

The Paris Independent

Issue #245

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CREATIVITY IN THE RAIN (RUBYYY JONES PHOTO)

Despite torrential rain, spirits remained bright at the fourth annual Banfield Art Crawl this past weekend. Pictured on Jane Street are artist Lenny Jones (left), first-time attendee Prinx Lydia holding the umbrella, and artist Lisa Franklin displaying artwork during the popular community event that drew visitors from across Ontario. Read about the event on page 5.

Construction nears for Grand River St N roundabouts

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

Long-discussed plans to reshape traffic flow in north Paris are moving into the next phase, with County of Brant council advancing construction of two major roundabouts along Grand River Street North as part of a broader corridor expansion project.

At the May 19 Administration and Operations Committee meeting, councillors approved awarding a \$10.1-million contract to J-AAR Civil Infrastructures Limited for construction of new roundabouts at Scott Avenue and Trillium Way as part of Grand River Street North Contract 2.

The work represents the second phase of a larger multi-year project intended to support

County firefighters currently operate from eight stations with a team of 190 volunteer firefighters, while a ninth station serving North Paris is now under construction. The new north end station, located at 21 Ann Wilson Way (beside Sobeys), is expected to be completed in spring 2027. The project represents a key milestone in the County's Fire Master Plan and aims to improve emergency response capabilities in one of the municipality's fastest-growing areas.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH
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2026 Community Grants will fund festivals, food banks and community projects

Demand for grants continues to grow, despite fewer dollars allocated

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

County of Brant community groups and non-profit organizations will share more than \$146,000 in funding through the County's 2026 Community Grants Program, supporting everything from local festivals and food programs to accessibility upgrades and youth initiatives.

A report presented to the Administration and Operations Committee on May 19 outlined the results of the 2026 intake, which was administered in partnership with the Brant Community Foundation (BCF).

In total, 118 applications requesting more than \$686,000 in funding were submitted this year. Following the adjudication process, 55 grants were approved, distributing the full \$146,369 available through the program.

The 2026 funding envelope was significantly smaller than last year's \$350,000 program after approximately \$266,000 was reallocated by the County toward gender-based violence supports and frontline counselling services. Under that directive, four organizations have already received

one-year funding approvals from council in 2025 through the Community Grants budget. Those allocations included \$80,000 for Nova Vita, \$90,190 for the Sexual Assault Centre of Brant, \$35,573 for Victim Services and \$60,415 for Willowbridge Community Services.

The Community Grants Program is intended to help non-profit and charitable organizations deliver "vital services and amenities" while strengthening partnerships between the municipality and volunteer groups.

Grants were offered in three categories, including operational grants and event grants of up to \$5,000, along with capital project grants of up to \$10,000. Organizations were permitted to apply under multiple streams.

The latest intake follows significant community feedback and council debate in 2025 over the accessibility and fairness of the grants process. Last year, several councillors raised concerns that smaller grassroots organizations were at a disadvantage compared to larger organizations with more experience preparing grant applications.

Coun. David Miller had questioned how new or volunteer-run groups could compete for funding, particularly after several local organizations were deemed ineligible due to incomplete applications or missed documentation requirements. Coun. Jennifer Kyle also noted there was "a very big difference" between the ability of small volunteer-led organizations to prepare grant applications compared to larger groups with dedicated staff.

Following that feedback, the County and Brant Community Foundation made several changes to the 2026 process, including moving the entire application intake online, increasing follow-up with organizations struggling to meet documentation requirements and strengthening requirements for applicants to demonstrate how projects directly benefit County of Brant residents.

Among the event grants approved were funding for the St. George Apple Fest, the Banfield Art Crawl, the Afro-CariBrant Festival and the Paris Lions 95th Anniversary and Canada Day Celebration.

Capital project funding was awarded to initiatives including the Mt. Pleasant Sta-

tion restoration project, upgrades to the Harlequins Rugby Football Club clubhouse, a batting cage installation for Burford Optimist Baseball and playground improvements at the St. George Children's Centre.

Operational grants supported a wide range of community organizations and programs, including Brant Food for Thought student nutrition programs, the Burford Community Food Bank, Kids Can Fly's Imagination Library in Brant County, Scientists in School and several local sports and cultural organizations.

The Brant Community Foundation is expected to notify successful applicants this month, while the County's finance department finalizes electronic fund transfers anticipated to be issued in early June.

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North Paris roundabouts move closer as County awards \$10.1M contract

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Questions during committee discussion focused heavily on how the roundabouts will function for residents and pedestrians.

Coun. Ella Haley asked whether pedestrian crossing signals similar to those installed at the Rest Acres Road roundabouts would be included.

Mark Eby, the County's director of infrastructure services, said the same system would be used.

He said pedestrians will be able to activate flashing lights by pressing a button before crossing.

Coun. David Miller also sought clarification on the scale of the intersections, asking whether they would resemble the larger Rest Acres Road roundabouts or smaller versions such as the one in Falkland.

Eby said the north Paris installations will be double-lane roundabouts similar in size to those at Rest Acres Road.

Concerns were also raised about public communication as construction nears.

Coun. Steve Howes noted many residents now living in the area were not part of earlier discussions when the roundabouts were initially introduced.

He asked whether the county had a communication strategy to keep residents informed about construction

schedules and traffic impacts.

Eby said staff are discussing plans for a public open house in June where updated plans will be presented and residents can ask questions directly.

Coun. Jennifer Kyle asked when construction on the first roundabouts would begin.

Eby said an exact date has not yet been confirmed, but work is expected to begin sometime in July. He added the first roundabout is expected to be operational before the new North Paris fire hall opens.

Despite anticipated construction disruptions, county staff confirmed traffic will continue moving through the corridor.

One northbound lane and one southbound lane will remain open throughout construction, with temporary detours used only when necessary. County tender documents state access for pedestrians, emergency services and area properties must also be maintained during the work.

The roundabouts form part of a broader transportation strategy that has been in development for years. Earlier environmental assessment work identified roundabouts as a preferred approach for improving safety and traffic flow while accommodating future growth along the



Grand River Street North corridor. Contract 3, the final phase of the Grand River Street North corridor work stretching

toward Watts Pond Road, is expected to return to council next month for consideration.

Report highlights that County fire services demand continues to grow

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

County of Brant firefighters responded to more emergencies in 2025 while advancing a long-term plan to strengthen service levels, highlighted by the start of construction on a new North Paris fire station and increased investments in training, public education and emergency preparedness.

The County of Brant Fire Department released its 2025 annual report, outlining a year marked by growth, increasing call volumes and several major initiatives designed to support the municipality's expanding population.

Emergency responses rose significantly in 2025, with firefighters attending 1,145 incidents compared to 983 the previous year, a 16.5 per cent increase. Public education activities also climbed by more than 31 per cent, increasing from 117 to 154 initiatives.

During discussion at the Administration and Operations Committee meeting, Councillor John Peirce said the report highlighted just how active County firefighters are.

"Fantastic report with a lot of information in there," said Peirce. "One thing I don't think people understand is how busy our fire services are. People understand is how busy our fire services are." County firefighters currently operate from eight stations with a team of 190 volunteer firefighters, while a ninth station serving North Paris is now under construction. The new north end station, located at 21 Ann Wilson Way (beside Sobeys), is expected to be completed in spring 2027. The project represents a key milestone in the County's Fire Master Plan and aims to improve emergency response capabilities in one of the municipality's fastest-growing areas.

"This new station marks an important step in improving our service to the northern part of the County and reflects the ongoing progress of our Fire Master Plan," General Manager of Emergency and Protective Services Cindy Stevenson and Fire Chief Darren Watson wrote in a joint message included in the report.

The report also highlighted continued in-

vestments in staffing and training. Sixteen new recruits were hired and trained to National Fire Protection Association firefighter standards during the year. Additional specialized instruction included live fire scenarios, vehicle extrication, hazardous materials response and firefighter survival training.

Councillor David Miller praised the report but questioned whether any trends were emerging that council should be paying closer attention to, specifically referencing concerns around firefighter recruitment and retention.

"I like that annual report. It's a good snapshot of how we did over the past year," said Miller. "Do you see any trends we as a county have to get in front of?"

Deputy Fire Chief Brent Cain acknowledged retention challenges among volunteer firefighters, noting that some recruits remain with departments for only a few years before moving on. He said the issue is not unique to the County of Brant.

Cain said he would bring the question back to Fire Chief Darren Watson, who monitors high-level trends, adding that firefighter recruitment and retention challenges are being experienced across the province.

Several stations experienced notable increases in emergency activity. Burford Station saw one of the largest increases, with calls rising 67 per cent from 94 incidents in 2024 to 157 in 2025. Airport Station calls rose 30 per cent while Paris Station recorded an 11 per cent increase.

Peirce also questioned a notable drop in fire inspections, which fell from 756 inspections in 2024 to 422 in 2025.

Cain said the reduction was largely the result of a new reporting system and improved data tracking rather than a decrease in inspection activity.

"The big change there is our new software," Cain explained. "That's amalgamated the way we report everything in the fire service. We found a lot of duplications in the past when people were working on different parts of the project at different times and were reported as different events."

The department also continued efforts to



(COUNTY OF BRANT FIRE DEPARTMENT PHOTO)

New County of Brant fire recruits officially began responding to calls in February 2026 after receiving their pagers and joining experienced firefighters on emergency responses. The milestone comes as the department continues expanding training efforts amid rising call volumes and community growth.

address risks associated with legacy oil and gas wells. Through provincial funding, the County received more than \$105,000 along with an additional \$141,000 in collaborative funding to support training, equipment purchases and public education. Acquisitions included handheld gas monitoring equipment, portable digital signs and a drone equipped with air monitoring technology.

