

The Paris Independent

Issue #209

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2025

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Afro CariBrant Festival draws record crowds to Lions Park



(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

A performer lights up the stage with a fire-breathing act during the Afro-CariBrant Festival at Lions Park in Paris this past weekend. The two-day celebration drew record-breaking crowds with music, dance, food, and cultural showcases. See story on page 4.

Lace up for Annual Terry Fox Run this weekend

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

This weekend, residents will rally once again at Paris District High School for the enduring spirit of hope and resilience embodied by Terry Fox. On Sunday, September 14, 2025, the

45th-anniversary Paris Terry Fox Run invites everyone—runners, walkers, families, pets, and more—to take part in a collective stride against cancer.

Last year's event was deeply moving, featuring heartfelt tributes from Clayton Eaton and Heidi Wright. Clayton carried on an emotional

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

County faces rising social service demands in shared budget with Brantford

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

The County of Brant's share of the 2026 Shared Social Services budget will climb to nearly \$6 million, reflecting both rapid population growth and a surge in demand for housing and income supports.

Under the provincially mandated arrangement, the City of Brantford acts as the service manager for social services in both municipalities, while costs are shared on a per-capita basis. For 2026, the County's contribution is projected at \$5.95 million, representing 27.9 per cent of the total \$21.3 million operating budget. That's an increase of 11.36 per cent compared with this year.

The budget identifies housing instability and Ontario Works caseload growth as major pressures. Demand for Ontario Works is rising faster than provincial forecasts, with local caseloads expected to jump by as much as 15 per cent next year, well beyond the 6 per cent increase projected provincially.

Housing pressures are equally acute. The County and City are on track to add hundreds

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Paris to mark 45th anniversary of Terry Fox’s Marathon of Hope with community run Sept. 14

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tradition in honor of his late daughter Emily—who, despite cerebral palsy, joined him at past runs until her passing in early 2024. The sight of the empty cart crossing the finish line symbolized both loss and enduring love. Heidi’s tribute to her husband Gary Wright, lost to brain cancer in 2024, similarly resonated with participants, especially since many in the community followed his courageous battle.

Last year’s event saw 150 participants raise a record-breaking \$19,000.

This year, the goal is ambitious but simple: to surpass that total, said Melanie Chmelik, co-organizer of the Paris event. She also encourages anyone with a personal connection to Terry’s legacy or a story to share to reach out and participate.

“For some families, including ours, the Stew Crew, the Paris Terry Fox Run has been a way to establish a meaningful tradition,” said Chmelik. She notes it can also be about showing up for the community or honouring someone’s cancer journey. “Whatever the reason, the teams’ contributions have a huge impact on reaching our goal.”

Behind every step of the run, volunteers and supporters—from local businesses to dedicated individuals—make it possible, giving selflessly without expectation. All donations and pledges go directly to the Terry Fox Foundation, funding vital cancer research.

Terry Fox’s Marathon of Hope began on April 12, 1980, when he dipped his prosthetic leg into the Atlantic at St. John’s, Newfoundland, vowing to run across Canada to raise funds for cancer research. Over 143 grueling days, he covered 5,373 km, averaging nearly a marathon a day, before cancer forced him to halt near Thunder Bay.

Terry’s dream—to raise one dollar for each Canadian—was realized posthumously, with total funds surpassing \$24 million by early 1981.

Since then, the annual Terry Fox Run, first held in 1981, has become the world’s largest one-day fundraiser for cancer research. Over \$900 million has now been raised globally, thanks to the unwavering efforts of volunteers and participants in more than 60 countries.

This year’s 45th anniversary has inspired a suite of national initiatives:

- The National Ride of Hope, a coast-to-coast tribute on bicycles, spearheaded by Terry’s brother Darrell, has already raised more than \$1.1 million
- Commemorative projects including a new picture

book (T is for Terry: An ABC of Courage), a documentary titled Run Terry Run, and a reissue of the iconic Adidas Orion shoe model Terry wore.

A stylish “Finish It” collection—T-shirts, hoodies, toques, and more—was launched by the Terry Fox Foundation, with donations matched up to \$100,000 by PharmaChoice Canada for contributions made on April 12

“Beyond the fundraising,” says Chmelik, “we want our event to be a place to connect with the spirit of Terry Fox—where our participants feel inspired by his courage and determination.”

