

If you suspect impaired driving, call 9-1-1 immediately.

COUNTERFEIT CHEQUE SCAM

On February 14, 2021, the Caledon Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) received a report of an employment/counterfeit cheque scam.

The victim reported finding employment online for a legitimate organization based out of Toronto. All correspondence was performed by email and the interview was conducted by ways of an online survey. Since it was a "work from home" position, the organization offered to purchase the required office furniture.

The victim received an invoice for just under $5,000 for furniture from what appeared to be a legitimate furniture company based out of Quebec. An email cheque was sent to the victim for the same amount as a form of reimbursement. Since no elements of the transaction seemed suspicious at the time, the furniture was then paid for by sending two separate e-transfers to two different Gmail accounts.

The bank later informed the victim that the cheque received by email did not go through. As a result, the funds used to purchase the furniture were lost, and no office furniture was purchased.

A call to the organization believed to have been hired from revealed that this was a scam. The correspondence did not come from them.

The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre's website (www.antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca) contains information on various scams. In this specific situation, a counterfeit cheque was used to obtain funds from the victim.

Caledon OPP would like to remind everyone that scammers use tactics to make their requests appear legitimate. Always verify the information by contacting organizations directly at the coordinates provided on official websites.

Residents are asked to be mindful of scammer red-flags:

- Unsolicited phone calls, emails, texts or mail.
- Interactions that are coerced, threatening, or involving conversations that you are told not to discuss with anyone.
- Payments or money transactions that are requested in the form of cryptocurrency, money transfer or gift cards.
- Government agencies notifying you of payments via text message.
- The use of free web-based email accounts

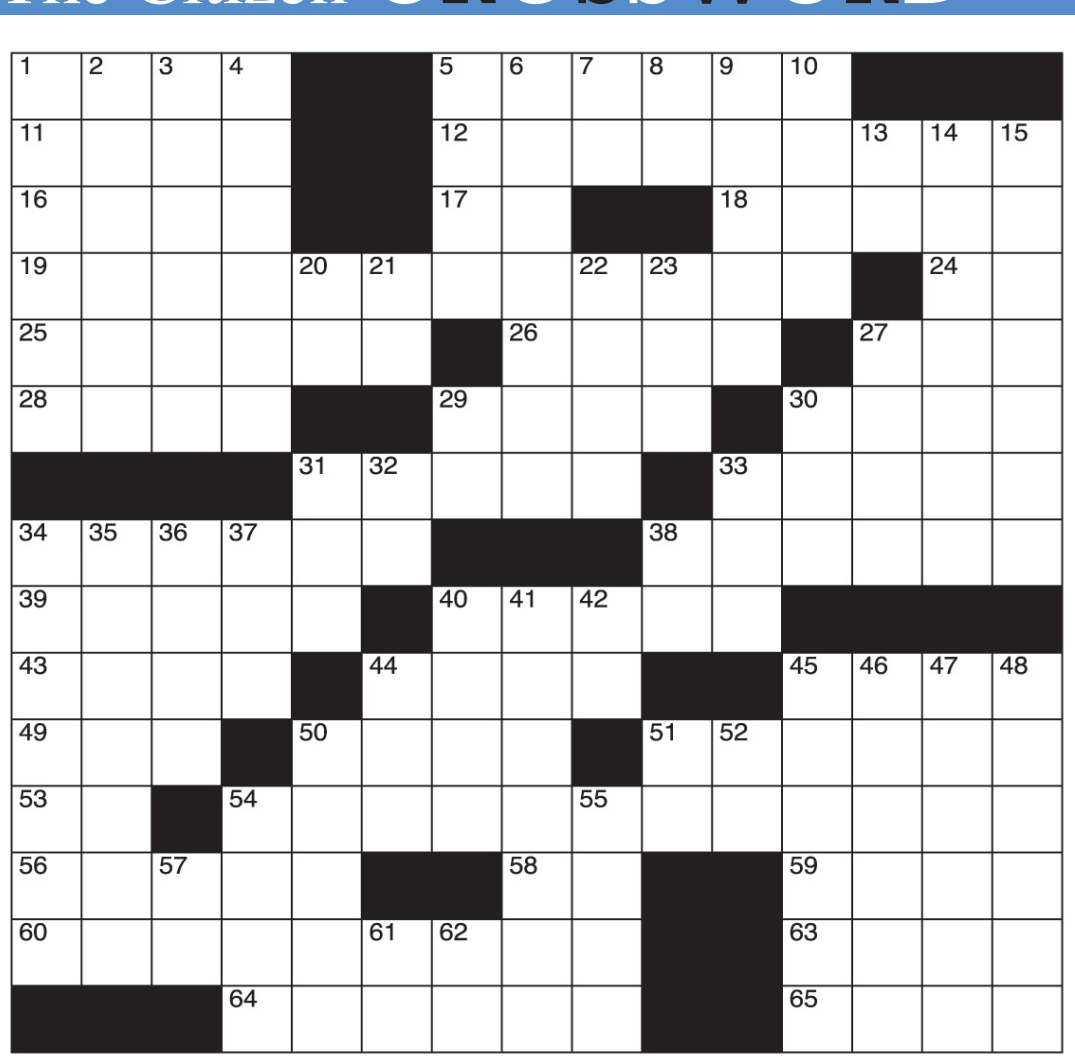
And remember:

- If something seems too good to be true, it probably is.
- Hang up the phone, delete an email or text if you think it's a scam.
- Research sellers and websites before making purchases or donations.
- Don't let anyone pressure you into providing personal information.

If you think you have been a victim of fraud, contact the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at 1-888-495-8501 or report online at www.antifraudcentre.ca; you can also contact your local police service or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS).

The Citizen CROSSWORD

Solution on page A12



CLUES ACROSS

1. Ancient Persian city
5. Spindles
11. Stake
12. Retrain
16. Close by
17. Commercial
18. One who publicly announces
19. American ballplayer
24. Junior's father
25. Go up or climb
26. Concern
27. When you hope to get there
28. Iacocca and Oswald are two
29. Plant of the lily family
30. Male college organization
31. National capital
33. Raccoonlike animal
34. Symbols of fertility
38. Astronomy unit
39. Series of ridges in anatomy
40. Hebrew leader
43. A portent of good or evil
44. Supreme goddess
45. Gelatinous substance
49. Engage in a contest
50. Famed ballplayer Ruth
51. Pledge
53. -__, denotes past
54. Revival
56. Spanish surname
58. Gold
59. Elsa's sister
60. Workplace
63. Large quantity of something
64. Engraved
65. Discount

CLUES DOWN

1. Shoe
2. Disquiet
3. Posture
4. Large nests
5. Soviet "Second Symphony" composer
6. Joins two pipes of different diameter
7. Exist
8. Overdose
9. Pleat of fabric
10. Predict the future
13. Burgeoning technology
14. Having made a valid will
15. Having no fixed course
20. __ route
21. Lethal dose
22. Indian musical pattern of notes
23. Athlete
27. Geological times
29. Atomic #21
30. In support of
31. Brew
32. Certificate of insurance
33. Taxi
34. Type of saying
35. For cigars
36. Phil __, former CIA
37. Local area network
38. Gym class
40. Philippine Island
41. Not great or bad
42. Eastern part of NY state
44. Gov't lawyers
45. Constructions
46. Former British gold coin
47. Unkeyed
48. Rechristen
50. Threaten persistently
51. Southeast
52. Cools your home
54. Removes the leaves
55. Regretted
57. Thus
61. Relief organization (abbr.)
62. Exclamation of surprise

No one has more self-confidence than the person who does a crossword puzzle with a pen.



Premier Doug Ford held a press conference on Monday to announce a new legislation to fight the fight against human trafficking in Ontario. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**

Province introduces new legislation to combat human trafficking

BY ALYSSA PARKHILL
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Provincial Government has announced a new legislation to fight against human trafficking in Ontario.

Announced on National Human Trafficking Awareness Day on February 22, the Combatting Human Trafficking Act was introduced, which includes new legislation as well as amendments to the current Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy 2020-2025.

"Our government is taking deliberate steps to put an end to human trafficking and protect victims and potential victims of this terrible crime," said Premier Doug Ford in a statement. "This tough new legislation builds on our Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy we introduced nearly a year ago, giving law enforcement additional tools to help prevent and deter human trafficking."

Ontario reported more than half of human trafficking cases across Canada, with the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) begin a major hub due to its easy access to all major highways and airport.

According to Statistics Canada, 45 per cent of reported victims in Canada are between the ages of 18 and 24, with 28 per cent under the age of 18 and 26 per cent older than 25 years old.

Police services across Canada reported 1,708 incidents of human trafficking beginning in 2009 to 2018. Additionally, Ontario reported 68 per cent of human trafficking police reports since 2009.

Premier Doug Ford stated in a press conference held on Monday that Ontario has seen the highest number of human trafficking reports across Canada in 2019.

"Our province has become a hub for human trafficking," he said. "We will not allow this to continue here in Ontario."

The five-year anti-human trafficking strategy is a Provincial investment of $307 million for victim supports and services in Canada.

The Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy 2021, and the Accommodation Sector Registration of Guests Act 2021, are the two new legislations introduced.

"Our government voiced its commitment to tackling human trafficking early on in our mandate and we worked with a wide spectrum of stakeholders to establish a comprehensive $307 million Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy," said Solicitor General Sylvia Jones. "These legislative changes, if passed, will reinforce the strategy's key objectives of supporting survivors, protecting children and youth, raising awareness among parents and community partners as well as dismantling criminal networks."

The Child, Youth and Family Services Act 2017 and the Prevention of Remedies for Human Trafficking Act 2017 are the two acts that will see several amendments in order to continue supporting the fight against human trafficking.