Public safety and community engagement remained a central focus throughout the year. Through Safe Community Project Zero, the County received 264 combination smoke and carbon monoxide alarms through a partnership with Enbridge Gas Ontario and the Fire Marshal's Public

Fire Safety Council. Volunteer firefighters also remained active beyond emergency response, organizing food drives, toy collections and community events while continuing programs such as Camp Phoenix, a five-day initiative aimed at introducing young women aged 14 to 18 to careers in fire services.

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Weekend Quiz

By Jake Grant

1. What corporation is Canada's largest uranium supplier?
2. What major man-made waterway is in Egypt?
3. What is Drake's latest album (2026) called?
4. What does DEFCON stand for?
5. Who is Disney's tiny fairy introduced in 1953?
6. What type of dish is a Minestrone?
7. Billiard cloth on a pool table is commonly referred to as ____?
8. What celebrity launched a perfume called glow?
9. What are you to do if you happen to catch on fire?
10. What is the most dangerous level of Tornado?

This week's answers are found on pg. 16

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Garden enthusiasts invited to explore unique local landscapes at annual Tour next weekend

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

The arrival of the Paris Horticultural Society's annual Garden Tour is often seen as one of the clearest signs summer is just around the corner and for gardening enthusiasts, it's a weekend tradition that continues to bloom year after year.

Now entering its 23rd year, the self-guided tour invites visitors to explore a collection of unique and inspiring private gardens throughout Paris and surrounding communities, while also supporting local beautification projects and student bursaries.

"This is approximately the 23rd year that the Paris Horticultural Society (PHS) has had an annual garden tour in June," said Nancy Chipman, chairperson of the Garden Tour Committee and member of the Paris Horticultural Society. "It originally coincided with the Springtime in Paris Festival. It showcases gardens of both PHS members and the public."

This year's tour features five diverse properties stretching from Glen Morris to Brantford, each offering its own distinct style and personality. Visitors will find everything from mature heritage landscapes and cottage-style gardens to native plant collections and artistic stone labyrinths.

Among the featured stops is a Gold Street property in Paris showcasing exten-

sive perennial gardens, mature trees and a labelled Hosta collection surrounding a historic 1883 brick home. Another Warwick Street garden offers an informal cottage-style design filled with native plants, shrubs, a small pond and vegetables grown from seed.

A large East River Road property includes pollinator gardens and native species planted on land once belonging to the homeowner's grandparents, while a heritage property in Glen Morris highlights the ongoing efforts of a young family restoring historic grounds dating back to 1867.

One of the tour's most unique destinations is the Stone Garden Labyrinth on Robinson Road in Brantford, featuring blue granite columns, dry stone sculptural elements and winding pathways lined with cedars and perennials.

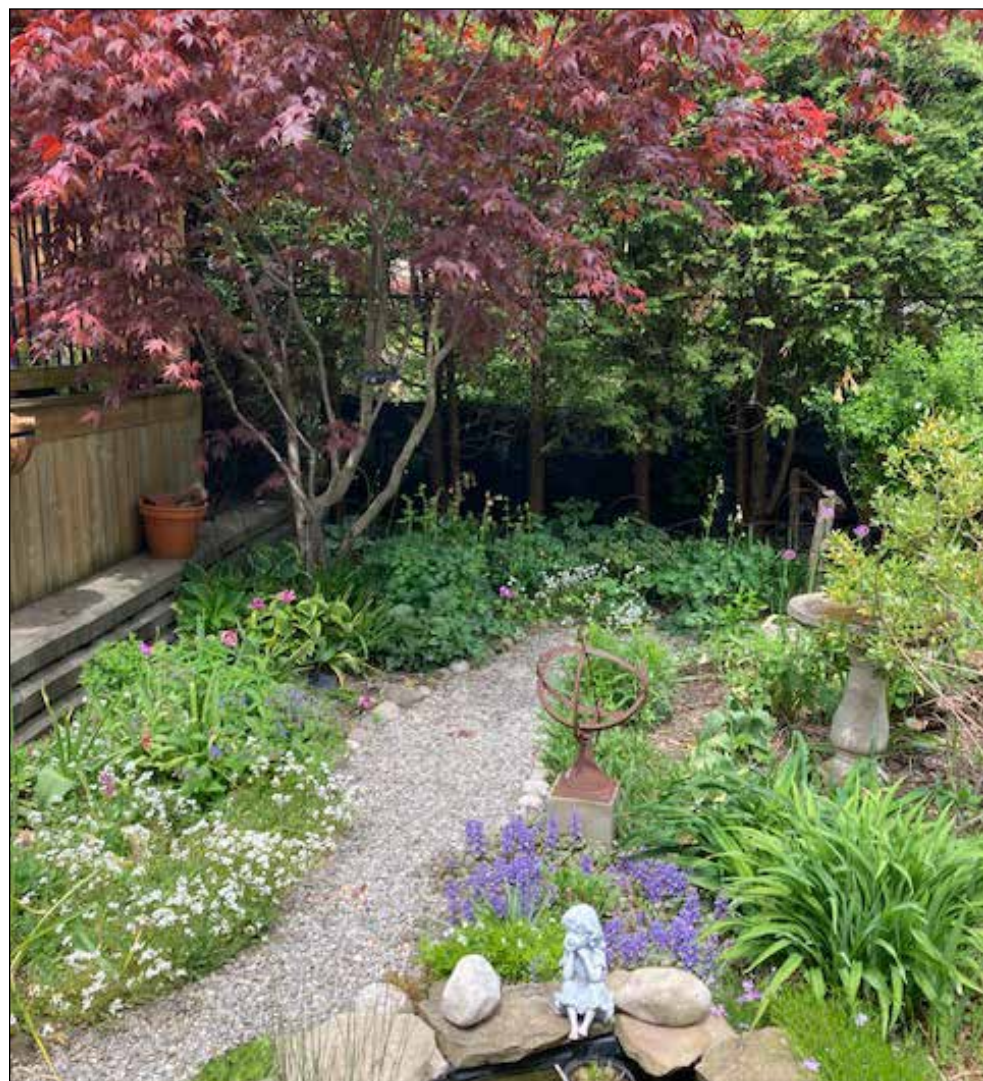
Beyond providing visual inspiration, Chipman said the event also serves an important community purpose.

"The garden tour is one of two major fundraisers for our society," she said. "The funds help cover the costs of our meeting place, monthly speakers, an annual bursary for the local high school, maintenance of a variety of public gardens in Paris and ongoing public plantings. The tour also promotes the town of Paris as a gardening event destination."

For homeowners participating in the



The Stone Garden Labyrinth at 420 Robinson Rd. in Brantford is one of five featured properties on this year's Paris Horticultural Society Garden Tour. The unique landscape includes blue granite columns, dry stone sculptural features and winding pathways lined with cedars and perennials (photo taken in 2023).



The cottage-style garden at 4 Warwick St. in Paris is among the featured stops on this year's Paris Horticultural Society Garden Tour. The informal landscape includes native plants and shrubs, a small pond and annuals grown from seed by the homeowner, a Master Gardener and Native Plant Society member.

tour, preparation often begins months in advance.

"People who agree to be on a garden tour definitely put more time and energy into preparing their property and this is greatly appreciated," said Chipman. "Even the summer before (when the gardens are found) homeowners may start fixing up different areas."

She noted that everything from repairing hardscaping and redesigning flower beds to mulching and edging gardens becomes part of the preparation process.

Chipman said the tour appeals to both seasoned gardeners and newcomers looking for inspiration.

"Why come to a garden tour in Paris? For a true gardener, it's a no-brainer. We love looking at other people's gardens, plants.

It's our hobby," she said. "For newbies it's a great way to start to think about how they can incorporate some of the ideas into their own homes, talk to more experienced gardeners, get new ideas and meet some great people!"

She added the event has become a popular social outing for many returning visitors who spend the day touring gardens, shopping and dining in downtown Paris.

The Paris Horticultural Society Garden Tour runs Saturday, June 6 and Sunday, June 7 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Tickets are \$15 and available at Sobeys Paris, John M. Hall House of Linens, Walters Greenhouse and at each participating garden. Local musicians and artists will also be featured throughout the gardens during the event.

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Community favourite Teddy Bear Picnic Returns next weekend

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

The Kiwanis Club of Paris-Brant is inviting families from across Brant County to pack their picnic baskets, grab a favourite stuffed animal and head to Burford for one of the community's most cherished family traditions.

The club's 5th annual Kiwanis Teddy Bear Picnic returns June 7 at the Burford Fairgrounds, offering an afternoon of free family fun, games, entertainment and activities aimed at bringing children and families together.

This year's event will once again feature children's games, face painting and live entertainment from The Barry O Kidshow. Families are also encouraged to participate in several teddy bear-themed contests throughout the afternoon. Children can enter an art contest by creating a teddy bear picture at home and submitting it at the Kiwanis Tent before 1:30 p.m., while prizes will also be awarded for the most creatively dressed teddy bear or stuffed animal.

Running from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., the event will take place rain or shine. Youngsters who bring along a teddy bear or stuffed animal can also enter a special prize draw sponsored by Jim and Karla Stonham.

But beyond the games and laughter, organizers say the picnic reflects the deeper mission of the Kiwanis Club itself - serving children and strengthening communities.

"As a local chapter of an international service organization with a long-standing commitment to community service, the Kiwanis Club of Paris-Brant was first chartered on April 11, 2001," noted Sheila Moore, Treasurer of the Kiwanis Club of Paris-Brant and Past District Trustee.

The club recently celebrated its 25th anniversary with a special event at the Walter Gretzky Municipal Golf Course, marking a quarter-century of volunteerism and community support throughout Paris and the County of Brant.