On September 14, she hopes to see new families and friends building their own traditions and carrying forward Terry’s dream. This year, the Paris community joins a national movement—determined to Finish It.

Quick Info: Paris Terry Fox Run 2025

- **What:** 45th-anniversary Paris Terry Fox Run (5 km, all-inclusive, non-competitive)
- **When:** September 14, 2025 — Registration at 10 a.m., start at 11 a.m.
- **Where:** Paris District High School, Paris
- **How:** In-person or online via run.terryfox.ca/92857
- **What to Expect:** A non-competitive, all-ages gathering, welcoming participants with bicycles, strollers, scooters, leashed dogs, or simply walking shoes. Rain or shine, the event carries on.



(CASANDRA TURNBULL PHOTO)

Walkers and runners set off from Paris District High School at the start of last year’s Terry Fox Run, an annual community event that raises funds for cancer research.

The Paris Independent

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Brant's social service costs climb as demand outpaces provincial forecasts

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of affordable units by 2030, but aging infrastructure, declining federal transfers, and rising construction costs are straining resources. Meanwhile, homelessness in Brantford-Brant has grown by 281 per cent since 2016, with a notable rise in "hidden homelessness" in rural communities.

Two notable budget additions are aimed at stabilizing housing and improving outreach:

Four Housing Stability Workers transitioned from pilot to permanent full-time positions (\$381,045; 1.99% increase).

Two Community Initiatives Coordinators focused on outreach in Brantford's downtown core and across rural encampments in Brant County (\$201,629; 1.05% increase).

Combined, these positions represent a \$582,674 investment—a 3.04% impact on the overall operating budget.

County Councillor Christine Garneau supported the new positions, stressing that prevention saves money in the long run.

"Investing in support workers who provide earlier intervention and specialized responses improves outcomes and reduces longer-term dependence on social services," she said in a social media post last week following the shared services meeting September 3rd. "Once a person becomes truly homeless, the costs of re-

sponding escalate to \$50,000 to \$70,000 annually across emergency sheltering, healthcare, incarceration, and social services."

Garneau added that rural homelessness is often less visible than in urban centres, with residents relying on informal supports that don't lead to stable housing. "While I am always cautious about adding expenditures, I supported the creation of full-time support workers because this represents a direct service increase within the County that will quickly return on our collective investment," she said.

Garneau also clarified that the County's 11.36% increase in social service contributions should not be confused with the property tax levy. "The Social Services Budget is only one driver of the County's overall operating budget," she said.

Social services cover a wide spectrum in Brantford-Brant, including:

Children's Services and Early Years: childcare oversight, special needs supports, and Indigenous-led programming.

Family and Income Stability: delivery of Ontario Works and discretionary benefits.

Housing: management of more than 1,300 municipally owned or managed housing units, subsidies, and affordable housing development.

Homelessness: oversight of shelters, encampment outreach, and federally mandated programs such as "Reaching Home."

Juniper Dining Co. brings French-inspired flavours and riverside views to downtown Paris



David Powell, Chef Andrea Legacey, Brandon Legacey and Mayor David Bailey celebrated the official opening of Juniper Dining Co. in downtown Paris on August 31. The French Lyonnaise-inspired bistro, located at 7 Grand River Street North, welcomed guests with hors d'oeuvres before launching dinner service featuring its signature beef wellingtons. Diners are already praising Juniper's riverside patio as Paris' best new dining spot.

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Public asked to weigh in on new Brant hospital site

PARIS INDEPENDENT STAFF

Staff Contribution

The task force charged with finding a location for a new Brant Community Healthcare System (BCHS) hospital has launched a public consultation to help shape the criteria used to evaluate possible sites.

Residents of Brantford-Brant, Six Nations of the Grand River, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, and surrounding communities are being asked to complete an online survey that will guide the process.

The survey, available at www.hospitalsurvey.ca until Oct. 3, takes about 10 to 15 minutes to complete and is offered in English and French.

“This is an important moment for our community,” said Don Shilton, chair of the site identification task force. “The decision on where to locate a new hospital will shape health care in this region for many years. We want to hear from as many people as possible about what factors matter most when determining the best site. Every voice will help inform this process and strengthen the fairness and transparency of our work.”

Feedback from the public will be considered alongside input from TeamBCHS, First Nations and local Indigenous communities, subject matter experts and the Ministry of Health. Those perspectives will be used to finalize the criteria for evaluating land submissions.