The changes include supporting long-time Provincial response, strengthening the role of children's aid societies and law enforcement, providing more support for victims and survivors, increasing governments ability to collect non-personal data and providing law enforcement agencies with better tools in order to locate and charge traffickers.

"This legislation is the first of its kind in Canada," said Ford. "It's desperately needed here in Ontario."

For more information on the new legislation and amendments, visit Ontario.ca.

A healthy, engaged compassionate community for all

CALEDON COMMUNITY SERVICES

Employment Services · Transportation · Stores · Seniors Supportive Housing · Transitional Care · Respite Care · Care Coordination · Language Training · Volunteerism · Food Support · Youth Services · Santa Fund · The Exchange

"Volunteering enriches my world—I miss it!"

by Virginia Yule, Caledon Community Services Volunteer



In March 2020, COVID-19 became a reality in Canada. Caledon Community Services responded immediately by pausing their volunteer programs in order to keep everyone safe.

Part of the 'new normal' many of us have adjusted to includes remembering to wear a facemask, socially distancing from not only strangers but also family and friends and no longer being able to visit the Exchange – Caledon Community Services' hub for sharing nutritious food and community programs.

Because of this, high on the list of things I look forward to once the threat of COVID-19 has passed, is to volunteer once again in the kitchen at CCS's Exchange.

I miss arriving to a chorus of 'hello's from the staff and other volunteers. I long to head into the pantry to see what food is available so I can begin to prepare a nutritious meal for those who might not have time to cook that day.

I look forward to hearing others arrive. Vicki who loves to dance and has a smile that lights up a room comes with her Mom, Marlene. They stock the shelves while keeping me updated on the latest news in their world. They radiate joy. There is Johan who works alongside me, telling me of his many jobs and travels, while he teaches me how to peel a potato perfectly.

As we prepare food there are always people stopping by the kitchen. They talk about their children and their pets. We hear about their concerns and achievements and sometimes they come just to have a coffee and be in the company of others. They all enrich my world by welcoming me into theirs.

My community has grown to include people and experiences I would never have without the opportunity to spend a few hours each week in the company of those who come to the Exchange.

So, when I think about what I most look forward to once the pandemic protocols pass, high on my list will be putting on an apron and opening the kitchen and my heart to the people who populate the Exchange. Perhaps you'll join me?

Interested in future or virtual volunteer opportunities? Connect with Tania Casaluce, Volunteer Resources Coordinator at tcasaluce@ccs4u.org or 905-584-2300 ext. 277.

We look forward to when we can safely welcome back all our wonderful volunteers.

How Do You See It?

Tell us how you see it.
Tania Casaluce, Volunteer Resources Specialist, Caledon Community Services at 905-584-2300 ext. 277 or tcasaluce@ccs4u.org

This column is provided free of charge by the Caledon Citizen.



New firearms measures to combat crime and increase public safety

Continued from FRONT

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau recently announced the introduction of new legislation to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act to make communities safer while respecting law-abiding gun owners. Through the proposed legislation and other measures, the government would:

- Combat intimate partner and gender-based violence, and self-harm involving firearms by creating "red flag" and "yellow flag" laws. These laws would allow people, such as concerned friends or relatives, to apply to the courts for the immediate removal of an individual's firearms, or to ask a Chief Firearms Officer to suspend and review an individual's licence to own firearms.
- Fight gun smuggling and trafficking by increasing criminal penalties, and by enhancing the capacity of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canada Border Services Agency to combat the illegal importation of firearms.
- Help create safer communities by supporting municipalities that ban handguns through bylaws restricting storage and transportation in their jurisdictions. Individuals who violate these municipal bylaws would be subject to federal penalties, including licence revocation and criminal sanctions.
- Protect Canadians from gun violence by creating new offences for altering the cartridge magazine component of a firearm and depicting violence in firearms advertising, introducing tighter restrictions on imports of ammunition, and ensuring the prohibition of imports, exports, sales, and transfers of all replica firearms.
- Complete the prohibition of assault-style firearms to ensure these weapons cannot be legally used, transported, sold, transferred, or bequeathed by individuals in Canada. We also intend to move forward with a buyback program in the coming months to support the safe removal of these firearms from our communities.

Caledon CAO Carey Herd said staff are looking into the implications of the proposal but at this time, they don't have a position.

Mayor Allan Thompson, however, says he is concerned that there may be a "patchwork set of rules" across all municipal jurisdictions in the country and that could lead to confusion and challenges for a consistent approach to compliance by handgun owners.

"In terms of enforcement, from a safety perspective, it is not reasonable to expect municipal By-law Officers to enforce matters pertaining to firearms as these officers are not trained nor equipped for such matters and it will become a matter of municipal police services to enforce any such municipal bylaws," he said.

Caledon OPP noted they can't provide opinions on legislation, they can only enforce them.

OPP already lay charges for hand gun possession (classified as a restricted or prohibited weapon depending on the barrel length and calibre), according to Constable Joe Brisebois, Community Safety Officer for Caledon OPP.

"One Canadian killed by gun violence is one too many. The tragedies we have seen in Ste-Foy and Portapique, and more recently in Toronto and Montréal, should never happen. This is why our government has taken some of the strongest action in our country's history against gun violence. We will continue to take steps to strengthen gun control measures, remove dangerous weapons from our streets, and make sure everyone can feel safe from violence," said Prime Minister Trudeau.

"Too many Canadians have been killed or injured because of gun violence, and we need to take every reasonable step to stop more Canadians from suffering the same fate. These concrete measures we're announcing today build on actions already taken to address some of the most serious firearms safety issues and are part of our government's detailed firearms strategy that will help make our communities safer for everyone," added Bill Blair, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

There were more than 99,000 victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) in Canada in 2018. Firearms were present in more than 500 IPV incidents. Women accounted for almost 8 in 10 victims of all IPV incidents and they were even more likely to be the victim in the more than 500 IPV incidents where a firearm was present.

The rates of violent and non-violent offences specific to firearms increased for the fifth consecutive year in 2019. The number of violent offences specific to firearms increased by 21% (an increase of 642 from 2,861 to 3,503).

Statistics Canada reports the use of firearms in homicides increased from 30% in 2009 to 40% in 2019.

Break and enter for the purposes of stealing a firearm continue to increase. Police reported just over one-third of these offences involved breaking into a motor vehicle for the purpose of stealing a firearm.

The remainder involved breaking and entering into another location, the majority of which were private residences.

In order to improve the firearms classification framework, the Minister of Justice will conduct a review of firearms classification. The Minister will also look into modernizing language in the regulation and the Criminal Code with respect to prohibited weapons, devices, and ammunition to close gaps in the law.

In June 2019, new legislation on firearms received Royal Assent, and many measures will come into force soon. The 2019 legislation includes practical, targeted, and measured steps to keep Canadians safe, including: Helping ensure people with a history of violence are not granted a licence to own firearms through expanded background checks that consider the applicant's lifetime history, not just the preceding five years.

A Criminal Code amnesty is in place until April 30, 2022, to protect lawful owners from criminal liability and to enable them to comply with the law. Under the amnesty, the newly prohibited firearms can only be transferred or transported within Canada for specific purposes.

Dufferin-Caledon Green Party announces 2022 election candidate

BY ALYSSA PARKHILL
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Small business owner and environmentalist Laura Campbell has been nominated as Dufferin-Caledon's candidate for the Green Party of Ontario for the next election in 2022.

Campbell's love for nature and the outdoors began when she was a young child, and she has been working towards fostering the same love for the environment for her own two children.

She holds a Master of Science from the London School of Economics and Politics as well as a Bachelor of Arts from Western University.

She has been thoroughly involved in the environmental issues facing Dufferin-Caledon, having previously ran for the candidacy back in 2018.

"I have always been deeply engaged in politics, both around issues of biodiversity and our ongoing climate crisis, and also in areas such as education, social justice, and affordable housing," said Campbell in a statement.

The 34-year-old has encouraged other residents in her community to get out into nature, including forest school that Campbell and other families participate in every Monday for their children to learn and play out in nature.

"Over the past decade, I have advocated strongly for local food, and against large infrastructure or resource extraction projects that only benefit a select few rather than the hard-working people of this riding," said Campbell.

Campbell is the first 2022 candidate to be announced throughout all parties.

"I'm very excited to have Laura join our team," said Mike Schreiner, Leader of the Green Party of Ontario. "Her perspective as a fellow small business owner will be greatly appreciated as well as her passion and advocacy for action on critical issues like local food and the climate crisis."

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT

Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Structure Improvements

As part of the Town of Caledon's Asset Management Strategy, improvements are being considered for bridges and culverts. This is due to the wear and tear on existing infrastructure due to increased traffic and use.

The Town has initiated a Schedule 'B' Class Environmental Assessment (EA) to consider options for improvements to the following bridges. The approximate location of the project is shown on the map.

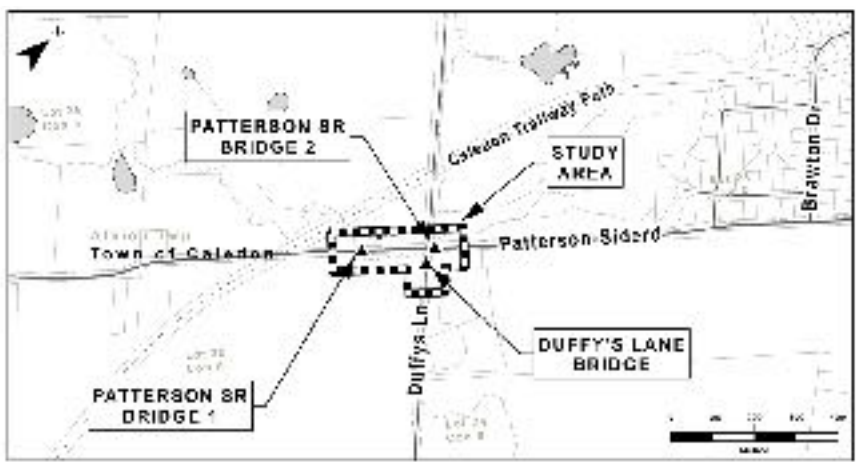
PATTERSON SIDE ROAD BRIDGE (1)
For improvements to the existing 2 lane, T-beam reinforced cast-in-place structure constructed in 1950 and located approximately 0.1 km West of Duffy's Lane over the Humber River.