Originally founded as the Kiwanis Club of Paris, the organization expanded its

reach in 2011 to become the Kiwanis Club of Paris-Brant, reflecting its growing commitment to serving communities throughout the county.

Today, the club supports a wide range of local initiatives focused on helping children and families. Those efforts include awarding service scholarships to students, donating restored bicycles to disadvantaged children, organizing food drives, sponsoring youth leadership opportunities and participating in local volunteer projects such as Adopt-a-Road cleanups.

"The Kiwanis Motto is simple - Serving the children of the world," Moore stated. "The club's mission follows the Kiwanis vision - To be a positive influence in communities worldwide so that, one day, all children will wake up in communities that believe in them, nurture them and provide the support they need to develop and thrive."

The Teddy Bear Picnic has become one of the club's signature events alongside its annual Breakfast with Santa celebration held each November in Paris. Both events continue to draw strong attendance from families across the county.

Moore said the club's flexible volunteer model has also helped attract members from a wide range of ages and backgrounds.

"In 2011, the club became the first '3-2-1' Kiwanis club in Canada," Moore explained. "This flexible structure emphasizes community engagement over formalities, enabling volunteer participation while accommodating modern schedules."

Families attending the Teddy Bear Picnic are encouraged to bring their own picnic lunch or purchase snacks and refreshments on site. If you don't feel like packing your own picnic, a canteen will be on site serving hot dogs, drinks and treats - cash only - no debit.

More information about the event and the club's community initiatives can be found through the Kiwanis Club of Paris-Brant website or on Facebook at Kiwanis Club of Paris-Brant Facebook page.



A youngster pins the heart on a teddy bear at the 2025 event. The Kiwanis Club of Paris-Brant's 5th annual Kiwanis Teddy Bear Picnic returns June 7 at the Burford Fairgrounds.

Letter to the Editor

Resident asks: Growth at the cost of charm?

Dear Editor:

I just had to reach out to you and congratulate you on an excellent Editorial on the need for the county to improve its communication to Paris residents and town council regarding any future development in Paris.

I strongly oppose any building in town higher than the Wincey Mill - anything higher would absolutely be detrimental to the historic look of the town. With a new parking and a new proposed condo type building, Paris is going to look more and more like a major downtown area rather than a charming small town.

I often wonder if the county plans for any downtown expansion more for visi-

tors than towns people - why do we need more parking? Is it for Paris area residents to shop or for tourists? What does the BIA think the needs are for more parking to support their businesses?

Any new buildings must not be higher than current building heights (example) the Wincey Mill and have an era style and the mandatory use of construction materials that fits in with the town.

Thank you again for your editorial! I hope your article informs Paris citizens to get involved with the county and council to oppose the new condo building and ensures any new parking building fits in with the town's historical look.

Steve Blake | Paris, Ont

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Brant Community Foundation awarded \$1.5 million in grants

KIMBERLY DE JONG

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Brant Community Foundation celebrated the impact of this year's donors and grant recipients during a reception in Cainsville on Tuesday, May 5, 2026.

Brant Community Foundation (BCF) is a registered charitable public foundation that provides grants to support various community initiatives across the City of Brantford, the County of Brant, Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Funds are raised through donations and the foundation manages close to \$30 million in endowed assets. The foundation has also awarded more than \$10 million in grants to vital programs and services since 2001.

Fundholders, donors, local charities, volunteers and community champions attended the annual recognition celebration where the foundation acknowledged \$1.5 million in financial support over the past year through 186 grants to 99 local charities.

"The impact of grants of this magnitude is extraordinary," said Jayne Carman, Chair of the foundation's board of directors. "Combined with the \$10 million in grants we've awarded since our founding, the foundation's influence is truly profound."

Carman then introduced one of the BCF's fundholder, Donald Wilkin. He and his wife Jo-Anne Wilkin have created three funds for the last 15 years, ultimately supporting a wide range of causes that are meaningful to them.

Donald said he had been interested in philanthropy since he was young and that he always tries to ensure that Jo-Anne and their two sons are involved in the decision making process when it comes to making donations.

"There isn't one donation we make that we don't call our boys up and get their opinion," he said. "That's the secret to life, involve everybody."

Rita-Marie Hadley of the Lansdowne Children Centre and Heather Vanner of the Community Resource Centre, both representatives of two of the 99 organizations that benefited from last year's grants, had the opportunity to speak about the impact of the funding.

"While the donations that come through funds that Lansdowne can access in grants might be supporting specific programs, they complement government supported rehabilitation, respite and recreation and what they translate to is a way of being included in full citizenship," said Hadley. "The support that comes through the Brant Community Foundation to support Lansdowne's infants, children and youth, is also building tomorrow's leaders. ...It's your investment in young people that gives us that hope for the future leaders."

Vanner said that the foundation helped during tough times and when the Brantford Food Bank needed it most.

"During a time when this community was in a deep recession, and I was losing sleep each night because the need was so high and financially, our organization just couldn't keep up with each individual needing our services," she said.

Vanner went on to say that funding from the BCF has made sure that those who are struggling can get help when they need it without feeling judged.

"That is what the Community Foundation provides," she said. "It provides us as an organization, the opportunity to provide food and help to someone who's going through a very tough time in their life and doing it by offering help with choice and dignity."

BCF Executive Director Anna Marie Peirce later reiterated the foundation's ongoing commitment to show up where needed.

"From shelter and food security to arts, culture, heritage, mental health, recreation, reconciliation and the climate changes ahead—wherever this community hurts, and wherever it dreams, we will be there," she said.



Members of the Brant Community Foundation pose alongside fundholders, donors, and representatives from local charities during a reception at the TF Warren Cainsville Community Centre on Tuesday, May 5, 2026.

Peirce also gave thanks to everyone in the room who helped make the community a better place.

"To our donors, thank you for believing that generosity is not a moment but a movement. To our charity partners, thank you for being the hands and the heart of this work. We see you. We are in awe of you," she said. "The future impact of the Brant Community Foundation will not be

written by staff or by a board or by any one leader. It will be written by every change maker in this room and by the ones you will inspire to follow."

Kimberly De Jong's reporting is funded by the Canadian government through its Local Journalism Initiative. The funding allows her to report rural and agricultural stories from Blandford-Blenheim and Brant County.

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HISTORIC PARIS

PARIS PAST: The Week Paris Forgot to Sleep



By Chris Whelan

In the sweltering heat of mid-August 1905, the usually tranquil town of Paris, Ontario, was shook entirely out of what local journalists called its "slumbrous summer beauty." For six chaotic, brilliant days—from August 14 to 19—the community played host to the Great Old Boys and Old Girls Reunion. It was a massive, historic homecoming festival that remains arguably the largest and most ambitious public celebration in the town's long history.

Thousands of former residents, who had scattered across North America to seek their fortunes, answered the call to return to the valley where the Grand and Nith rivers meet. The most famous contingent arrived via a dedicated, multi-car train straight from Chicago, packed to the brim with expatriate "Old Boys" and "Old Girls" singing songs and waving banners as they crossed the border back into Canada.

For months leading up to the event, local committees worked tirelessly. When the festival week finally arrived, the town was unrecognizable. Main streets were spanned by grand, temporary arches crafted from cedar boughs and electric lights. Storefronts along Grand River Street were swathed in bunting, and nearly every residential porch proudly displayed welcome signs.

The official Souvenir Program, a beautifully bound booklet published to mark the carnival, documented the sheer scale of the town's early 20th-century industrial boom. It featured formal portraits of prominent local families, sweeping photographs of the red-brick factories, and lyrical prose inviting the wanderers back to their ancestral hearths.

The six-day itinerary was a breathless blur of activity. There were massive civic parades featuring elaborate floats from local manufacturers, concerts by citizen bands, athletic competitions, and regattas on the river. The local volunteer militia and the Paris Firemen marched in full dress uniform, establishing a proud tradition of civic display that Paris performers would carry to neighbouring town reunions, like Burford's, in the years that followed.

Yet, amidst the grand public spectacles, the true heart of the reunion lay in the



Old Boys Reunion parade August 1905

(PARIS MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY PHOTOS)

quiet, emotional moments on street corners. Decades-old neighbours locked in tearful embraces; childhood friends, now grey-haired, traded stories of swimming in the river in the Flats or walking the steep hills of Upper Town.

1905 REUNION WEEK HIGHLIGHTS

- Aug 14: Arrival of the "Chicago Special" Train
- Aug 15: Grand Civic & Military Parade
- Aug 16: River Regatta & Athletic Games
- Aug 17: Industrial Exhibition & Grand Concert
- Aug 18: Dedication of the Gouinlock Fountain Fund
- Aug 19: Auld Lang Syne & Farewells

As the historic week drew to a close, a collective desire swept through the crowd: this magical gathering could not simply be allowed to fade into memory. Near the end of the reunion, attendees rapidly raised roughly \$1,500—a small fortune at the time—to erect a permanent monument to mark the historic gathering.

They commissioned "Old Boy" George W. Gouinlock, who had risen to become one of Toronto's most prominent architects (famed for designing many of the earliest buildings at the Canadian National Exhibition), to design it. The result was the

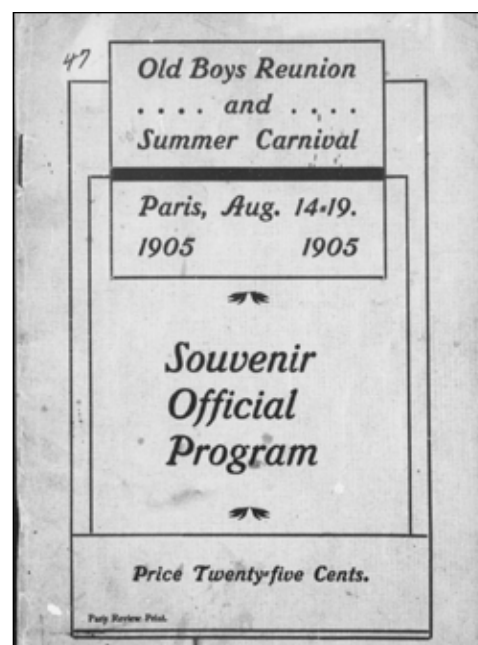


Old Boys Souvenir Program ad

Paris Gouinlock Fountain. Erected proudly in front of the Grand River Street North post office, this beautiful white marble stone structure served the community for 50 years, purposefully designed with separate drinking basins for horses, people, and dogs. Though the fountain was eventually removed to accommodate modern traffic, its legacy endures in local lore as a symbol of Paris's hospitable spirit.