Once criteria are confirmed, a public call for land will be issued later this fall. Each submission will be reviewed using the same set of standards, with a site recommendation expected by spring 2026. BCHS says the project comes at a critical time as Brantford and area continue to experience rapid population growth.

As part of its broader “Reimagine BCHS” initiative, the system says the new hospital will provide modern infrastructure to meet current and future health-care needs.

More information about the project is available at www.ReimagineBCHS.ca. Input or questions can also be sent to reimaginebchs@bchsys.org.

BCHS operates Brantford General Hospital, which provides acute care services, and The Willett in Paris, which offers urgent care. It serves Brantford, Brant County, Six Nations of the Grand River, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and surrounding areas.

Weekend Quiz

By Jake Grant

1. What is the highest possible score the can be achieved on the SATs?
2. What is the birthstone for September?
3. How much is a carat in grams?
4. What is a male turkey called?
5. In what city does Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade take place?
6. Manhattan is not a city. It is a what?
7. What does the acronym GPA stand for?
8. Where does The Boots and Hearts Music Festival take place?
9. The mandible and the maxilla make up what bone?
10. Which has the thickest fur of any mammal?

This week's answers are found on pg. 19

Afro-CariBrant Festival returns with theme ‘Our Roots. Our Rhythm. Our Future’

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

The Afro-CariBrant Festival returned this past weekend, bigger and stronger than ever, expanding from a one-day celebration in its first two years to a two-day cultural showcase in 2025.

Organizers say the growth is proof of the community’s embrace of the event, which celebrates the African, Caribbean and Black (ACB) culture through music, food, art and storytelling. In 2024, the festival drew 4,022 attendees. This year, attendance records were broken on opening day alone.

“On Saturday we had already recorded 4,000 attendees,” said festival co-founder Tobi Adedayo. Both the feedback and turnout have been positively overwhelming. After extending the festival to two days this year, people are already asking for more.

The weekend featured live performances, drumming circles, dance, arts and crafts, a kids’ zone and a wide variety of food vendors. Vendors were carefully curated to reflect the diversity of African and Caribbean traditions.

“It’s about having proper vendors that will cater to the community,” Adedayo said. “The Afro-CariBrant Festival is about showing the diverse delicacies of the many countries in the African continent.”

For organizers, the event is about more than entertainment. It is also about creating understanding and connection.

“The purpose of the event is exposing people to new culture and celebrating culture,” said Adedayo. “It’s what you don’t know that you are afraid of. But once you begin to see and you understand the culture there is more understanding of cultural differences.”

Festival organizer Essay Folami explained that the roots of Afro-CariBrant lie in a desire to give back.

“It originated from our for-profit business. We run Darmont Entertainment.. We run an events management incorporated,” Folami said. “We wanted to give back to the community and that is how we gave back through Darmont GivesBack. It’s how we support charity in the community. What better way of impacting our community if people know each other? If you know where I’m from, if you know each other’s culture you’ll learn to respect each. And that is how Afro-CariBrant Festival came to be.”

Darmont GivesBack began as the charitable arm of Darmont Entertainment and now stands as its own organization. The festival is one of its flagship initiatives, but the organization runs several other programs to support families and entrepreneurs locally and abroad.

The grassroots organization is rooted in empowerment, equity and cultural celebration, working to uplift under-represented groups through education, mentorship, and support programs.

- Among its initiatives are:
- **CoB-NISH (County of Brant – Newcomer Integration Support Hub):** Helps newcomers build roots through orientation, wraparound services, mentorship and access to local resources.
 - **PluggedIn Brant:** A business development platform that supports Black-owned and newcomer-led businesses with mentorship, funding pathways and visibility in the local market.
 - **R.O.O.T.S. (Raising Our Offspring Together for Success):** An educational parent support hub for ACB families, providing workshops, mentorship and wellness supports to help parents navigate the school system and advocate for their children.

Folami highlighted the R.O.O.T.S. program, which supports ACB parents and children in Brant, Brantford and neighbouring communities.

“Roots is our way of supporting the African Caribbean Black community in the County of Brant, Brantford and neighbouring areas,” Folami said. “It takes a village to raise a child, that kind of family support. Roots is geared towards providing stability and support for parents, their children.”

Beyond Canada, Darmont GivesBack also funds scholarships and supports medical missions in Africa.