PATTERSON SIDE ROAD BRIDGE (2)
For improvements to the existing 2 lane, rigid frame, vertical leg reinforced cast-in-place structure constructed in 1950 and located approximately 0.03 km East of Duffy's Lane over the Humber River.

DUFFY'S LANE BRIDGE
For feasibility investigation to determine future management of the existing 2 lane structure. The structure is located approximately 0.03km South of Patterson Side Road over the Humber River.

THE PROCESS:
The project is being planned under the Municipal Class EA process (October 2000, as amended in 2007, 2011 & 2015), which is an approved process under the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act. Further information about the project and planning process can be found at **caledon.ca/notices**. At the end of the study, the process will be documented in a Project File Report (PFR), prepared for public review.

PUBLIC INPUT:
The public is invited to provide comments for consideration in the planning and design of the project. .A virtual Public Information Centre (PIC) is planned for Spring 2021. Further notice will be provided closer to the date of the PIC. Subject to comments received and obtaining the necessary approvals, the Town of Caledon intends to proceed with the planning and design of the project, with a construction date to be determined dependent on funding.



To provide comment or to request additional information concerning this study or if you would like to be added to the project contact list to receive future project notices, please contact either of the following project team members:

Ian Todhunter, P.Eng.
Senior Project Manager
Town of Caledon
6311 Old Church Road
Caledon, Ontario L7C 1J6
905-584-2272 x 4065
ian.todhunter@caledon.ca

Matt Brooks, P.Eng.
Project Manager
R. J. Burnside & Associates Limited
15 Townline
Orangeville, ON L9W 3R4
705-797-4284
matt.brooks@rjburnside.com

Project and notice information will be made accessible upon request in accordance with the Accessibility Standard for Information and Communication under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

Information will be collected and maintained to meet the requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act and for the purposes of creating a record that will be available to the general public as described in Section 37 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. With the exception of personal information such as name, address, telephone number and property location, all comments will become part of the public record that is available to the general public.

This Notice First Issued on February 18, 2021.

TOWN OF CALEDON
6311 Old Church Road
Caledon, ON L7C 1J6
www.caledon.ca
T. 905.584.2272 | 1.888.225.3366 | F. 905.584.4325

PUBLIC NOTICE

SIMPSON ROAD PHASE 3

Notice of passing of Area Specific Development Charges By-law

The new Area-Specific Development Charges By-law (2021-09) for Simpson Road Phase 3 is now in effect, which was passed by Town Council on February 16, 2021. This is in accordance with the Development Charges Act 1997, S.O. 1997 c.27. This By-law applies to lands located within the study area as outlined in the key map.

Any person or organization may appeal the Development Charges By-law to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal under section 14 of the Act, by filing with the Clerk of the Town of Caledon on or before March 28, 2021. A notice of appeal must be submitted setting out the objection to the By-law and the reasons supporting the objection.

A copy of the complete by-law is available for examination at Town Hall: 6311 Old Church Road, Caledon, ON L7C 1J6. Town Hall is currently open by appointment only.

Key Map: Source Schedule A – By-law 2021-09



Schedule B – By-law 2021-09

Schedule of Development Charges (effective February 17, 2021)

			D.C. Payable		
Map Ref	**Municipal Address**	**Developable Land Area (ha.)**	**Services Related to a Highway**	**Stormwater Management Services**	**Total D.C. per Property**
S-3	12155 COLERAINE DR	3.65	$3,157,134	$550,881	**$3,708,014**
S-8	8576 MAYFIELD RD	2.30	$1,991,441		**$1,991,441**
S-2	0 COLERAINE DR	3.60	$3,117,184	$928,936	**$4,046,120**
S-4a	8664 MAYFIELD RD	10.46	$9,055,275	$5,114,548	**$14,169,822**
S-4b	0 MAYFIELD RD				
S-4c	8746 MAYFIELD RD				
S-5	0 COLERAINE DR	3.46	$2,995,324		**$2,995,324**
S-6	0 COLREAINE DR	3.30	$2,854,690		**$2,854,690**
S-7	8602 MAYFIELD RD	1.55	$1,345,703		**$1,345,703**
TOTAL SIMPSON RD. PHASE 3 LANDS		**28.32**	**$24,516,751**	**$6,594,364**	**$31,111,116**

Please visit **caledon.ca/dc** for more information. A notice of appeal can be submitted to:
Laura Hall, Municipal Clerk, 6311 Old Church Road, Caledon

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Caledon, ON L7C 1J6
www.caledon.ca
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COVID-19

If you have symptoms, get tested as soon as possible.

If you have symptoms, or have been in close contact with someone who has symptoms, get tested.

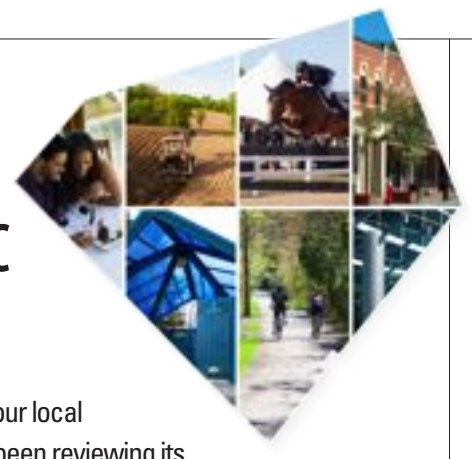
For more information visit:
peelregion.ca/coronavirus

CALEDON COVID-19 TESTING SITES

- **CALEDON CENTRE FOR RECREATION AND WELLNESS**
  14111 Regional Road 50 North
  Hours: Mondays | 2 - 7 p.m.
- **SOUTHFIELDS COMMUNITY CENTRE**
  225 Dougall Ave
  Hours: Wednesdays | 2 - 7 p.m.
- **CALEDON EAST COMMUNITY COMPLEX**
  6215 Old Church Rd
  Hours: Fridays | 2 - 7 p.m.

  *For the above locations call **905-796-4922** to book an appointment.*
- **HEADWATERS HEALTH CARE CENTRE**
  100 Rolling Hills Drive, Orangeville
  *Visit **headwatershealth.ca** to book an appointment.*

COMING SOON:



Ward Boundary Public Consultation Round 2

The ward system is a fundamentally important part of our local government. Over the past few months, the Town has been reviewing its ward structure and your input during the second round of public engagement is important!

Public Engagement Sessions

SESSION	DATE	TIME
1	Monday, March 22	7 – 9 p.m.
2	Wednesday, March 24	10 a.m. – Noon
3	Monday, March 29	10 a.m. – Noon
4	Monday, March 29	7 – 9 p.m.
5	Wednesday, March 31	7 – 9 p.m.

Please note, more information on proposed ward options will be provided on our website closer to the sessions. To provide input and learn more about the final phase of the review, attend any of our five online virtual public engagement sessions.

Register now to reserve your spot, **caledon.ca/wbr**.

Winter pet safety

Here are some tips to protect your pet from ice, snow, freezing temperatures and other hazards.

- Never leave your pet unattended in a cold car.
- Keep your pets warm. If it's too cold for you to stay outside, it's too cold for your pet.
- Provide your pet with a warm cozy bed.
- Keep your pet away from puddles or large bodies of water.
- Wipe your pets' paws and underside after being outside.
- Beware of cats seeking warmth under vehicle hoods.
- Dress your pet appropriately for winter outings.
- Prepare an emergency pet survival kit for possible power outages.

caledon.ca/animalservices
#CaledonAnimalShelter



2021 Interim Property Tax Bills have been mailed out

Be sure to pay your taxes by March 4 and May 6 to avoid late payment fees.
Still going through financial hardship because of COVID-19?
Apply for one of the COVID-19 property tax relief programs.
caledon.ca/tax

Support local businesses



#lovelocalcaledon

Snowplows are busy this time of year.

Keep roads, driveways and sidewalks free of obstructions so that they can do their job quickly – and safely!
caledon.ca/snow #CaledonWinterSafety





Watch for pedestrian crossings as students are now back at school!

Back to school means more children walking on our roads and sidewalks. The youngest of them often have limited experience with traffic. Roads can be slippery and visibility reduced...so please take extra caution and drive safe!



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Brock's Banter

Continually re-inventing the wheel

BY BROCK WEIR

Occasionally having to reinvent the wheel can be frustrating, but it is often a necessary evil.

The last twelve months have proved that with maddening regularity.

If you had called me a creature of routine over a year ago, I probably would have made a half-hearted attempt to deny it. After all, one of the best things about being in this job is never having time or monotony enough to get in a rut.

Sure, there were days where a routine was more invariable than others; the appointed day of the week when this paper has to get to press, is just one that comes to mind. But the other four, five, six days of the week often offered seemingly endless possibilities.

There were community events to cover, behind-the-scenes stories to suss out and uncover, people to meet, their stories to glean, and, ultimately, their stories to tell.

Rarely was a day exactly like another. It kept things fresh and, for us, engaged and involved.

Today, those chances to meet up over coffee to talk to somebody about the issues that are on their mind, opportunities to get out and sift through archives in person, or take out the camera to capture images an event or more than a handful of people, are few and far between.