While the horse-drawn carriages and cedar arches of 1905 are firmly rooted in the past, the core impulse of the Old Boys and Old Girls Reunion—the deep-seated need to return home—never truly left the valley. Today, that torch is carried by the alumni networks of Paris District High School (PDHS) and its many reunions.

In the contemporary era, the massive town-wide carnivals have evolved into vibrant, multi-class high school milestones. Instead of arriving by special steam trains, modern "Old Boys and Girls" coordinate dynamically online. Local community boards, most notably the If You Grew Up In Paris, Ontario Facebook Groups, serve



Old Boys Souvenir Program

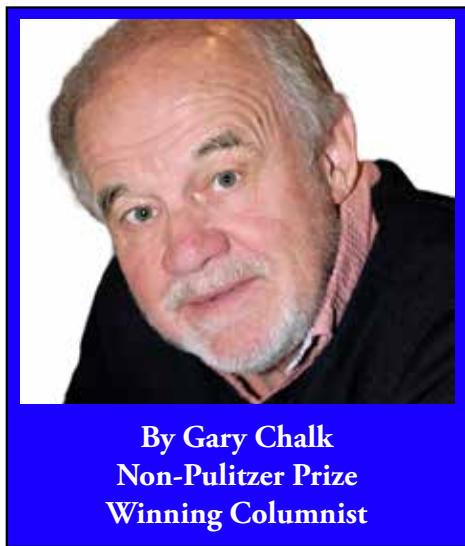
as the digital town squares of the 21st century. Here, alumni from the late 1940s to the 1990s actively swap vintage yearbook photos, track down missing classmates, and organize casual meetups.

When the grand, multi-generational milestone reunions take place, they regularly descend upon local event hubs like the Paris Fairgrounds. The clothes and the music have certainly changed—swapping the brass bands of 1905 for classic rock and casual backyard barbecues—but the atmosphere remains identical. Just as our ancestors did over a century ago under the glow of the post office clock tower, returning Paris residents still gather to look back, raise a glass, and celebrate the timeless magic of coming home.



In 1905, the Paris Old Boys and Old Girls reunion gave \$1500 for fountain erected in 1912. roadway side were two troughs for horses lower for dogs. On the other side for people

'Need To Replace Your Home Printer? Good Luck.'



By Gary Chalk
Non-Pulitzer Prize
Winning Columnist

Unless you have been Living Retired under a rock, today's home technology issues are different than when we grew up. The days of rotating the direction of the television antenna until Dad screamed, "STOP!" have gone the way of the test pattern. Today, technology issues are trying to login to Facebook when you have no friggin' idea what your user name and password are! You're doomed!

I don't know my CPU from my CPP. All I know is our recent technology meltdown went down like this. I was in my office,

Living Retired

Jan was over in her office, painting.

I screamed, "Jan, the #%%\$#! printer in my office isn't working!"

Jan screamed, "Gary, what is wrong with the #%%\$#! printer?"

I screamed, "Jan, it's technology. I don't know what is wrong with the #%%\$#! printer!"

Before you could say 'Control + Alt + Delete' Jan and I were shopping for a new printer. I am a Neanderthal but the young people who sell computer stuff look like their Mom had to drive them to work. And because my knowledge about computers can be written on the label of one of my medication containers, Jan said, "Gary, let me do the talking."

Jan could not begin talking because the two young sales associates were talking — on their iPhones. Eventually, one put his iPhone down and asked if he could help and Jan said we were looking at printers. He picked up his iPhone and texted to his colleague — STANDING BESIDE HIM

— asking him to talk with us.

The conversation went like this...

Young sales associate: "Hey man what's the word?"

Jan: "My husband and I are looking to purchase a printer for our home office."

Me: "Yeah, we need to update our RAM so the modem on our web browser can reboot its cookies."

Silence.

Young sales associate: "Hey man, I'm on it. I take it you want a basic easy-to-use printer. Do you need fax?"

Jan: "No we don't need fax."

Me: "Jan, I want the facts. I don't want to purchase a printer that is out of date."

Silence.

Young sales associate: "Hey man, I'm cool. Is colour printing something you would be interested in?"

Jan: "We only print black and white documents."

Me: "Colour printing would be helpful making counterfeit twenty dollar bills. Do you have something with quick drying ink?"

Silence.

Young sales associate: "Hey man, can I say I'm on it. I recommend this monochrome laser printer with high-yield toner, manual feed slot, drum unit, toner cartridge and USB cable."

Jan: "That sounds like what we need."

Me: "Does it have quick drying ink?"

Jan: "Sorry, I couldn't leave him home alone."

Back home I read the side of the box: 'Returning this product is expensive and time consuming for you, your retailer and for us, the manufacturer. Should you encounter any problem with your new product, please refer to the instruction manual.' So much for computer-friendly!

Jan and I decided to install our monochrome laser printer with high-yield toner, manual feed slot, drum unit, toner cartridge and USB cable ourselves! The instruction manual was in English: 'EASY TO INSTALL.' French: 'FACILE A INSTALLER.' German: 'EINFACH ZU INSTALLIEREN.' Spanish: 'FACIL DE INSTALAR.' And Pig Latin: 'EASY WAY OTAY INSTALLWAY.' That's all the news that is fit to print because hooking up our monochrome laser printer with high-yield toner, manual feed slot, drum unit, toner cartridge and USB cable was #%%\$#! hard as Dell!

Living Retired is written weekly by Gary Chalk and published throughout Canada and USA. Living Retired On The Radio is heard Thursdays. To inquire about keynote presentations visit www.LivingRetired.press

Rural Prosperity grants begin flowing as first applications reach committee

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

Just weeks after the County of Brant approved its new Rural Prosperity Community Improvement Plan (RPCIP), the first applications are already making their way through the approval process, offering an early glimpse into how the program could shape investment across rural communities.

Two applications were presented to the Administration and Operations Committee on May 19, supporting projects that range from creating new housing opportunities on farms to converting an empty former bank branch into a daycare facility.

Approved by council in April, the RPCIP was designed to extend Community Improvement Plan incentives beyond urban areas and into farms, rural tourism operations, hamlets and villages throughout the county. The program provides grants aimed at reducing the cost of building improvements, adaptive reuse projects, signage upgrades and residential additions.

"The Rural Prosperity Community Improvement Plan is an important step in supporting the sustainability of our rural communities," Mayor David Bailey said when the program launched. "By helping to offset costs for improvements, we are investing in our farms, businesses, and rural areas in the County for years to come."

The largest of the first applications came from the tenant at 284 Oakland Rd., where plans are underway to transform a former bank building into a licensed daycare facility in Scotland. The project is seeking up to \$32,295 through a combination of grant streams including signage improvements, adaptive commercial reuse, property upgrades and application fee support.

According to staff, the project carries a total construction value of nearly \$66,000 and would add 45 daycare spaces

in the County of Brant — a move staff noted could help address persistent childcare waitlists.

The proposed renovations include significant interior work to bring the building into compliance with Ontario building and childcare requirements, including electrical upgrades, a new fire alarm system, emergency lighting, HVAC improvements and outdoor play space enhancements.

The second application involves a farm property at 222 Bishopsgate Rd., where the owner is seeking the maximum \$10,000 Housing/Residential Unit Improvement Grant to convert an existing structure into an Additional Residential Unit (ARU).

County staff noted ARUs can help support farm succession planning by creating opportunities for another generation to remain on the property.

The project has a total construction value of just over \$26,000 and includes upgrades such as higher-efficiency windows, electrical improvements and renovations required to meet Ontario Building Code standards.

The applications also demonstrate the financial leverage the county hopes to achieve through the program. Together, the two projects would generate more than \$92,000 in construction activity while drawing just over \$42,000 in grant support.

County staff reported that, to date, 81 downtown Community Improvement Plan projects have been approved, with the new rural program now beginning to build on that momentum. As of this week's meeting, the two RPCIP applications were the first awaiting approval under the initiative.

"The RPCIP reflects what we heard from our rural community," said Zach Gable, Director of Economic Development and Tourism, in the program launch announcement. "There is strong interest in practical improvements that support local businesses, agriculture, and tourism while

maintaining the character of rural Brant." The two applications were moved by councillors at the Administration meeting but must be ratified by Councillors.






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Food insecurity now affecting one in four households in region, committee told

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

Food insecurity is no longer simply about access to food. It is increasingly becoming a broader affordability issue affecting thousands of households across the region, members of the County of Brant's Administration and Operations Committee heard Thursday.

Representatives from Grand Erie Public Health (GEPH) appeared before the committee to raise awareness about growing rates of food insecurity across the region and encourage support for a municipal strategy document aimed at addressing underlying causes.

Councillor John Bell introduced the delegation, noting public health officials have a responsibility to advocate on issues that affect community well-being.

"In 2025, the City of Brantford declared food insecurity an emergency," Bell told committee members. "The GEPH estimates the living wage in our region is \$21.40, which is in excess of the Ontario minimum wage, so already you can see a problem there."