For Adedayo and Folami, who both live in Paris, the Afro-CariBrant Festival represents the culmination of their efforts to create space for culture, understanding and unity in the community.



(CASANDRA TURNBULL PHOTO)

Afro-CariBrant Festival organizers Tobi Adedayo and Essay Folami, both residents of Paris, celebrate another record-breaking year for the two-day cultural event that showcases African, Caribbean and Black heritage through music, food, art and community. Behind the scenes, it takes nearly 50 volunteers to run this success festival, some are pictured above.



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EDITORIAL

Growth is inevitable – How we manage it matters most



Buster Population Sign

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

Paris is no stranger to growth. That much is clear from the recent community debate sparked by one of our contributor's articles and the thoughtful letters to the editor it inspired. Both letters make a critical point: growth in Paris today is happening at a pace unlike anything in our modern history, and how we respond will shape the town for decades to come.

The data leaves little room for doubt. As Rob Hunter, a Western University professor, pointed out, Paris is growing nearly four times faster than its historical average. From 2011 to 2021 alone, the town added 3,193 residents — a 27% increase in just ten years. That is the largest population surge Paris has seen in 150 years. The numbers don't lie: the pace of growth today is indeed unprecedented.

Yet, numbers only tell part of the story. Growth is not experienced in statistics but in the daily lives of residents. As Jacquelin Henry reminded us, what feels like progress to some — “empty fields transforming into bustling neighbourhoods” — to others feels like loss: farmland paved over, traffic congestion mounting, and once-distinct neighbourhoods being filled with rows of cookie-cutter houses. These perceptions matter, because they shape how communities respond to change.

Councillor Steve Howes said it plainly: growth in a beautiful town just 100 kilo-

metres from one of North America's largest cities is inevitable. The real questions before us are: What is acceptable growth? How should it be managed? And are we truly prepared?

To answer those, we must first acknowledge an important truth: the development we see rising today was approved decades ago. The subdivisions that are now filling in our fields and roadways were given the green light by councils more than twenty years ago. At the time, there was little foresight into how infrastructure, transportation, schools, and vital services would support this influx. Today's council inherits that legacy, tasked with managing the consequences of past decisions while staring down the reality of continued growth mandated by the province.

That is why the conversation sparked by Rosemary's article is so valuable. Agree or disagree with her optimistic perspective — that we cannot stop growth, so we must get on board — her words lit a fire. People debated, argued, and reflected on what kind of community Paris should become. That dialogue is the heart of local journalism: creating space for conversation.

But conversation must lead to planning. Growth is not inherently good or bad; it is what we make of it. If left unmanaged, it risks eroding the very character that makes Paris unique. If guided thoughtfully, it can bring jobs, services, and amenities that strengthen our community.

The lesson from the past is clear: decisions made today will shape Paris for the

next 20 years. Let us not repeat the mistake of approving growth without a roadmap for how to sustain it. Infrastructure must keep pace, schools must be built, transportation must be improved, and most of all,

the small-town identity of Paris must be protected even as we welcome new neighbours.

Growth is inevitable — but the way we grow is a choice.

Letters to the Editor

Letter writer pens an apology noting a lesson learned

Dear Editor:

I would like to thank data scientist and Western University Professor Rob Hunter (Letters to the Editor September 3/25) for correcting my wildly erroneous interpretation of the 'Statistics Canada' population data for Paris, ON.

I was clearly out of my league on this

one and learned something in the process: stay in your lane and run things by people who clearly know better and have the courage to call people out publicly when any data is misinterpreted.

Thanks again for bringing this matter to my attention, Professor Hunter!

Rosemary Rich

Why comparing past and present growth isn't apples to apples

Dear Editor:

Re: "Is Paris really growing too fast?"

Rosemary Rich would have you believe not. She told a story, but she wasn't comparing apples with apples.

In the chart she offered as proof, statics were gathered haphazardly. Here are the facts.

The first two entries have a 30-year span, compared with the chart from 1871-2001 which is in 10 year increments. On that basis it does not comply with the rest of the data collected and should be excluded.

Then after 2001 the rate of collection of data changed. I don't know why, but it skews the interpretation. And simply crossing out 2006 and 2016 is not sufficient.

The 'Num Change' in 2006 has to be added to the 'Num Change' in 2011 and then the numbers are crunched.

The population from 2001 to 2011 increased by 1882 people, a 19.05% change over 10 years. The population from 2011 to 2021 increased by 3193 people, a 27.14% change in 10 years.