When last March came around, and our first stay-at-home orders were issued, I would be lying if I said I wasn't a little scared. We all were. I would also be lying if I said I never had an emotional moment about it all. I'm sure we all did. And yes, there would be no point in denying a bit of panic set in when the realities of not being able to cover, uncover and share in the traditional methods were pulled out from under me like a rug if I was a film extra indulging in a little Three Stoogery.

But developing a new routine in the new reality fostered a sense of calm. All it took was a bit of time.

Eventually, the norms around traditional photo opportunities were re-thought and rolled out. Tools that were necessary but hadn't yet been digitized were quickly sorted. And meeting up with people once again to get valuable input on events facing this community resumed, once people gained some degree of comfort with technology such as Zoom that was now an inextricable point of our day-to-day lives.

In short order, one of the many questions that kept me up at night – "How am I going to fill these pages with nothing going on?" – subsided, and not just because the evolving realities of the global pandemic, including how the community was answering calls to action, provided no dearth of things to write about.

We were lucky, of course, that we didn't have to completely re-invent that pesky wheel.

Sure, there was a bit of a reconfiguration of how we in the office communicated, particularly those of us who had to collaborate directly face-to-face, yet we were quick studies, got the job done, and a new template evolved organically. Okay, so the routine sometimes veers close to monotony, particularly this past week where I had eleven Zoom meetings spread over two days which left me feeling contemptuous of the four walls of my home office, but them's the breaks.

Others, such as our retail and service business owners, have not been as fortunate.

There is no doubt in anyone's minds that retail, particularly small businesses, have been particularly hard-hit by the pandemic. With limited opportunities to welcome customers into stores for face-to-face interaction, owners, managers and staff have had to reinvent the wheels that had previously served them well time and time again.

Some outlets, if they have the space, have found success in the curbside pickup model. Others have had better luck making deliveries to customers who have stood by them through this challenging time. Restaurants have been able to maintain some cash flow with take-out options, but some businesses are better placed to adapt than others.

Consider your local shoe store. How comfortable would you be buying footwear that you weren't able to try on and get a feel for before purchase? I, unfortunately, know what my answer would be.

As of 12.01 a.m. on Monday, business owners in neighbouring York Region were tasked with executing another transformation. Between Friday and the dawn of a new day on February 22, those who have had their livelihoods all but shuttered for nearly two months have had to re-learn the rules of the game, preparing to re-welcome customers and clients into their workplaces with new protocols, new capacity limits and, more likely than not, new expectations from those looking to do business.

Coupled with these challenges, they also need to consider the challenge and risk of customers coming in from COVID-19 hotspots like the Region of Peel and the City of Toronto still under lockdown, despite pleas from Public Health officials.

Part of the challenge is inconsistent messaging from the Provincial government.

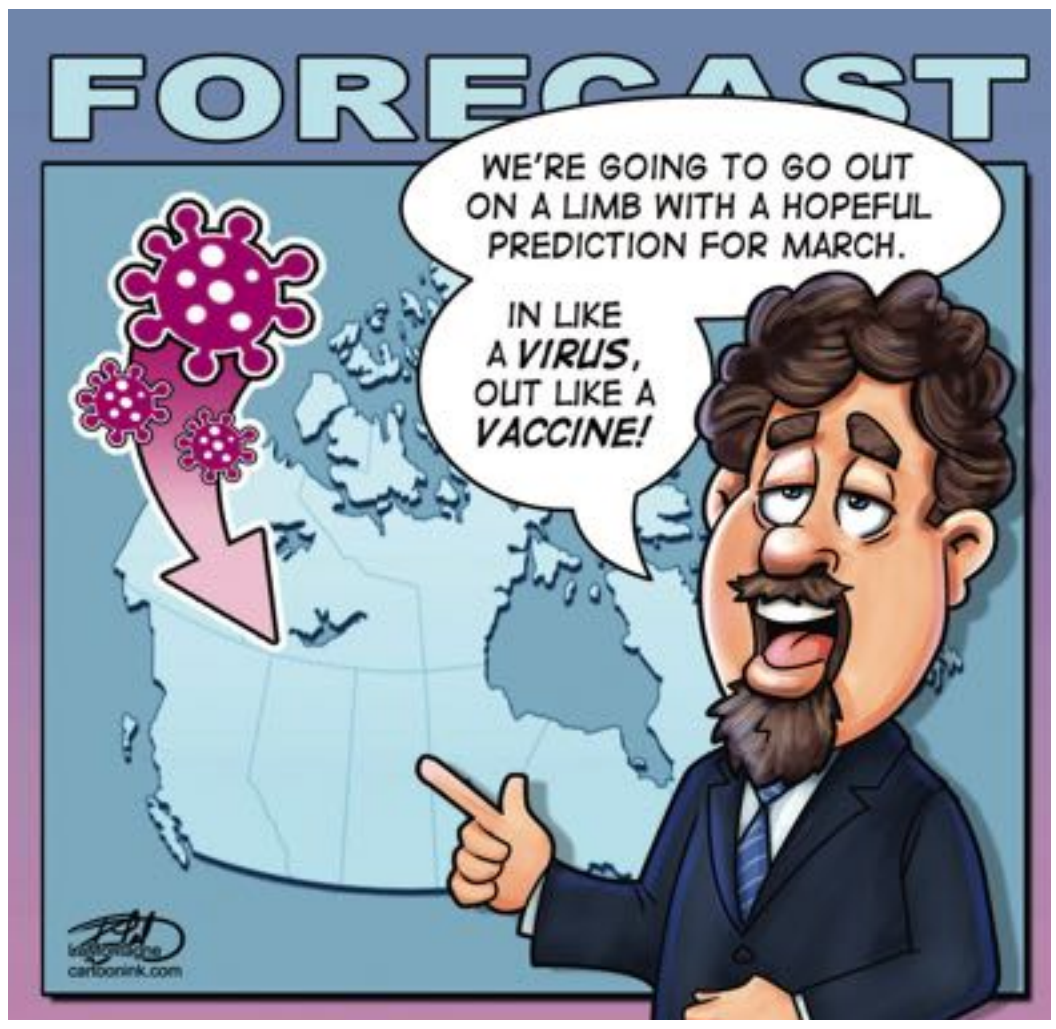
The piecemeal approach taken by the Government only sows confusion: schools opening back up to in-person learning when communities are still under lockdown, regions coming out of lockdown when surrounding communities are at different levels of Ontario's COVID-19 framework despite similar numbers, and treating some types of retail as more equal than others.

Last week, I was asked by a co-worker if being the editor of three newspapers in three different communities which, come next week, could be at three different levels of the framework was in any way confusing? It certainly can be, and I can only imagine how much of a challenge it is, and will continue to be, for business owners to not only keep track of what is now required of them, but to instill consumer confidence and feel comfortable that they have the resources they need to keep themselves and their employees safe.

"While the trends in public health indicators are heading in the right direction, we still have work to do," said Dr. Dave Williams, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health. "Everyone is strongly advised to continue staying at home, avoid social gatherings, only travel between regions for essential purposes, and limit close contacts to your household or those you live with."

Avoiding social gatherings should be relatively simple at this point, as is limiting close contacts to your households or those you live with, but discouraging travel between regions outside of essential purposes will be a tall order when residents of Toronto and Peel have the opportunity to experience a return to some degree of retail normalcy just across the street.

It might temporarily be a boon to business in York and South Simcoe, but it could pose a significant challenge at the community level; a challenge that is unavoidable without a consistent approach, response and message. Until then, on top of everything else, all we can do is support another round of reinvention.



Pandemic has sparked innovations

by Mark Pavilons



Human history is filled with some very amazing accomplishments.

It seems that some of our greatest achievements arise out of the ashes like the mythical Phoenix – good things come from very bad experiences.

Humankind's work in aeronautics, jet and rocket propulsion, was advanced decades due to the Second World War. German scientists worked around the clock to make major leaps in all of these areas. After the war, many of these scientists were conscripted to work for NASA. The space program was quickly accelerated because of wartime research.

Other inventions that came from the war included synthetic rubber and oil, pressurized aircraft cabins, radar and helicopters.

Tragedies often spawn improvements or greater efficiencies. Only when we suffer great loss can we work to prevent it from happening again.

Improvements in firefighter gear often come from loss. In fact, many major fires have led to improvements in safety regulations, building design efficiencies, and firefighter equipment. We are now much better at saving lives.

Breakthroughs in medicine all followed major disease outbreaks and pandemics.

The current COVID pandemic has led to vaccine development in record time around the globe. How researchers work and develop medicine has likely taken a major leap forward. As work continues on the current batch of vaccines, perhaps some other "cures" will emerge. Science often "stumbles" on treatments while looking for something else.

With pharmaceutical companies making untold billions from COVID vaccines, I only hope they can direct more of their profits to cancer research.

There's no question our society has adapted and evolved in many ways.

And technology has played a major role. We switched, in a matter of months, into a digital world. Online services – from consumer goods to municipal services – grew tenfold.

Online learning, government meetings and interviews via Zoom and YouTube are now commonplace. A year ago, few of these were in common practice.

Technology associated with online platforms has lunged ahead and we can expect even more great things from here on in. In the past 10-20 years alone, we've witnessed some incredible advancements. Here are some: GPS-enabled devices (remember those odd-looking gadgets for the car?). Now any of us can ask for directions to anywhere on the planet. Hybrid and electric vehicles. The Tesla first appeared only 12 years ago. How about "texting?" It was introduced by AT&T in 2000.

How about Wikipedia, iTunes, Google, smart watches, drones ...

A report from the Brookfield Institute for Innovation + Entrepreneurship (BII+E) explores the biggest social, political, economic, environmental and technological trends driving Canada's labour market in the decade ahead.