Deanna Renn, manager of community health, and Lisa Vermeersch, a public health dietitian with GEPH, presented regional data spanning Brant County, Brantford, Haldimand and Norfolk counties.

Food insecurity was defined as inade-

quate or insecure access to food due to a lack of money.

Vermeersch said local household food insecurity rates have climbed sharply in recent years, with 25.4 per cent, roughly one in four households in the Grand Erie Public Health region, experiencing food insecurity in 2023-24. That marked a significant increase from rates recorded just a few years earlier. The presentation highlighted food insecurity as a public health issue linked to higher risks of chronic illness and poorer health outcomes. Adults in food insecure households are more likely to experience conditions including hypertension, depression, chronic pain and heart disease.

Vermeersch said the issue can no longer be viewed solely through the lens of food access.

"There are a lot of great food charities in the region, which we are fortunate to have," she told committee. "But if we use food charity as the sole solution to address food insecurity, nothing will change."

Instead, GEPH is focusing on root causes, with evidence suggesting income-based responses are most effective. The presentation noted households experiencing food insecurity prioritize housing and other essential costs over food when financial pressures increase. An example shared during the presentation outlined the circumstances of a single person receiving Ontario Works, showing rising costs continue to worsen

affordability pressures for residents relying on social assistance.

Councillor David Miller said he was struck by the increase shown in the report.

"I think it's important you are raising awareness to this issue," said Miller. "What do you think caused this massive spike in two years?," he asked of the jump from 15% to 25.4%.

Vermeersch said the increase reflects broader economic conditions.

"It's a reflection of the economy as a whole," she said.

Bell later pointed to examples included in the report illustrating challenges faced by individuals on social assistance.

"If you take the time to read the other examples, you'd be really troubled by what you read there," Bell said.

Bell, who sits on the Joint Social Services Committee, said he recently brought forward a motion asking the province to increase Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program rates, which he said have remained largely unchanged for

years.

Bell said failing to address gaps in social supports now could lead to greater long-term pressures on the health-care system and future generations.

Bell then introduced a motion asking the county to endorse GEPH's "Primer for Municipalities on Food Insecurity in the Grand Erie Public Health Region," a document containing nine evidence-based recommendations and strategies municipalities can adopt to improve affordability and address food insecurity.

While Miller said he agreed with the proposed solutions, he opposed the motion.

"I won't support the motion because I don't think food insecurity is a problem. It's a symptom," he said. "It's a symptom of a wider problem and that problem is affordability."

"I agree with the solution — it's an income problem."

Committee members ultimately approved the motion with support from all councillors except Miller.

Paris homeowner loses more than \$200K in alleged contractor fraud, OPP warns

PARIS INDEPENDENT STAFF

Brant County OPP are warning residents to exercise caution when hiring contractors after a Paris homeowner reportedly lost more than \$200,000 in an alleged contractor fraud case.

Police say they received a report on May 8 involving renovation work that was paid for but never completed.

According to OPP, the contractor allegedly approached the homeowner through door-to-door solicitation while using the name "Ecoguard Contractors." Investigators later found the contact information and website provided were not functional. Police also noted payments were reportedly made under a different company name — "Friendly Masonry Ltd." — raising additional concerns.

The investigation remains ongoing.

The case comes as warmer weather prompts an increase in home improvement and renovation projects, a period police and fraud prevention agencies say can attract scammers looking to take advantage of homeowners.

Spring and summer are often peak seasons for unsolicited driveway paving, roofing, landscaping and exterior renovation offers, particularly those involving contractors who show up unannounced claiming they noticed damage or have leftover materials from nearby jobs.

Police are reminding residents to take extra precautions before agreeing to work.

Among the tips provided by OPP:

- Be cautious of door-to-door contractors
- Confirm whether a County Peddler's Licence is required and valid
- Verify company information before hiring
- Avoid making large upfront payments
- Ensure all work, costs and timelines are documented in writing

Additional fraud prevention advice includes researching companies through online reviews and local references, obtaining multiple written estimates and being cautious of high-pressure sales tactics or offers claiming "today only" pricing.

Residents are also encouraged to confirm a business has a legitimate online presence and contact information and to avoid contractors who request large cash payments or refuse to provide written contracts.

Anyone who believes they may have information related to the investigation, or who may have been affected, is asked to contact Brant County OPP at 1-888-310-1122 and reference incident number E260619398.

More fraud prevention resources are available through the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre

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The Paris Independent SPORTS



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GUESS WHO?

Born in Rosario, Argentina in 1987, I began kicking a soccer ball almost as soon as I could walk. As a child, I was smaller than most kids my age and was diagnosed with a growth hormone deficiency, but that never stopped me from chasing my dream. At just 13 years old, I moved far away from home to join one of the world's most famous soccer academies in Spain.

Over the years, I became known for my incredible dribbling, pinpoint passing, and ability to score goals that seemed impossible. Defenders struggled to keep up with my quick feet and vision on the field. I spent most of my legendary career wearing the number 10 jersey for Barcelona, where I won countless league titles, Champions League trophies, and individual awards.

I have broken records for goals scored, won multiple Ballon d'Or awards as the world's best player, and led my national team through heartbreak and triumph. In 2022, I finally achieved the dream I had chased my entire life by helping Argentina win the FIFA World Cup. Fans around the world debate whether I am the greatest soccer player of all time.

Who am I?

Answer: Lionel Messi



House League Standings - Week of May 18th

7-8 Year-Old (House League)

Marshmallows tied Lakers, 18-18
Chicken Jockeys defeat Sharks, 20-4

This week's top scorers:

1. Gavin N, Lakers, 14 points
2. Ryder, Chicken Jockeys, 12 Points
3. Hukam, Marshmallows, 8 points

9-11 Year-Old (House League) Quarter finals - single elimination

1v8 match up: Huskies defeat Skyscrapers, 34-24
2v7 match up: Hamburgers defeat Flaming Flamingos, 27-24

3v6 match up: Lakers defeat Fire, 30-18
4v5 match up: Tigers defeat Warriors, 29-23

This week's top scorers:

1. Aurora, Huskies, 23 points
2. Anna Laine, Hamburgers, 16 points

12-14 Year-Old (House League)

Splash Gang defeat Elite, 42-38
Warriors defeat Blackhawks, 37-21

This week's top scorers:

1. Ian, Blackhawks, 19 points
2. Calum, Warriors, 16 points
3. Kieran, Elite, 14 points

Paris Duffers: Last-hole heroics and milk money dramatics

GREIG GRAHAM AKA GG

Paris Independent Contributor

To our faithful readers, we have all the action you've been waiting for from the pristine fairways of the Burford Golf Course last Friday, courtesy of your very own Paris Duffers.

The Birthday Blessing: First out of the gate, Bergy and Double G took on the formidable pairing of Cutter Barber and Billy B. This nail-biter came right down to the final shot of the match on the 18th hole. Fortunately for his partner, Birthday Boy Bergy proved to be the gift that keeps on giving, draining a spectacular winning putt to seal the victory.

The Milk Money Mystery: AA and AO (that's a lot of vowels) found themselves in tough against the vet-

eran duo of Big Ferg and Brownie. The "A-Team" was down three heading into the final hole, so they decided to press—and managed to win the hole. Ordinarily, a successful press in that scenario just means a tie game, but somehow the math got creative. Even after manually checking the official definition of "pressing," Ferg and Brownie still ended up paying for two glasses of milk each. Something is definitely fishy here!

The Flight Risk: Our designated threesome of the day featured Gerry Hoog, Jay Bird, and Swanee. While it was a great, competitive game all around, J-Bird reportedly "flew the coop" the absolute second the final putt dropped. Speculation is running rife through the clubhouse as to why he had to make such a hasty retreat.

The Rookie Resiliency: Finally, Kopper and the tour's newest face, Chris "Enzo" Entz, fought tooth and nail to secure a hard-earned tie against the ever-dangerous duo of Jacquer and Sinc. Rumour has it Sinc was absolutely on his game this week, so a massive tip of the cap to the new guy for keeping pace.

A big shout-out this week to our fantastic hosts at Burford Golf Course. Tommy, Harvey, Nate, and the rest of the crew always do a superb job and look after the Duffers incredibly well.

If you happen to be out that way, do yourself a favour and try their Friday fish special—you can thank us later.

Until next week: guard your milk money and keep it on the fairways!

Hodgson leads Dusters out of Brantford in style

SID LUCKMAN

Paris Independent Contributor

Folks, the Dusters tenure at the Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre came to a more than thrilling conclusion this past Thursday. Shots from the point had the goalies' heads spinning!

Unquestionably this week's Duster of the game was Ryan Hodgson. Local legend and self-proclaimed best passer in town, Kenny G, had this to

say about Hodgson's play.

"In all my years of federal employment, today was by the far the best Hodgson ever did. You go for a pass and it's like....he wasn't even there!"

Certainly this effort was backed up by Duster co founder, Chadwick Lattimer, saying "Hodgson scored like I have never seen before. Truthfully, I couldn't hear his skates today...like he wasn't even out there trying!"

So it was a big day for the Dusters as they left Brantford and back for

home. Kenzie Lees and Brian Kenney made well fitting new assets to the Duster fold. The goalies had their fill of the puck for sure. The Dusters return for the annual "Throwback Game" dubbed "Maroon in June". Puck drop on Thursday June 11 at 5:30 in Paris. The players will be sporting the original Dusters maroon jersey that night! Come on out and join. The team will be hosting the social at Club 221 after; come on and meet the team!

Paris Challenger Baseball to host first-ever Try-It Day at Lions Park

A new chapter for inclusive recreation in the community is set to begin later this month as Paris Challenger Baseball prepares to host its first-ever Try-It Day at Lions Park.