Ms. Rich's claims are no longer substantiated by facts.

- 1841-1871 not relevant.
- 2011-2021 is the largest increase in population in 150 years.

"Why Growth Feels Different Today"

When feelings are interjected into a debate, the points of the argument are subjective. No right. No wrong.

Ms. Rich stated, 'empty fields transform into bustling neighbourhoods.' That's one way to look at it. I saw FARM fields being paved over by unattractive town houses, lots of them, no character, no individuality, no curb appeal. Sad.

And don't forget traffic congestion, the price of growth, right?

"The Psychology of Perception"

We shouldn't fixate on crowding and noise, that's the price of new jobs and improved infrastructure. Let's look at infrastructure. A typical one-million-gallon water tower can supply 10,000 people. Let's say, come 2031 there is a 27.14% increase in population. That's 4059 more people, and in 2041 another 5161 people. Nearly 10,000 people are added to the census in 15 years because it's already 2025.

So, what's being improved, or is Paris just keeping up?

"Context Matters"

You're darned right. We will complain and we will adapt.

Jacquelin Henry, a resident of Paris

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Letters to the Editor

Councillors urge rethink as Brant delays green bin rollout to 2034

Delaying green bins until 2034 seen as missed chance to cut emissions, save landfill space and reduce costs

Dear Editor:

This past week, at the County of Brant's Policy Development Committee meeting, the County's Solid Waste Management Master Plan (SWMMP) passed with a vote of eight in favour, two opposed. This master plan will be potentially ratified at the County's council meeting on September 23rd. Councillor Bell and myself opposed the SWMMP as it is currently written, and just minutes before the master plan was approved, I had proposed an amendment to the master plan that failed (with only Councillor Bell and myself voting in favour).

So, this I am sure, begs the question: what failure was there in the Solid Waste Management Master Plan such that I could not support it? The plan as written will not bring the County of Brant into the twenty first century with an organic waste program until 2034, when we are required by provincial legislation due to projected population growth. I believe that this represents an irresponsible abdication of political leadership to allow ourselves to not undergo this much needed transformation of our waste management program a full decade past when we had initially proposed to in our 2024 contract (had it not been due to a tumultuous market as a result of the blue bin transition causing our RFP to fail to get more than one bidder).

One of the things I heard often at the door three years ago during the 2022 election, and many times since when communicating with residents of the County is why we had not yet implemented an organic waste program. After all, in 2019, the County declared a Climate emergen-

cy and indicated that it wished to take climate action seriously (despite this, our Climate Action Plan only just passed last year). The reasoning, as I later learned, would be that implementing a County Wide program whilst we were still responsible as well for blue bin collection would result in additional vehicles being required to collect the waste, meaning due to our rural layout, the additional greenhouse gases produced would cause minimal environmental improvements.

However, since that point in time, we are no longer responsible for blue bin collection as a municipality, and other municipal peers such as Kawartha Lakes have implemented programs which only collect organic waste within urban boundaries while providing rural residents with subsidized composters. There is now a wealth of options available to the County to sustainably provide a green bin program to urban residents, to divert waste from our landfill, both reducing greenhouse gases and extending the useful life of our landfill. Thus, when we were composing our RFP for a new solid waste contract in 2023, we included a requirement to the bidder to provide us with an option for organic waste collection within urban areas.

So, if this is the case, and there are options available to us with peers who have implemented them to pull from, why is it that the recommendation from staff did not include organic waste collection for another eight and a half years and two full terms of council from now? From discussing with staff, the primary motivators were the following:

The short timeline from the approval of

this master plan to producing an RFP in Q1 of 2026 (seven months)

And the upfront capital cost to acquire the new equipment (approximately 1.8 million for urban-wide collection).

I unfortunately do not agree with the staff recommendation here for the following reasons. To address the first point, I will refer back to the Kawartha Lakes example I previously referenced. The council of Kawartha Lakes first passed a motion directing staff to compile an RFP for Organic waste collection in March 2024, which was then put out to the public in July 2024 and then implemented at the start of this year in January 2025 (seven months from the RFP). It is thus, precedent that this scale of works can be completed within the time frame for the County of Brant to have a new waste contract that includes an organic waste collection program for 2027 when our current extended contract expires.