The rapid adoption of remote work is something that is here to stay.

Using strategic foresight research and interactive expert workshops, the "Yesterday's Gone" report identifies and explores eight megatrends with the potential to impact employment in Canada by 2030.

Key findings from the report:

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated pre-existing trends such as automation and digitization while forcing society to rethink many of our assumptions about how we work and learn, and our socioeconomic structures and systems.

COVID-19 has given rise to new trends, including a heightened prioritization of meaning and well-being in our work and lives. While some changes may be temporary, they could have longer term implications for the labour market.

Topics that may seem unrelated to Canada's labour market, such as floods, air pollution, and responsible AI, all have the potential to impact the future of work.

The writing is on the wall for gas-powered vehicles, as almost all major manufacturers have vowed to end production by 2030, in place of electric cars. Our penchant for technology, and newfound direction for research, may in fact, accelerate this, too.

Undoubtedly, battery technology will improve, too, to the point where we have uber long-life AAs, car batteries or button cells.

Since we've grown more attached to our smart gizmos, this industry will only grow exponentially.

During the pandemic, many of us have been secluded and sheltered, with only our gadgets and the internet for companionship. Some may have realized their own personal tech is out of date, so they're seeking the ultimate in connectivity. I bet we'll see a surge in phone and laptop technology very soon. From pocket-sized drones taking photos overhead, to remote-controlled robo-vacs, our lives are filled with gadgets and gizmos.

Our tech-propelled society will simply roll right over us in the coming decade.

And yet our needs are likely quite simple, emerging out of the darkness.

I'm am looking forward to enjoying backyard BBQs again, perhaps sprucing up the yard.

I want to take my family on outings again, maybe to a lake or cottage.

I want to enjoy life's simple pleasures.

And I want to forget all about the pandemic. It's one story I really don't want to share with future grandkids.



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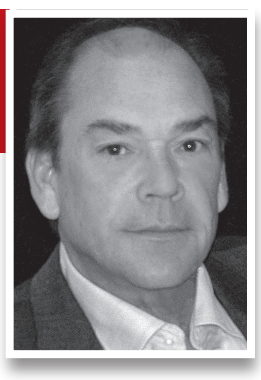
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The digital age

BRIAN LOCKHART
FROM THE SECOND ROW



Over the past month, the auto industry in North America had a bit of a rough time.

Several automakers had to shut down some lines and others actually closed the plant on a temporary basis.

There wasn't a slump in sales – the closures were due to a parts shortage.

When you hear that, you might think they ran out of Johnson rods or maybe a shipment of fuel pumps were lost at sea when a container ship ran aground.

Nope – the lines were shut down because of one tiny microchip that wasn't available.

When the current pandemic changed peoples lifestyles and forced a lot of folks to stay home, sales of smartphones and video games and similar products went through the roof.

It didn't take Chinese chip manufactures long to switch production to gear their products to that market and away from the auto industry. After all, in the video and smartphone market they were getting orders of one billion, whereas the auto industry required less than 100 million.

Money talks.

It seems unlikely that a single computer chip could stop production in something as important as the auto industry - but it did.

After all, those computer chips are now an integral component in new cars.

You can't sell someone a $30,000 SUV and explain that the traction control they paid for doesn't work because the computer chip that controls it wasn't available.

It is amazing how much of our modern lives are controlled by digital technology.

It sort of snuck up on us, but once the technology became mainstream, the world changed.

Smartphones aside, digital technology has replaced how things operate on so many levels, you don't even notice it anymore.

If you ever had one of those big, clunky television sets that weighed a ton and had a picture tube the size of Volkswagen Beetle, you probably appreciate that flat screen you now have hanging on the wall in your rec room.

"There is nothing that will ever replace film," a professor told us during a discussion about cameras when I was in film school.

At the time, 35 mm film ruled the camera world and the idea of something that could come along and replace it seemed unlikely.

It wasn't too long after that the concept of digital cameras started to be known in science magazines.

When the first digital cameras were first produced they were more of a curiosity than anything else.

They lacked the depth, colour, and vibrancy of photos produced on regular film. The images produced had an unflattering flatness to them.

However, while the executives at Kodak were asleep at the switch and fiddled while the film world began it's slow decent into oblivion, other companies realized the camera industry would indeed become part of the digital world - and for good.

Those companies went on to build a better version of the camera then improved on that design. They finally decided to merge the capabilities of a single lens reflex camera with a digital format.

When the first version of a Nikon DSL came on the market, I was on the waiting list to receive one. It was a great camera that made my life a lot easier.

Thanks to the digital world many people can work from home. You can go a year without seeing a co-worker and still get your job done.

I'm not sure how this has affected the greeting card companies, but you are now way more likely to get a holiday or birthday greeting via Facebook than you are through snail mail.

And a hand written letter? That's almost a lost art form.

I'm pretty sure schools have stopped teaching kids how to write – although I may be wrong. But with most work done on a keyboard now, it's a lot easier and faster to type a letter than it is to pick up a ballpoint pen and write it out long-hand.

Although I think if you are writing a love-letter of sorts, it may have more impact to tell the girl of your dreams how you feel about her on paper rather than a computer screen.

Digital technology has changed our world so much that without it, we would now be in lot of trouble if something suddenly happened to eliminate it from our lives.

The only drawback is a loss of power plunges us from the digital age to the stone age in the blink of an eye.

For now, I'm going out to check the computer chip that controls the Johnson rod in my car and make sure everything looks A-okay.

A Lesson in Language

SHERALYN ROMAN
TALK CALEDON



Annually, several of the larger purveyors of dictionaries release lists of new words that will be added to dictionaries moving forward. It's always an interesting exercise to see which words make the cut and which do not. I've no doubt that back in 2020 and now in 2021 we will see some significant changes to the English language. If you can't wait that long, however, I'm offering this handy-dandy short form lesson in language for those who remain either confused, or stubbornly resistant to, words that have changed meaning over the course of this pandemic.

We'll start with Pivot: No longer a term associated with either "a fixed point on which something turns or balances" or even, "a person or thing on which something depends," pivot is now firmly a part of the new pandemic lexicon and refers to our ability to literally adapt to new circumstances CONSTANTLY, always on short notice and/or whenever Mr. Ford decides it's time for a new interpretation of the word "lockdown."

Cross-Border Shopping (CBS). You might have fond memories of those times when you'd head off to Buffalo for a "girls' weekend," or some "back to school" shopping at fabulous discounted prices and unique finds not available here in Canada. These days, cross-border shopping has taken on a whole new meaning and is much more "local." CBS now refers to those folks still hunkered in our homes during lockdown (that would be us Caledon) who decide to hop across the border into York Region, or take a trip "up north" to Orangeville just so we can hit up one of their open stores or restaurants. Stay in town. Yes, we know you're sick of it but with some of our brightest stores and restaurants here in Caledon struggling to stay afloat and to serve us curbside, STOP cross-border shopping! PS – You might just stop the potential spread of this godforsaken virus too.

Shop "Local." See the paragraph preceding this one. Shopping "local" doesn't mean hopping across the border to a region that is open while yours is still in lockdown. You don't need anything that badly! It means supporting those from whom you would normally purchase your goods and services, and hopefully, when this all ends, they'll still be around for you to continue doing so. When you are finally allowed to get your hair cut and styled again, will you find your local salon ready and waiting? We certainly hope so. But if you continue to go elsewhere, there's a chance you won't.

Here is one of my favourites, and by "favourite" I mean that I hate it because frankly, I think we have all heard the phrase a few times too often. What are the words? "Unprecedented Times." I actually think there is a very good chance this phrase will end up almost as famous as the Charles Dickens line from A Tale of Two Cities, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." In fact, for those of you who know the remainder of the quote, "unprecedented times" is an oddly accurate summation. Perhaps Mr. Dickens was channelling the future when he further wrote, "it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair." Perhaps "unprecedented times" actually requires no revision of meaning.

Zoom. Formerly this was a sound you made while playing with hot wheels cars with your kid, or that you sang along to the nursery rhyme "zoom, zoom, zoom we're going to the moon." Now, Zoom has become synonymous with a Brady Bunch collection of faces in squares on your computer screen. It's also associated with a whole new fashion statement: work wear on top and pj's on the bottom, the better to appear presentable when in meetings with clients and co-workers. Finally, with apologies to American Sign Language practitioners everywhere, it's also become known for a host of signs and hand signals to indicate to fellow Zoom participants, "you're on mute!" and "we can't hear you" and "turn on your **&$% microphone!"

There are just a few more. We'll try to keep them brief. Next up is Self-quarantine: Basically, this refers to our apparent inability to follow the rules. It should mean, stay in your house – especially if you have recently travelled (which you weren't supposed to do) or if you think you were exposed to COVID-19.

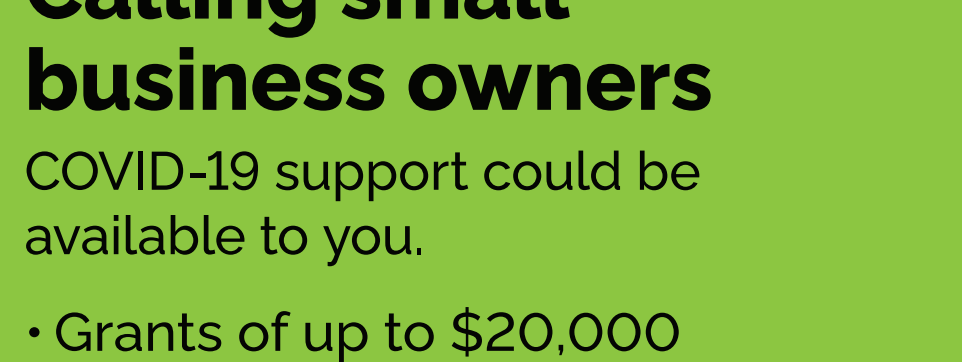
However, instead it appears to mean, "I'm totally self-quarantining except for when my brother-in-law came over to watch the Super Bowl but we were totally safe." This one is followed closely by doctors explaining our need to Flatten the Curve. For some of us, attempts at flattening the curve used to mean working out in a feeble attempt to lose weight and obtain that elusive flat belly. Thankfully, due to being in lockdown and Zoom viewing us only from the waist up, no one can see me anymore so I don't give a gosh darn about flattening any curves!