The adaptive baseball and softball program, designed for individuals living with physical and cognitive disabilities, will hold the introductory event May 30 from 10 a.m. to noon at Diamond A.

Organizers say the program is focused on creating an inclusive and supportive environment where athletes of all abilities can build confidence, develop friendships and experience the joy of sport.

The Try-It Day will feature skill-building stations, adapted gameplay and sensory-friendly activities aimed at making the experience accessible for participants regardless of experience level.

"No experience is needed — just come ready to play, connect, and be part of something incredible," orga-

nizers shared in a public announcement promoting the event. The launch of Paris Challenger Baseball builds on growing efforts locally to expand accessible recreation opportunities and community programming for residents of all abilities.

The program is hosted by the Paris Youth Softball Association and supported by the Jays Care Foundation, which helps establish and grow Challenger Baseball leagues in communities across Canada. Challenger Baseball programs pair athletes with volunteers and adaptive supports to create a safe and welcoming environment centred on participation and inclusion.

In addition to recruiting athletes, organizers are also seeking volunteers to help support the league during the upcoming season.

Community members interested in registering an athlete or volunteering can contact organizers at parischallengerbaseball@gmail.com

Rain fails to dampen Banfield Art Crawl spirit

RUBYYY JONES

Paris Independent Cultural Correspondent

Banfield Art Crawl returned this past weekend, braving torrential rain and bringing plenty of colour to an otherwise grey day. With 50 talented artists and creators showcasing and selling their work, the damp weather did little to dampen the spirits of guests, who arrived in raincoats with umbrellas to browse and shop. Organizers say visitors travelled from Toronto, Guelph, Niagara and London to take part in the fourth annual event.

Spread across seven streets in the Banfield neighbourhood, the event is typically held outdoors with tents, tables and displays set up in driveways, on lawns and beneath the trees. This year, however, relentless rain pushed much of the event indoors, onto porches and into garages and artists' homes — but everyone pivoted with flair.

I spoke with Banfield Art Crawl organizer and artist Jeanette Obbink about the event and she shared her reflections on the day. "The day went very well, despite the nasty weather and we had about a hundred people braving the rain, which resulted in lovely visits, with a lot of positive feedback to the event, including some sales."

Bracing for lower turnout, the artists were in remarkably good spirits, and pleasantly surprised by the number of visitors. Paris artist Tony Churchill, who showcased his work on Banfield Street, shared that "even though it was a rainy Saturday, it was great to see people braving the weather to come out and talk about art. Many were very proud of the fact that there were so many creatives in one small town."

Brant artist Lisa Franklin showcased on Jane Street and spoke of the importance of

cultural events like this one, specifically, for the vendors. "Events like the Banfield Art Crawl are so important. Professional artists need to uphold large bodies of works and often pay out of pocket to have art available to the public. Something that isn't necessarily accessible to everyone. These events allow artists at any stage of their careers or joyful journey to connect with art enthusiasts and community members!"

The people that braved the weather loved the event, and lots of folks were posting their art purchases and happy rainy day selfies. "I can't believe there are so many creative people in this neighborhood!" was a regular recurring comment.

Banfield local Natalie Murdock was one of many who supported the crawl. "An event like this gives us a chance to see what's artistically happening in the community. Wander through the beautiful area, explore backyard studios, and enjoy the opportunity to talk with artists who are truly passionate about their work. The Banfield Art Crawl is the perfect place to discover something new!"

Banfield Art Crawl organizer Jennifer Budd of Woolscapes, she shared her thoughts and gratitude post event. "I would like to offer huge gratitude for everyone who put on a raincoat, found an umbrella and donned their wellies on what was an atrocious day of weather to attend the 4th Annual Banfield Art Crawl. It was a very challenging day for all of the participants. To feel the love and support for what we do was uplifting." It was an uplifting and inspiring day, proving mother nature doesn't always get the last word! If you're interested in reaching out to an artist, visit <https://www.banfieldartcrawl.ca/about>



(RUBYYY JONES PHOTOS)

A young participant brings a treasured stuffed friend in for a checkup at the Teddy Bear Medical Clinic during last year's Kiwanis Teddy Bear Picnic in Burford. The annual family-friendly event returns June 7 with games, entertainment, contests and activities for children across Brant County.



Artist, Red Willow, poses with her creations and the art of her kid, Sha'uri Ellis aka Sad Trash Panda, on St Andrew Street.

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Hands-on career event draws 2,000 students from across Grand Erie

MEDIA RELEASE

Approximately 2,000 Grade 7 and 8 students from across Grand Erie came together last week for Epic Jobs 2026, an annual hands-on career exploration event organized by the Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie and its partners.

Now in its seventh year, Epic Jobs gave students the chance to get up close with the skilled trades, apprenticeships, and a wide range of local career paths. Held at the Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre in Brantford, the event drew students from the Grand Erie District School Board, Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board, and schools from Indigenous communities and private institutions across Six Nations of the Grand River, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Haldimand and Norfolk Counties, County of Brant and the City of Brantford.

Over 40 exhibitors set up interactive stations where students could try their hand at various skilled trades, explore heavy equipment, engage with tradespeople, and discover the wide range of in-demand careers available right here in their own community.

“The Epic Jobs Event is an important opportunity for Grade 7 and 8 students to explore career pathways, gain real-world

insight, and begin building the knowledge, skills, and awareness that will help shape their future as the next generation of Grand Erie’s workforce”, said Danette Dalton, executive director of the Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie.

Dalton also noted that without opportunities like this and early exposure to careers and mentorship, growth and potential can be limited; and without the partnership, generosity, and commitment of our exhibitors and sponsors, who give so freely of their time, energy, expertise, and resources, this event simply would not be possible.

Trade unions, colleges, training organizations, and community partners participated in the event, and were encouraged to make their stations as interactive and hands-on as possible to engage and inspire young people. Some notable major employers attended the event, including Tigercat, Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Laidlaw, Walters Group, and many more.

Epic Jobs is designed to spark curiosity and help students start thinking about their future early with guidance from parents, family, caregivers, educators and other important mentors. Organizers say the event is particularly important for introducing young people to the skilled trades at a time when demand for tradespeople across the region continues to grow.



Students test their skills with hammers and other tools at the UBC Built (Carpenters’ Local 785) station during Epic Jobs 2026 at the Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre in Brantford. The annual hands-on career exploration event introduced Grade 7 and 8 students to opportunities in the skilled trades and other in-demand careers.

GRANT HAVEN MEDIA

St. Marys Independent The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette STRATFORDTIMES
Woodstock Ingersoll Echo Exeter Examiner Goderich Sun
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PUBLICATION DATES:

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TILLSONBURG POST: **JUNE 4** | WILMOT-TAVISTOCK GAZETTE: **JUNE 4**
SIMCOE ADVOCATE: **JUNE 4** | EXETER EXAMINER: **JUNE 4**
STRATFORD TIMES: **JUNE 5** | WOODSTOCK INGERSOLL ECHO: **JUNE 5**
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JUNE IS SENIORS MONTH IN ONTARIO - a time to celebrate the seniors who continue to make a lasting impact in our communities. Don't miss out on this opportunity to align your brand with the spirit of Seniors Month and connect with a passionate audience eager to celebrate the seniors who have made a lasting impact. Reserve your space today!

June is Seniors Month

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ontario.ca/SeniorsMonth



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Friday, May 29	Paris Optimist Park, 3 Catherine St, Paris	Freakier Friday
Friday, June 5	Forest Drive Park, 23A Forest Dr, Paris	Zootopia 2
Friday, July 10	Mount Pleasant Park, 555 Burtch Rd, Mt. Pleasant	Hoppers'
Friday, August 21	King William Park, 52 King William St, St. George	Bad Guys 2
Friday, Sept 18	Scotland Community Centre, 85 Simcoe St, Scotland	Toy Story 5'

brant.ca/ParkPrograms



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OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Music and more on Cape Breton's Ceilidh Trail



By Paul Knowles

Almost everyone has heard of the Cabot Trail. That's not surprising – Nova Scotia's Cabot Trail is one of the most breath-taking drives you can take in Canada, or anywhere in the world, for that matter.

Fewer, perhaps, know of the other Cape Breton Island "Trail" that connects with the Cabot Trail. Known as the "Ceilidh Trail", it begins at the Canso Causeway – the entry point to Cape Breton Island. The Ceilidh Trail then follows the western coast of the island for 107 kilometers, to Margaree Harbour, where it connects with the Cabot Trail.

As you may know, "ceilidh", pronounced kay-lee, is a Gaelic word that original meant "a visit". Today, it has come to include the idea of an informal gathering with music, dance, story-telling... and, very probably, beverages. There are ceilidhs all over Canada's four eastern provinces, some simply kitchen parties, others ticketed events in rented halls. Every one of them is fun.

And there is no lack of east coast music on Cape Breton Is-



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

The Celtic Music Interpretive Centre is a must-stop on your tour of the Ceilidh Trail.

land. This, after all, is the home of Ashley MacIsaac, Natalie MacMaster, The Rankin Family, the Barra MacNeils, John Allan Cameron, J.P. Cormier, and the late and dearly missed Rita MacNeil. So it's not surprising that the powers that be have dubbed this route "The Ceilidh Trail."

And you're not far along the trail, coming from the south, before you encounter physical evidence of the importance of music in this region. The Celtic Music Interpretive Centre is on the route, only 29 kilometers from the Canso Parkway. It's in Judique... not to be confused with the other small communities in the immediate area named Judique South, Rear Judique South, Rear Judique Chapel, Judique North, Judique Intervale, Little Judique, and

Little Judique Ponds. No, I am not making this up. I think it is charming, if a tad confusing.