To address the second point, I appreciate why staff have given this direction given our approved Strategic Plan from 2024, which had been reconfigured to bump "Economic and Financial Resilience" to be the foremost priority of the County and bumped down "Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action" to our lowest priority highlighted in our Strategic Plan. Thus, our Operations staff were indeed following the previous council direction, and the failure inherent in the recommended Solid Waste Management Program does not lie with them, but as I highlighted at the beginning of this article, lies at the feet of council. During the discussion of our Strategic Plan, I highlighted my concern with prioritizing finances above all other priorities, especially climate action, which has been actualized in this recommendation.

The prioritization of short-term fiscal stability at the cost of our long-term well-being as a community is the root cause of many issues plaguing us today, from the climate crisis itself to housing affordability and homelessness, and our flailing healthcare system. It is also the cause of our nearly billion dollars of spending in our asset management plan over the next ten years, of which is largely deferred costs from decades of long-term financial mismanagement from council past to prioritize having easier conversations at the door with below rate of inflation or zero percent increase, while increasing service levels.

It also behooves me to highlight that climate action IS fiscally responsible, even with steep upfront costs. Investing now in an organic waste program to divert waste from our landfill has significant cost savings potential not immedi-

ately obvious with the projected capital and operational cost increases.

Studies have shown that organic waste typically represents 30% of household waste by weight, and with escalating costs in managing landfills and limited space in our landfill, this represents a serious waste diversion opportunity which will drastically improve the lifespan of our landfill. As a result of this and other factors, for every dollar spent on food waste prevention and reduction, represents a fourteen dollar return on that investment, which is a return of investment ratio that is hard to compete with. This diversion could represent anywhere from 2,400 to 4,300 tons of organic waste diverted, or up to 6,600 cubic metres of landfill space saved annually. This stands to be an effective twenty percent expansion to the lifespan of our landfill and a potential over ten million dollars in landfill costs over the next 30 years.

Furthermore, as I've discussed previously from my experience at various workshops at the municipal conferences I have attended, the impact of climate change has drastic implications for the cost of maintaining and building infrastructure to the tune of billions of dollars annually. It is in our best financial interest to minimize the impacts of climate change by taking immediate and meaningful climate action, like diverting organic waste from our general waste stream.

So, you may be asking, what can be done with the Policy Development Committee having approved the staff recommendation, which is due to be ratified on September 23rd? Well, the council has the freedom to make any changes to committee recommendations at a council meeting, so with enough political and community pressure, we can try to correct the course here. I encourage you to reach out to your elected officials.

Also reach out to your friends, family, and peers in our community and organize to come to our council meeting on September 23rd to express your concerns and ask council to reconsider the decisions made this past Tuesday. It is my strong belief that we must be taking climate action seriously as per our commitment made in our Climate Action Plan, and delaying organic waste collection until we are dragged kicking and screaming by the province in a decade's time represents a failure to fulfill our climate action commitments. I encourage folks to reach out to me at lukas.oakley@brant.ca if you have any comments, questions, or concerns.

By Lucas Oakley

Paris Ward 2 Councillor

Long time resident weighs in on population statistics

Dear Editor:

I've lived in the Paris area for about 40 years and can certainly see the growth you refer to in your article of 2025-08-27.

However, there is an issue with the data that you present in your table. Except for the first two lines in the table (1841 to 1871), all table entries are in 10 year increments with the exception the 2006 and 2016 entries. This is a convenient way to show the data however the 2006 and 2016 rows should not be included as this goes counter to the "each decade" data. If 2006 is omitted, the growth from 2001 to 2011 (which would be consistent with the previous rows) would show a

change of 1,882 people or an increase of 19.05%. Similarly, if 2016 is omitted, the growth from 2011 to 2021 would show a change of 3,193 people or an increase of 27.14%. The decade from 2011 to 2021 is the LARGEST percentage growth in the population, exceeding the 1901 to 1911 decade.

Hopefully this can be clarified if anyone is actually interested in these numbers.

On an unrelated note, I really enjoy your historical columns. You folks are doing a great job with the community paper! Keep up the good work!

Kathy Usik, Paris, Ont.

Enzo Graziano crowned Grand Champion at Paris Fair Baby Show

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

The Paris Fair's annual Baby Show drew about 65 youngsters to the J.H. Buck Exhibition Centre on Labour Day, bringing families and friends together for one of the fair's most endearing traditions.