Finally, I'll end with everyone's favourite and the future we are all anxiously anticipating, Herd Immunity. Here's what the term used to mean: When herd immunity is achieved for a disease, it can help protect vulnerable people from contracting it. Diseases like chicken pox and measles and polio are examples of diseases that were once common but are now rare because of vaccination. As for the new meaning of herd immunity - the term "irrelevant" comes to mind. Here's why it's irrelevant: since it appears there are just enough anti-vaxxers, conspiracy theorists, climate deniers and QAnon followers who, for a variety of reasons, will refuse to get vaccinated, herd immunity (typically requiring a minimum of 70% of the population to be inoculated) will never be achieved. I guess that renders any definition of the term meaningless?

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Reviving the Caledon Bandits: House league lacrosse format will change to suit beginners

BY ROBERT BELARDI



Caledon Minor Bandits Lacrosse President Guy Dorval has been working on a new plan for game play, but says it probably won't happen this year due to COVID-19.

The Kitchener native moved to Bolton in 1997 with a rich background in the sport. He played all his life and, when his children joined the organization in 2007, he got back into coaching.

He was one of the many coaches to witness the rise and fall of lacrosse in the town.

The organization folded a few years and Dorval is working to revitalize not just the Caledon Minor Bandits but also the sport as a whole.

"What I'm working on now is to try and rebuild it from the ground roots," Dorval said.

"What we're doing is we're going to start with our house league and we're going to run a three- on-three lacrosse program. There's no equipment involved except for your helmet, your gloves and a stick. There's no goalies."

Young players who are new to the game and parents who are worried about the costs of playing will surely like to hear this approach.

The games are high scoring and will predominantly focus on learning the fundamentals without worrying about confounding aspects of the game such as how to hit.

"Once we do go back into the gyms and the arenas. We're going to try and run some free try-out clinics," Dorval said.

He is unsure when this will start up, however, Dorval is in constant contact with the Town of Caledon. When a date is set an announcement will be made.

He understands the popularity of the sport is not as large as it once was.

As of now, Dorval has four volunteers for coaches. He's heard excellent reviews on this three-on-three program that has been sanctioned by the Ontario Lacrosse Association. A lot of clubs in Ontario have been using three-on-three as their house league. This is a cost-effective option versus purchasing full equipment for five-on-five.

"I feel if we can get enough players and bring this three-on-three in for our house league program and build it up, I feel a lot of players will fall in love with the game. Seeing how it's so similar to hockey, and to soccer and to basketball, there's so many sports it can relate to."

Beginners will learn how to cradle the ball, how to pass and how to shoot. Dorval, plans to open free coaching clinics for parents. For house league, there's no requirement to be certified in order to be behind the bench.

Coaches will learn the sport from the rudimentary level. He plans to bring in Junior C players to help parents get acquainted. This effort will also help a player in high school complete their volunteer hours.

He plans to reach out to players in Caledon East, Bolton and Nobleton who would be interested in joining the club.

There is plenty of uncertainty as to when this will begin. The hope is to get on the ground running when the pandemic is over.

For any more information or questions about the Caledon Minor Bandits lacrosse, you can contact Dorval at guy_dorval@sympatico.ca

Pokemon is celebrating its 25th anniversary

BY ROBERT BELARDI
OPINION

When I was just a boy I remember receiving my first handheld system that I could call my own. I had Sega's Game Gear, but it was my father's.

The moment my Game Boy Color first sat in the palms of my hands, I thought it was the most incredible thing. A D-pad on the left side of the system, an A and a B button stationed diagonally to the right side. The stop and start buttons right on the bottom. It was a see-through mechanism tainted with the colour purple.

My father took me to a game store somewhere in Etobicoke. I walked in, in awe. There were games everywhere and all kinds of these cartridges in a glass casing right in front of the store clerk.

My dad said, "Pick a game Robbie, it's on me."

I was overwhelmed. What the heck do I pick? Do I choose the most coveted Nintendo game Super Mario? Do I choose Donkey Kong? Oh wait. My friends at school had this one and they said it was good. It was Pokémon.

I chose Pokémon Gold Version as my very first Game Boy Color game and my first video game I called my own. I can't fathom in my mind, but it has been 25 years since the game has been out and this week, fans and those from my generation alike, will have witnessed a quarter-century of a game that we simply knew as our childhood.

Originally named Pocket Monsters, Pokémon was released on February 27, 1996, in Japan according to Bulbapedia. Pocket Monsters Red and Green were the first. It's creator, Satoshi Tajiri, had a knack for capturing insects and tadpoles in his youth. He eventually created a game that resembled such a desire.

And when Pokémon came to North America a few years later as video games Blue, Red and Yellow, it came also as a trading card game, a television show and a movie series. Everyone wanted to be like the protagonist, Ash Ketchum. We all wanted to "catch 'em all."

I later got a Game Boy Advance SP one Christmas with Pokemon Ruby Version. I remember going to school and trading with other people at school with a cable that connected our Game Boys together. I later got Emerald Version of the game to now, Pokémon Sword on the Nintendo Switch.

Looking back at it now, this was one of the most inclusive video games. It was more than something you played by yourself. It was competitive with other people and it also helped Pokémon lovers become friends.

According to Bulbapedia, there are 122 Pokémon games in total that have been known and as of March 31, 2020, over 368 million game units have been sold. I'm sure there's more than that by now!

It has also become one of the largest esports competitions. Video Game Competitions (VGC) are held every year and Pokemon gamers all across the world compete in battles for money.

I still marvel today how far this game has come. If it's been 25 years, I'm sure Nintendo will find a way to keep it going for another 25.

I hope the children of today can experience the nervousness of choosing a starter and the exhilaration when you catch a legendary.

It's unforgettable. Just ask anyone and they won't tell you otherwise.



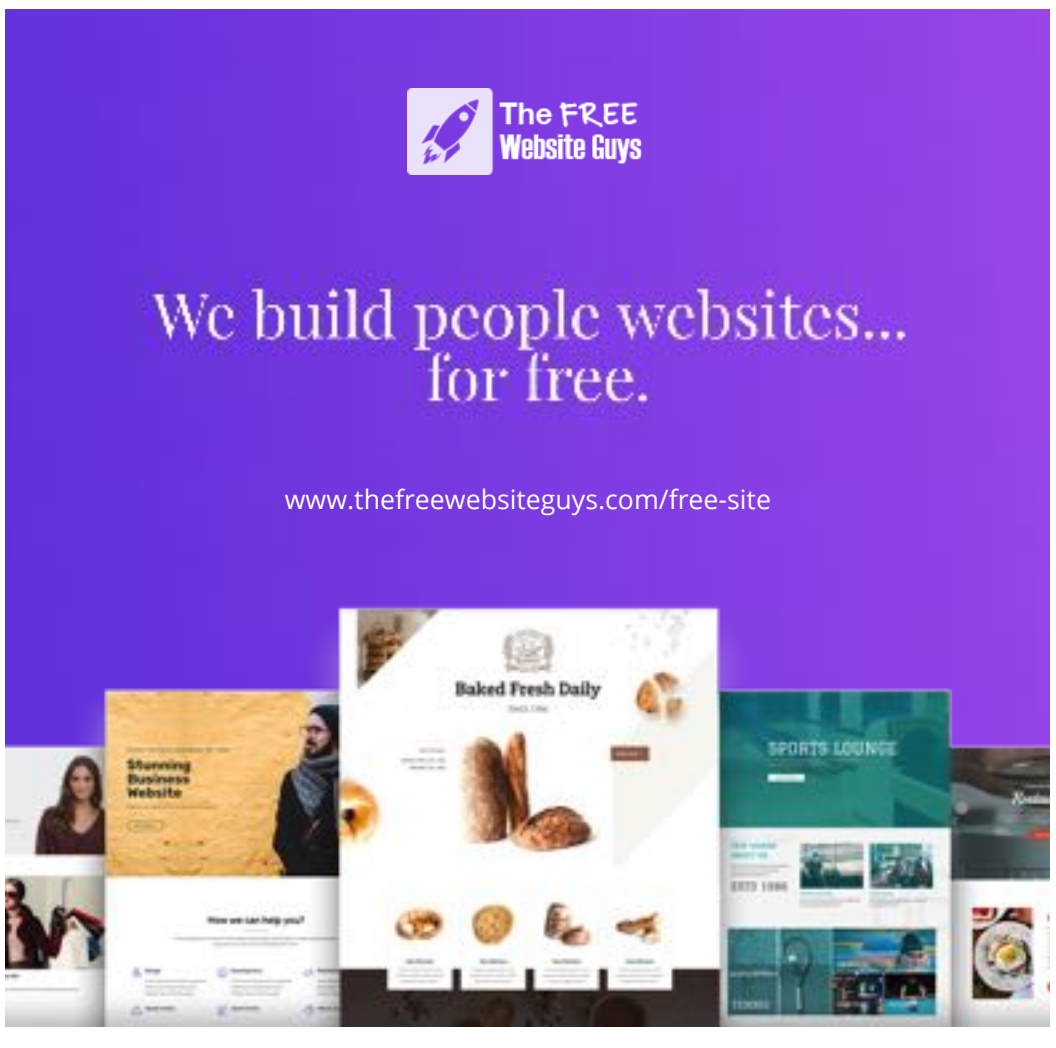
Pokemon celebrates its 25th anniversary this Saturday. Here's what cartridges and systems Robert has right now to remember the game.