The Celtic Music Interpretive Centre offers three distinct opportunities to visitors. You can dine in the restaurant. You can take in a concert of Celtic music (played on a stage in the dining room, so you'll probably want to eat and listen). And, you can visit the museum section of the Centre.

The museum has a lot of information about Cape Breton musical history. And if my experience is anything to go by, it's best to carry earplugs, because visitors have the chance to try their hands at playing a violin – with a video introduction to the art of the instrument. Trust me, the lesson didn't help. I was screech-worthy terrible.

The only problem with having lunch at the Interpretive Centre is that you will also want to have lunch at the Red Shoe Pub in Mabou, only 30 km north. This

is a special place – the restaurant features live music, seven days a week, and that's not surprising because it's owned by Heather, Cookie and Raylene Rankin of the famed Rankin Family.

In truth, there is music almost everywhere in this part of Nova Scotia. We stayed at the Glenora Inn (arranged very kindly by our hosts at Tourism Nova Scotia), which is in this district as well (I wrote about it in a previous feature). At the Inn, there was a wonderful duo playing Celtic music in the dining room in the evening. And in true spirit of the ceilidh, they called up a young man from the audience, a pianist friend of theirs, to join them for several songs.

There are plenty of arts and crafts stops along the trail, as well. In one shop, a woman was proudly declaring herself to be a hooker, as she produced hooked rugs, pot holders, and other items for sale in the shop. I asked

about her work, and she stopped for a moment to give me a very thoughtful, well-spoken answer.

I realized a few minutes later the reason for her articulate response, when she gave the same spiel, word for word, to another shopper.

I admit that everything I have mentioned so far takes place indoors, which is rather ridiculous when you are talking about travel in Cape Breton Island. Inevitably, the star of the show will be the seacoast, and the innumerable panoramas that inspire you to pull off the road and savor the scenery.

One perfect stop is at Inverness, where you can walk the beautiful beach, or stroll on the trail that runs along the very prestigious Cabot Links Golf Course. A note of caution: playing 18 on this lovely course will cost you between \$400 and \$600. But walking the trail, enjoying the view... and not worrying about a missed putt... is free.

There are many places to stay along the Ceilidh Trail, and it would appear that none of them are big, typical, cookie-cutter hotels. Here the options range from beach-front villas to geodomes to distilleries to country inns to RV sites. For more information about accommodation, see <https://capebretonisland.com/ceilidh-trail/>.

Of course, if you are visiting Cape Breton Island, you will want to travel the Cabot Trail. But leave a few days for its little sister, the lovely Ceilidh Trail.

Paul Knowles is an author and travel writer, and Past-President of the Travel Media Association of Canada. To contact Paul about travel, his books, or speaking engagements, email pknowles@golden.net.



The Red Shoe Pub, owned by the Rankin Sisters.



Live music at the Celtic Museum Interpretive Centre.

OBITUARY

Sinclair



Paul Sinclair

Paul David Sinclair of Marl Lake, formerly of the Cargill and Paisley communities, passed away suddenly, with Barb at his side, on Wednesday, May 6, 2026, in his 72nd year.

Cherished husband of Barb (formerly Patterson, nee Emmons). Loving father of Neil Sinclair of Walkerton and father-in-law of Corien Sinclair of Walkerton and treasured Grandpa of Denton and Emrey Sinclair. Paul will be dearly missed by his stepchildren, Brandy Patterson and her husband Bruce Cayford of Walkerton, Becky and her husband Dan Trepanier of Glen Walter, and Brandon and his wife Lisa Patterson of Walkerton. Grampie will always be held in the hearts of Hayley, Alyssa, and Marissa Trepanier, Lily and Owen Cayford, and Kally and Brady Patterson.

Paul will be greatly missed and fondly remembered by his siblings, Doug (Debbie) Sinclair, and Bev Sinclair (Clint Halstead), his nieces and nephews, as well as by his Aunt Evelyn Watling, Aunt Terry Wood, and Uncle John (Judy) Wood.

Paul was predeceased by his first wife, Laurie (McIntosh), son Adam, sister Susan Sinclair, and his parents, Ken and Betty (Wood) Sinclair.

Paul was welcomed into the Emmons family with open arms by his mother-in-law Margaret (and the late Gerry) Emmons of Kingston, brother-in-law of Liz and J.P. Costa of Saint-Lazare, Quebec, Jim and Cindy Emmons of Odessa, Carol (and the late Jim) De Rosie of Kingston, Tim Emmons of Latimer, and Holly deHoop of Gananoque and their families, and Barb's cousin Jeanine MacRow and her partner Lew Dawe of Kingston Mills.

A celebration of Paul's life will be held at the Cargill Community Centre on Saturday, May 30, 2026, from 2:00 p.m. until the time of the memorial service at 3:00 p.m. A time of refreshments and fellowship will follow until 5:30 p.m. Casual dress. In honour of Paul, his family would love to see you in your most colourful golf shirt.

Private inturnment in Douglas Hill Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations to Saugeen Hospice Inc. (<https://www.saugeenhospice.ca/donations/>) would be appreciated as expressions of sympathy.

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Contact:

info@theparisdependent.com

- The Paris Independent Community Calendar allows non-profit organizations to promote their free admission community events at no charge. Event listings can include the event name, date, time and location as well as contact information (ie phone number, email address or website).
- If your event is not free admission or you would like to include more details than stated above, The Paris Independent offers the following options for promoting your community events:
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 - Coming Events Boxed Word Ad (50 word max.) - \$15 + hst
 - Display Ad - Sizes begin at a Small Classified Display ad (3.3" x 2.5") - \$35 + hst

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WEEKLY Horoscope

May 27 - June 2 2026

ARIES

Mar 21 - Apr 20



Momentum builds. A fresh opportunity clears confusion and encourages bold decisions. Trust your instincts—it helps you move ahead with confidence and steady determination.

TAURUS

Apr 21 - May 21



Peaceful energy steadies you, Taurus. Familiar routines bring comfort and renewed focus. Stay consistent—it supports balance and dependable personal growth this week.

GEMINI

May 22 - Jun 21



Curiosity expands, Gemini. A lively exchange inspires new ideas and stronger motivation. Follow your excitement—it encourages progress and meaningful opportunities ahead.

CANCER

Jun 22 - Jul 22



Warmth surrounds you, Cancer. A thoughtful moment restores emotional clarity and calm. Trust your feelings gently—it encourages healing and steady reassurance moving forward.

LEO

Jul 23 - Aug 23



Optimism returns, Leo. Your natural confidence inspires others and attracts recognition. Move forward proudly—it helps you encourage people and strengthen important connections.

VIRGO

Aug 24 - Sept 22



Focus improves, Virgo. Organizing responsibilities creates calm and productive momentum. Rely on your preparation—it keeps important tasks moving with steady precision.

LIBRA

Sept 23 - Oct 23



Harmony improves, Libra. A supportive discussion restores understanding and emotional comfort. Stay approachable—it strengthens trust and meaningful connection with others.

SCORPIO

Oct 24 - Nov 22



Awareness deepens, Scorpio. Careful reflection reveals valuable information and hidden truth. Follow your intuition—it helps you stay grounded with confidence and purpose.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23 - Dec 21



Excitement grows, Sagittarius. A new experience inspires confidence and fresh motivation. Embrace the change—it guides you toward rewarding opportunities ahead.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22 - Jan 20



Progress continues, Capricorn. Dedicated effort creates reliable and encouraging results. Stay focused—it supports important goals and future success ahead.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21 - Feb 18



Fresh ideas grow, Aquarius. Creative thinking attracts support and positive attention. Trust your vision—it encourages meaningful progress and personal success.

PISCES

Feb 19 - Mar 20



Quiet reflection restores clarity and calm understanding. Trust your intuition—it encourages reassurance and peaceful direction ahead.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

MAY 27

Roberto Soldado, Soccer Player (41)

MAY 28

Kylie Minogue, Pop Singer (58)

MAY 29

La Toya Jackson, R&B Singer (70)

MAY 30

CeeLo Green, R&B Singer (51)

MAY 31

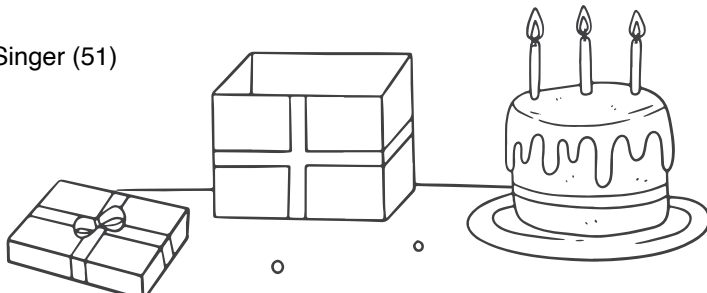
Brooke Shields, Actress (61)

JUNE 1

Morgan Freeman, Actor (89)

JUNE 2

Dana Carvey, Actor (71)



OBITUARY

Cunningham



CUNNINGHAM; Sherlie

Passed away peacefully on April 29th, 2026, with her daughters by her side. Sherlie was 72 years of age. Predeceased by her cherished husband Dennis Cunningham (2014). Beloved mummy of Mallory (Chris) Hill and Megan (Sean) Barrow. Cherished grandma to Logan and Sawyer Barrow, and Keira Hill. Sister of Marion Smith (Malcolm) and Jim Marsh (Cheryl). Beloved dog mom to Lucy. She will be dearly missed by many extended family members and friends.

Sherlie was known for her free and adventurous spirit. She would happily plan spontaneous adventures – if you were spending time with Sherlie, you never knew where you would end up! She was a dedicated guide for Girl

Guides for 31 years. In her free time, she loved to tend to her garden. With her spirit of adventure, she loved to travel, a good road trip, and she especially enjoyed her camping trips to Algonquin Park.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the Dwayne D. Budgell Funeral Home, 1105 Rest Acres Rd., Paris, ON, on Saturday June 13, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. To celebrate her bright and beautiful life, we kindly encourage you to wear cheerful or colourful attire to the service. Donations to Girl Guides of Canada in memory of Sherlie would be appreciated by the family.