The line to register began before 9 a.m. as parents, grandparents and siblings arrived to cheer on the babies competing in 10 age classes, along with special themed categories such as Midway Clown and Beach Baby.

Organizers Kathryn Wight and Ashley Cloverdale kept the show running smoothly, grouping contestants in lots of 10 for judging by Molly Luke, Jennifer Platz and Chris Whelan.

The crowd's attention peaked when all class winners returned to the stage for the final round, where 17-month-old Enzo Graziano was crowned Grand Champion.

Enzo, the son of Margarida Gamo and Matteo Graziano, charmed the judges with his bright smile and boundless energy. His father, currently deployed with the Canadian Armed Forces in Latvia, was unable to attend, but Gamo was surrounded by friends who offered their support as she dashed after her son to keep him from running off the stage.

"He smiled readily and seemed to enjoy

the whole event," said Margaret Collins, who photographed the event.

Each winner received a gift bag filled with items donated by the Homecraft Division and local sponsors. Enzo also received a cash prize and a deluxe gift box.

The Baby Show has long been a staple of the Paris Fair, which dates back to 1858. While midway rides and concerts may draw big crowds, the Baby Show remains one of the fair's most cherished contests, celebrating family, community and the next generation of fairgoers.



First-ever Paris Fair Baby Show Grand Champion, 82-year-old Brian Sayles, shares a special moment with this year's newest Grand Champion, 17-month-old Enzo Graziano, following the September 1st competition at the J.H. Buck Exhibition Centre.



(MARGARET COLLINS PHOTOS)

Grand Champion Enzo Graziano is joined on stage by his mom, Margarida Gamo, Paris Agricultural Society president John Stewart, the Paris Fair Ambassador Grace Aulsebrook-Smith, and Baby Show judges Molly Luke, Jennifer Platz and Chris Whelan following Monday's competition at the J.H. Buck Exhibition Centre.

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(MICHELLE MALVASO PHOTO)

A curious llama strikes a pose for fairgoers inside the petting zoo at the Paris Fair, one of the most popular stops for families over Labour Day weekend.



(MICHELLE MALVASO PHOTO)

Stuart Walker entertains the crowd during the The Reklaws Sunday night Fair performance drawing a massive crowd for one of the weekend's most anticipated concerts.



(MICHELLE MALVASO PHOTO)

A six-horse hitch thunders into the show ring during the Heavy Horse competition at the Paris Fair, drawing cheers from the crowd with their synchronized power and precision.



(PARIS AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY PHOTO)

During Friday night's demolition derby at the Paris Fair, organizers paid tribute to Ryan Robinson and his family. Robinson, who passed away earlier this year, was a familiar face at the derby, and many drivers dedicated their runs in his honour — forever 212.



(MICHELLE MALVASO PHOTO)

The Reklaws are a Canadian country music duo from North Dumfries, Ontario, formed in 2012. Pictured is Jenna and Stuart Walker.



(MICHELLE MALVASO PHOTO)

A young exhibitor presents their sheep for judging during the livestock competitions at the Paris Fair, showcasing the hard work and care that goes into raising show animals.



(MICHELLE MALVASO PHOTO)

A young handler leads a Clydesdale into the ring during the horse show at the Paris Fair, where participants proudly presented their heavy horses for judging.



(MICHELLE MALVASO PHOTO)

The Roy-Alia Clydesdales make a grand entrance in the Heavy Horse Hitch Class at the Paris Fair, showcasing both the strength of the team and the skill of their drivers.



(MICHELLE MALVASO PHOTO)

A freestyle motocross rider soars high above the track during a daring stunt performance at the Paris Fair, thrilling the crowd with mid-air tricks.

HISTORIC PARIS

PARIS PAST: The Enduring Legacy of Jumbo's last visit to the County of Brant 140 years ago this week