PHOTO BY ROBERT BELARDI

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New golf simulators allow for summer fun all year round

BY BRIAN LOCKHART

When the snow covers the greens and fairways, it's time to find a winter sport – or is it?

The new golf simulators at the Headwaters Fitness & Racquet Club provide a year-round indoor golfing experience with a high-tech approach to playing the game even when the weather outdoors means the local clubs are closed.

The new simulators offer golfers the challenge of playing 36 different golf courses from around the world including several Canadian courses, some renowned links in the U.S. and even some of the world-famous courses in Scotland.

Each simulator has a 14-foot wide screen for the full experience of being at one of your favourite golf courses

When you tee-off, the simulators track your shot and provide the path your ball takes based on sensors that can project distance, arc, and even the spin rate of your golf ball.

"It's HD golf," explained Headwaters Fitness coordinator Kerri Greenwood of the high resolution screens that display the courses. "There's 36 different courses you can choose from. You can play golf, you can practice, you can do competitions like closest to the pin. You can also do tournaments with other people in Canada or in the States."

You can sign up, then play against people in other places in the world.

"On cold days or rain days you can still come here and play a round of golf," Kerri said. "The simulator also has the ability to play other games like darts and mini-putt. This type of game is perfect for something like kids' birthday parties."

The simulators are surrounded by a laser system that tracks your swing and the impact on the ball. It gives an accurate depiction of where your ball will land on the course. The screen provides a lot of detail on the fairways and in the rough if you slice a shot.

On the putting green, it provides the distance to the cup as well as the lay of the green in term of slope and direction.

If you are a real hard-core golfer, there are sensors that can be attached to the ball that provide even more information.



If you miss your days on the golf course, the Headwaters Fitness and Racquet Club has the next best thing. Two new golf simulators are now available with 36 virtual golf courses to choose from. Headwaters Fitness coordinator, Kerry Greenwood, gives a demonstration of how realistic the new HD simulators show golf course on the 14-foot wide screens.

PHOTO BY BRIAN LOCKHART

"There's a metallic strip you can attach to the ball that will tell you all the information you need," Kerry explained. "It will tell you your spin and all sorts of additional information about your swing."

Since the virtual course doesn't require a golfer to walk or ride to where the ball lays, you can get through 18 holes of golf in about one hour for a single player.

When you're on the virtual links, you can also enjoy the clubhouse experience.

The Edge Restaurant will be serving food and drinks you can enjoy while your friends take their turn on the tee.

You don't have to be a Club member to play the golf simulator. They are open to the public.

Rates for the simulator are by the hour, not by the person, so you can bring your foursome and enjoy a round of golf at a very reasonable rate.

To try the simulators you must book your tee-time in advance by either booking online or calling the Racquet Club directly.

Bookings can be made up to seven days in advance.

If the weather has you pining for a day on the golf course, the Headwaters Racquet Club's simulators are the next best thing to really being on the fairway.

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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.aanorthhaltonerin.org.

DRUG PROBLEM? We've been there, we can help! Narcotics Anonymous meets over Zoom, via video call. The Zoom meeting information is: Meeting # 245 323 6271. Password: 1234. The meetings are hosted on Fridays & Sundays at 7:30 pm. Call anytime 519-215-0761. Shelburne is meeting at 7:30.

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.

IF YOU or a FAMILY MEMBER are struggling with gambling, Gamblers Anonymous is there to HELP. Call: 1(855) 222-5542 or visit www.gatoronto.ca.

ALZHEIMER SUPPORT GROUPS meet monthly for spousal & family support. Call (519) 941-1221.

LA LECHE LEAGUE Orangeville offers breastfeeding support. For more info call Erin at 519-943-0703.

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CARD OF THANKS

SINCERE THANKS from the family of HOWARD WALTON.The family of Howard Walton wish to express our gratitude to relatives,friends and neighbours for their words of comfort, cards, flowers and memorial donations and support during the sad loss of our husband, father and grandfather. We are truly grateful that we live in an amazing and caring community.

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OBITUARIES

FITZPATRICK, John



It is with extreme sadness that we announce the sudden passing of John (Johnny) Fitzpatrick on Sunday, February 21, 2021 from a massive heart attack in his 80th year. Much loved husband of Irene; father of Bill (Kelly) and Darlene (Brian). Dear grandfather of Klaysa Chalmers (Spencer), Noelle Fitzpatrick (Ryan), Brooke & Avery, and Jack Fitzpatrick; great-grandfather of Levee June Chalmers. Survived by his sister-in-law Dorothy Normore (Butch), brother-in-law Alf Butler, sister-in-law Barb Fitzpatrick (late Bernie), Mima & Paul Normore, Lisa & Ryan Kirk, Courtney Butler & Kyle Schnick, Jeff & Kim Fitzpatrick, Brett & Jill Fitzpatrick. Son of the late Owen (Billy) and Alice Fitzpatrick of Bell Island, Newfoundland. John will also be greatly missed by other relatives and many friends.

Visitation will be held at the *Dods & McNair Funeral Home, Chapel & Reception Centre*, 21 First St., Orangeville on Thursday, February 25, 2021 from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

~~Due to current restrictions, please call the funeral home to register a time slot for your attendance.~~

Funeral Service will be held at St. Timothy Catholic Church, 42 Dawson Road, Orangeville on Friday, February 26, 2021.

If desired, donations in memory of John can be made to Headwaters Health Care Foundation, Emergency Department, 100 Rolling Hills Dr., Orangeville, ON L9W 4X9.

A tree will be planted in memory of John in the Dods & McNair Memorial Forest at the Island Lake Conservation Area, Orangeville. The next annual dedication service will be held on Sunday, September 12, 2021 at 2:30 p.m. Condolences may be offered to the family at www.dodsandmcnair.com

ROBBINS, Kathleen Elizabeth

Don't be sad for me, I have lived a great long life. But at this time I'm getting very tired. I think it is time to reunite with the love of my life, the most handsome fellow that I met at church many years ago Bill Robbins.

I was born in Inwood, Ontario a farming community in southwestern Ontario. To John and Mary-Ann Elliott March 27, 1919. Youngest in the family with one brother Lucas and three sisters Beatrice, Annie and Mary. All have predeceased me.

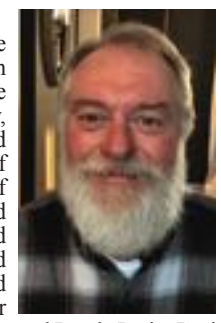
I met Bill in 1942 and was married April 21, 1943. We had 66 wonderful years together . From this marriage we were blessed with four children Bob (Maureen) Robbins, Kathy (Ivan) Quist, Karen (Gary) Craig and Brenda (Alan) Lundy. The light of our lives were the grandchildren Susan, Karrie Ann, Ian, Mark, Megan, Jamie, Anne Marie, Davin and Michael.

The icing on the cake was the arrival of all our great grandchildren Brett, Abby, Madelyn, Emily, Molly, Ethan, Anika, Carter, Emma, Jayvis, Addison, Avery and Emmett.

I was a member of the UCW, Horticultural Society, Hospital Auxillary in Orangeville, Couples Club of St. John's I was also known to kick up my heels with Bill, my life long dance partner, square dancing with the "Swinging Eights". I send my heartfelt love and thanks to my entire extended family at Good Samaritan Lodge nurses, PSW, Dr. Swarbreck and all the clients there especially Lois. Till we meet again. Love Kay.

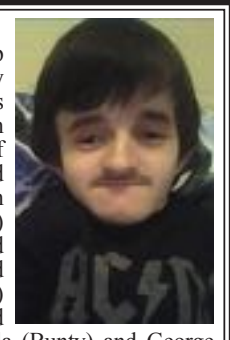
Visitation will be held at W. John Thomas Funeral Home, 244 Victoria St. E., Alliston on Friday February 26, 2021 from 2 to 4 pm. Private family service. Interment Alliston Union cemetery. If desired, donations made to St. John's Church or the Alliston Food Bank would be appreciated. www.thomasfuneralhome.ca

FAGAN, Daniel Wayne



It is with broken hearts we sadly announce the sudden passing of Daniel Wayne Fagan, 63 on Tuesday, February 16, 2021. Beloved husband and best friend of Donna, cherished father of Corbie Hannas (Terry) and the late Kyle Fagan. Proud Grampa of Grayson and Maizie. Dan leaves behind to mourn his loss, his mother Patricia Brouse, in-laws John and Lynda Prain, Lori and Jesse Burrell. During his career Dan served as a Senior Building Official with the Town of BWG, Chief Building Official for the Township of Adjala-Tosorontio and Building Inspector for the Town of Caledon. Dan was also a long time active member of the Ontario Building Official Association. Due to Covid-19 a celebration of Dan's life may take place at a later time when hugs are encouraged however the family have prepared a Tribute for Dan for all to view atwww.dodsandmcnair.com

GOURLEY, Justin James



Passed away in his sleep on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at Headwaters Health Care Centre in Orangeville at the age of 32. Beloved and cherished son of Susan Robertson Gourley and James (Jim) Albert Gourley. Beloved brother and best friend of sister Lyndsey (Mike) Ditchburn. Predeceased by his grandparents Isabella (Bunty) and George Robertson and Phyllis Gourley and James Gourley. Loved nephew of Linda Robertson and Tom Jarmai, Pat Brown (Andy Brown deceased), Isobel Robertson (George Robertson deceased) and Bill and Nancy Robertson and the Gourley siblings. Justin will be missed by many cousins who loved him and were inspired by his strength and courage. Justin grew up in Orangeville and attended Princess Elizabeth P.S., Credit Meadows P.S., and then graduated from Orangeville District Secondary School. Thank you to all the staff members and friends who supported him on his journey. He attended Algonquin College in Ottawa for 2 years to study video game development. We would like to thank the staff of the Hospital for Sick Children, Shriners Hospital, Toronto Western, William Osler and Headwaters Hospital for his care. Special mention to Dr. John Wedge, Dr. Frances Glorieux, Dr. Jean Ouellet, Dr. Michael Fehlings, Dr. Ron Murphy, Dr. Barbara Corbett (you were our rock) and Dr. Charlie Joyce. We are grateful for all of our St. Elizabeth Nurses in this past 2 years, especially Amy MacDonald (he trusted your decision making entirely). To the staff of Closing the Gap and our PSW's, were are eternally grateful. To Josephine Chua, you have been with our family taking care of Justin for over 8 years, no words can adequately express our gratitude. You were a member of our family and Justin loved you and you did him, we know you share in our sadness. Justin will always be remembered for his strength, courage and his amazing sense of humour. May he live on forever in our memories and hearts.