Online condolences and donations may be made at www.budgellfuneralhome.ca.



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SUDOKU ANSWERS

3	1	7	4	6	2	9	5	8
6	8	4	5	9	7	1	2	3
9	2	5	3	1	8	7	4	6
1	7	6	2	3	9	5	8	4
8	4	3	6	5	1	2	7	9
2	5	9	7	8	4	6	3	1
7	3	2	9	4	6	8	1	5
5	9	8	1	2	3	4	6	7
4	6	1	8	7	5	3	9	2



QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Cameco
2. The Suez Canal
3. Iceman
4. Defense Readiness Conditions
5. Tinker Bell
6. A soup
7. Baize or felt
8. Jennifer Lopez
9. Stop, drop, and roll
10. EF5

Riddle

I visit every night, but never by road.

I can build kingdoms or erase them by morning.

You cannot hold me awake, yet I can hold you captive asleep.

What am I?

Answer: A dream

Sudoku

	1	7	4		2			
		4	5	9				3
9	2	5	3			7		6
		6	2			5		
			6		1	2	7	
2			7	8	4			1
7	3	2		4		8	1	
5	9		1	2				7
	6			7			9	

Solutions on page 17

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PET OF THE WEEK

PEPPER

Meet our Pet of the Week:

Celebrating our seniors! Pepper was in to visit us for an annual wellness examination at the incredible age of 18! Wow! Just like people, our geriatric patients have different needs to ensure a continued good quality of life. Pepper is an exemplary example of a life well lived!

Stay tuned for more heartwarming stories every week from Paris Veterinary Clinic.



Word Search

WORDS WITH "CH"

P A Y I A S Y V Y C R B P W B U K L T Z
 S Q C U O C C H A L K C H E D D A R O M
 W A L H M Q H C H A P T E R R D Q B S T
 P E K P E L O E Q V S X U W C P J Z Y O
 C V P X Y E N C E C H U R C H R P L Y V
 H W G U D U S I H R B E L C E C R D E O
 A L A E I B E E B A I O V H S H I Z U Q
 N H W Z B Y Y B N G T K L O T I H E W Z
 D E I R E E B G S T L T L R N P C T G F
 E E J B I L L X R W Z F E E U M E A W V
 L Z B E Y X K F E T M S N R T U R L L C
 I N R B U T V K K W C V N N P N N O E Y
 E A M G D M Q X C C V J L O E K K C S R
 R P U P Z X J P E N G D Y I I H R O I R
 R M E Z L R V I H E X U H P O U K H H E
 I I S K O N U I C K Y I Z M R B S C C H
 A H T C H A S E J C K Q K A V A N Y A C
 H C H O I C E F U I T R V H T O S P E S
 C H I M N E Y B O H Q V D C V Y G Z K H
 W A B F P I I B Q C H A R G E R P U J W

- CHAIR
- CHEESE
- CHOCOLATE
- CHURCH
- CHEER
- CHAMPION
- CHALK
- CHERRY
- CHICKEN
- CHISEL
- CHATTER
- CHASE
- CHESTNUT
- CHIMPANZEE
- CHIPMUNK
- CHANDELIER
- CHOICE
- CHECKERS
- CHEDDAR
- CHIMNEY
- CHAPTER
- CHARGER
- CHORE
- CHIRP



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May 30...Paris Legion

2:00PM - 5:00PM



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Thank you Paris Sobey's!!!!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EMAIL TO INQUIRE INFO@THEPARISINDEPENDENT.COM

FRIDAY, MAY 29

St. George Pro Musica Choir presents - "Singing From Dawn to Dusk" at St. George United Church, 9 Beverly St. E. (Hwy. #5), St. George on Friday, May 29th at 7:30 p.m. Directed by Tannis Hamill; pianist, Scott Millward. Join us for music filled with light, laughter and a few black flies! Debuting new music by Susan Norman. Guest artists, including harp and vocal soloists. A free-will offering is gratefully received. For information, contact (519) 448-3842.

SATURDAY, MAY 30

Join us for the Alzheimer Society IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's in Brantford/Brant County - Mohawk Park - Lower Pavilion, Brantford. 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. This annual walk helps raise funds so the Alzheimer Society can continue providing vital programs, support, and resources for people living with dementia and their families in our community. Bring your friends, family, coworkers, or start a team and walk with us. Every step helps make a difference. To learn more, register, or donate, visit www.walkforalzheimers.ca and select Brantford/Brant County. Let's come together as a community to support those affected by dementia!

Optimist Club Bottle and Can Drive - Paris Optimist Club Bottle Drive. We will collect your liquor/beer bottles and cans at the Optimist Club House from 10 am to 12 pm on May 30th. If you can't make it through construction for the drop off, Optimist Club members can arrange to pick up your empties. Please reach out to Jackie at 519-608-9867. Additionally the club is collecting pop cans, just ensure they are packed separately from the liquor cans/bottles.

SUNDAY, MAY 31

Brant Men of Song - are hosting 5 men's choirs at the Sanderson Centre on Sunday, May 31st at 3 pm. Contact Sanderson for tickets.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3

Paris Horticultural Society General Meeting - The Paris Horticultural Society will be hosting the final General Meeting before summer break on June 3rd starting with social time at 7 pm at the Paris Fairgrounds. Our guest speaker is Kevin Kavanagh, from South Coast Nursery his presentation will be "Paw Paw", a tasty hint of the tropics in Ontario. Come on out and join us for an informative evening.

TUESDAY, JUNE 2

'Breath of Spring' Ladies' Evening - to be held Tuesday, June 2 at Burtch Baptist Church (352 Cockshutt Rd., Brantford). Meet and Greet at 6:15pm. Join them for desserts, musical entertainment and guest speaker, Rev. Lola Mather Dyer. Wear your spring bonnet or other hat. Free will offering, with proceeds to local missions.

The Brantford Stamp Club - The Brantford Stamp Club meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays from September to December and January to May, plus the 1st Tuesday in June and December. Meetings are held at the Branlyn Community Centre, 238 Brantwood Park Drive, Brantford. Doors open at 7 p.m., with meetings starting at 8 p.m.

FRIDAY JUNE 5 & 19

Ingersoll Country Music Jamboree Meeting - Spring into the Ingersoll Country Music Jamboree meeting every other Friday 1-4 p.m. at Masonic Hall, 190 Thames St. S. Ingersoll. Join us, walk ins welcome. Qualifications - love 50-70's country music. Perform, listen, dance & enjoy!

SATURDAY, JUNE 6

Spring Fling - Luncheon and concert at Harmony United Church 268 Marlborough St. Brantford. Saturday June 6. Enjoy a hot lunch at 12:30pm and then sit back and enjoy the toe tapping music of Dave Jensen and John Harris.

SUNDAY, JUNE 7

Kiwanis Teddy Bear Picnic - A Family Favourite Is Back! Join the Kiwanis Paris-Brant club for this year's Teddy Bear Picnic on Sunday, June 7 from 1 pm to 3 pm at the Burford Fairgrounds. More information about the event is available at www.parisbrantkiwanis.org

TUESDAY, JUNE 9

Brant County Men's Probus Club Meeting - Tuesday, June 9th, 2026 at 10 AM at the Sherwood Restaurant 799 Colborne Street in Brantford. The guest speaker will be Peter Hunton discussing theatre history. New members are always welcome.

THURSDAY, JUNE 11

Women's Institute Meeting - 7-9 pm at the Wilkin Family Community Centre. Join us for Lawn Bowling 101, graciously hosted by the Paris Lawn Bowling Club. Strawberry shortcake to be provided.

SATURDAY, JUNE 13

Harmony United Church Spring Fling Luncheon - Join Harmony United Church for our Spring Fling Luncheon. Saturday June 13 at 6:00pm. Dinner will be Harmony's famous beef pies, salad, fruit tray and tiramisu for dessert. Please note the change of date and time. Following dinner, sit back and enjoy the toe tapping music of David Jensen and John Harris. Tickets are \$30 and are available by calling the church office 519 752 2912.

TUESDAY, JUNE 23

Knights of Columbus Monthly Meeting - on Tuesday, 23th at 7:30 PM in the Sacred Heart Parish hall at 17 Washington Street, Paris.

MONDAY, JULY 20 - FRIDAY, JULY 24

Summer Kids Camp Paris Baptist Church - Join our detective squad and hunt for clues to uncover the truth of who Jesus is! July 20 - 24 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. Free Program Ages 5-12. Register now at parisbaptistchurch.org



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If you have a story about a Paris Veteran, please email the committee at info@homesofheroes.ca. Let's work together to give all our veterans, living and fallen, in war and in peace, the recognition and honour they deserve. If you have any questions about the project, please email Neil Edwards at neiledwards51@gmail.com.



Dan MUYS

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
FLAMBOROUGH–GLANBROOK–BRANT NORTH

PARIS Mobile Office Hours

My office has hosted weekly pop-up offices for communities around the large geographic riding of Flamborough-Glanbrook-Brant North.



Upcoming Pop-up Office

Dates in Paris:

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 29
(Paris Legion)
70 William Street, Paris
Every Friday – 1:30 to 4:00pm

- **Fri. May 29th**
- **Fri. June 12th**
- **Fri. June 5th**



Dan Muys, MP for Brant North

519-448-1483
Office: 6 Main St. S., St. George
Mail: Box 1100, St. George, ON N0E 1N0
dan.muys@parl.gc.ca | DanMuysMP.ca



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