Private Family Service at the *Dods & McNair Funeral Home, Chapel & Reception Centre*, 21 First St., Orangeville on Saturday, February 20, 2021. Service may be watched by Webcast at 11:30 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family is asking for donations in Justin's memory to Shriners Hospitals for Children, 1003 Decaire Blvd, Montreal, Quebec H4A 0A9

A tree will be planted in memory of Justin in the Dods & McNair Memorial Forest at the Island Lake Conservation Area, Orangeville. The next annual dedication service will be held on Sunday, September 12, 2021 at 2:30 p.m. Condolences may be offered to the family at www.dodsandmcnair.com

BLANCHETTE, Mary Louise (nee Cadeau)

Peacefully on Monday, February 22, 2021 at the age of 71. Beloved wife of Gerald Blanchette (2010). Dear mother of David Marks & his wife Sandi and Danni Brown & her husband Paul. Cherished Gma of Justin Marks, Ryan Marks, Kyle Marks, Emily Brown, Bruce Brown and Sarah Brown. Remembered by her sisters Sue (Dave) and Patricia (Chris) and her brothers Michael (Lorraine) and Jimmy (Sarah). Predeceased by her brother Peter and her parents Murray and Audrey. Mary will also be greatly missed by other relatives and many friends.

A Private Family Funeral Service will be held at *Dods & McNair Funeral Home, Chapel & Reception Centre* on Friday, February 26, 2021. Memorial donations to Ontario Lung Association would be appreciated by the family.

A tree will be planted in memory of Mary in the Dods & McNair Memorial Forest at the Island Lake Conservation Area, Orangeville. The next annual dedication service will be held on Sunday, September 12, 2021 at 2:30 p.m. Condolences may be offered to the family at www.dodsandmcnair.com

THANK YOU

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Thanks again.

Audrey Phillips

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Council approves 1.13% tax increase

Continued from FRONT

The 2021 Budget was approved by Council with an overall increase of 1.13 per cent. The Budget includes tax increases from the Region of Peel and the school boards, states the Town.

This boils down to a $59 tax increase on the average residential tax bill, a drop from last year's $117 property tax increase.

Here's a breakdown of the 2021 Budget:

$30 million is being put towards the Town's Road Capital Program, along with another $1.8 million for the Bridge Capital Program for future road projects, including reconstruction, maintenance, design and other necessary road treatments.

The Caledon East Community Centre expansion will continue being constructed. $17.5 million was approved in last year's budget to begin Phase 4 of the expansion which will have a new pool, library branch, gym and fitness centre, and community areas.

Other projects that will continue to be expanded including the Caledon Seniors' Centre in Bolton and the Rotary Place.

$3.1 million will go towards community improvements including parks, playgrounds, parkways and the rehabilitation of the Caledon Trailway Bridges.

Valleywood Fire Station will gain five new full-time firefighters, as well as $0.8 million will fund a multi-year project in order to expand fire stations in Palgrave, Mono Mills and Alton.

"Our focus this year is on people, community and recovery. This means that the best thing we can do for residents and businesses is maintain service levels and keep our infrastructure in a state of good repair," said Thompson.

For further information on the 2021 Budget, visit Caledon.ca/budget.

Minister continues doing "what's right" in education

BY MARK PAVILONS

King-Vaughan MPP Stephen Lecce makes no apologies for his work as Minister of Education.

In fact, he's driven by doing "what's right," not what's popular. And, he's continually governed by the health and welfare of Ontario's students, teachers and residents.

Every step of the way during the pandemic, Provincial officials have had to stop, pivot and drive change.

Changes and innovations were vital to an admittedly tired education system that needs modernization.

Lecce and the Province have been key movers to online learning and technology long before COVID-19.

But, since the pandemic's arrival, education in this Province has changed dramatically. And Lecce maintains it's all for the best. In fact, Ontario has become the national leader in its synchronous online system, led by live teachers.

The Minister pointed out that almost all bureaucracies are traditionally averse to change. And yet, all levels of government – from Ottawa to the municipal level – have had to adapt, evolve and find efficiencies.

The push for online learning over the past year has accelerated Ontario's game plan, with largely strong, positive results.

Lecce said we owe it to our children to ensure our education system is aligned with the job market, both now and in the future. Boosting the curriculum with technology-related courses and options will only strengthen the resolve of future leaders.

No other province currently offers the breadth of online learning opportunities as Ontario.

Lecce said his ministry stood up and updated the curriculum, including math, at a time when it wasn't necessarily a priority for everyone.

Career development is also important for today's students. Lecce and the Ministry want to position Ontario as a global leader, making our kids THE global leaders



Stephen Lecce, MPP for King-Vaughan and Ontario's Minister of Education, visited Maple High School, ahead of this mobile testing unit opening for students and staff. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**

in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics). Life skills and experiential learning are other mandates included in today's curriculum.

"The Ministry won't be put on hold (by the pandemic)," he said. "Kids deserve a modern, relevant education and curriculum. I learned we have to do what's right, not what's easy."

His job, his mission, is to give students and educators the tools they need to make this happen.

He pointed out the Province recently earmarked $1 billion for new schools, including one in King-Vaughan.

Lecce and his Ministry are constantly facing criticism by unions and educators. But it's important to note that while the Ministry mandates the changes and improvements, it's the school boards themselves that carry them out.

The Province recently provided $18 million in additional funding to the York Region boards of education.

That's a significant contribution, he pointed out. The Province has upped funding across the board, since the beginning of the pandemic, and the money has been put to good use.

He said at this point, more than 95% of Ontario schools have improved ventilation systems, HEPA filters, etc.

But Lecce doesn't point any fingers, noting the pandemic has actually improved networks and partnerships. Lecce said he speaks regularly with his colleagues and several medical officers of health, to be kept abreast of the situation, which tends to change weekly.

Politicians and civil servants have all learned the value of accessibility and visibility. While the Provincial government has always been accessible, Lecce said a stronger presence by elected officials has provided a greater level of guidance and leadership. From health officials to ministry spokespeople, everyone has had to step up, he said.

Lecce pointed out, remarkably, the Provincial PCs have worked extremely well with the federal Liberal government, as well as Liberal MPs, through the pandemic.

"It's the leadership we all need," he said.

The fact that kids are back in school is a "great service" and he's adamant that he will do everything in his power to keep schools open. Mental health professionals and medical officers all supported getting kids back in school.

Having students return to school and moving York to the red zone is being done cautiously.

"I will continue to act quickly, to ensure the safety of children and staff," he said.

The layers in place, which include stepped up in-school monitoring, anti-congregation measures, etc. are working. Further, the Province is making sure that educators will have priority in getting the vaccine in the second phase, expected to start soon.

The pandemic has actually brought these partners closer together, Lecce admits, particularly in the health care sector. These connections will continue in the post-pandemic society.

It may also lead to a less apprehensive approach and a more cooperative one.

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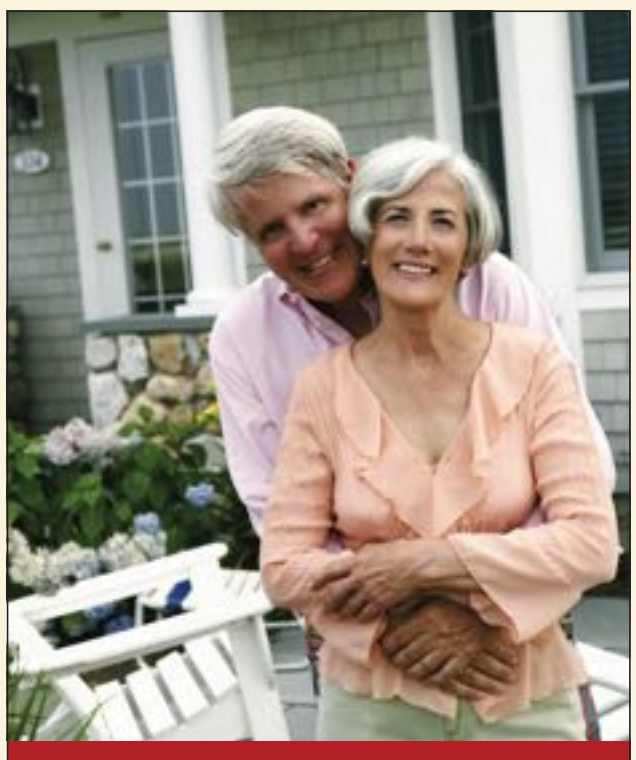
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