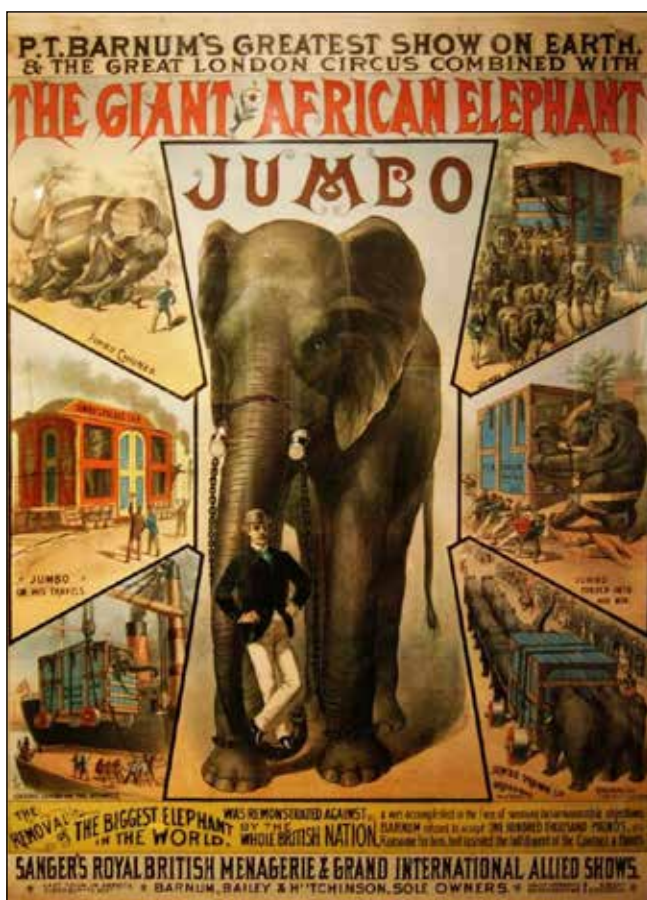


By Chris Whelan

Jumbo the elephant, a figure familiar to many of us for his association with St. Thomas, Ontario, has recently taken center stage once again in a unique commemoration. This summer, news of a special Jumbomania exhibit in St. Thomas was unveiled, marking the 140th anniversary of Jumbo's untimely passing. As I ventured into the depths of "Paris' Past," I was surprised to learn that remarkably, Jumbo had graced the County of Brant just a few days before his tragic accident in St. Thomas.

140 years ago on September 12th, the town of Paris found itself intricately linked to the legacy of Jumbo, a colossal African elephant of unparalleled size and fame. The year was 1885, and the air was thick with anticipation as news spread of Jumbo's impending visit to nearby Brantford, a spectacle that would draw crowds from far and wide including many from our town.

The Barnum and London Circus, renowned for its gran-



(ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO PHOTO)

P.T. Barnum poster ca 1885 with JUMBO the elephant the world's first super star and many other circus images were plastered all over town



(ARCHIVES OF ONTARIO PHOTO)

Crews hauled the poles and canvas from the train and had the big tent and side tents up before noon.

deur and showmanship, had proclaimed Jumbo's arrival as a momentous event – The posters plastered across towns beckoned patrons to witness the spectacle, promising a show unlike any other, featuring a triple circus in three grand rings, a menagerie of exotic beasts, and the star of the show himself, Jumbo – the wonder of the age and the darling of children far and wide.

Brantford, with its modest population of just over 12,000 souls, swelled to double its size as enthusiasts converged on the fairgrounds in West Brantford. The day of Jumbo's appearance was a carnival of sights and sounds, with a grand street parade heralding his arrival, and afternoon and evening performances that left local audiences spellbound.

The Expositor, in its review of the event, lauded the show as the "finest, most complete and extraordinary" spectacle ever witnessed under one canvas. The grand entry, the mesmerizing ring performances, and the palpable excitement in the air all contributed to a day that would be etched in the memories of all those who were present.

Amidst the throngs that filled the tents to capacity, one figure stood out – Jumbo, the gentle giant whose fame transcended borders. Born in the French Sudan and later finding a home in the Royal Zoological Gardens in London, England, Jumbo had captured the hearts of the masses with his docile nature and endearing interactions with children.

Phineas T. Barnum, the visionary showman behind the Barnum and London Circus, recognized Jumbo's star quality and acquired him in 1882 for a sum that raised eyebrows – \$10,000, a princely amount in those times. The acquisition sparked protests in Britain, where Jumbo had attained the status of a national treasure, but Barnum's conviction in the elephant's allure proved unshakable.

Jumbo's last visit to Brantford, marked by his voracious appetite for hay, bread, oats, and fruits, culminated in a tragedy that shook the world. Just three days after his appearance here, on a railway siding just an hour west of us in St. Thomas, Jumbo's life was abruptly cut short by a

tragic accident involving a freight train. The news of his demise reverberated across continents, leaving a void in the hearts of those who had witnessed his majesty.

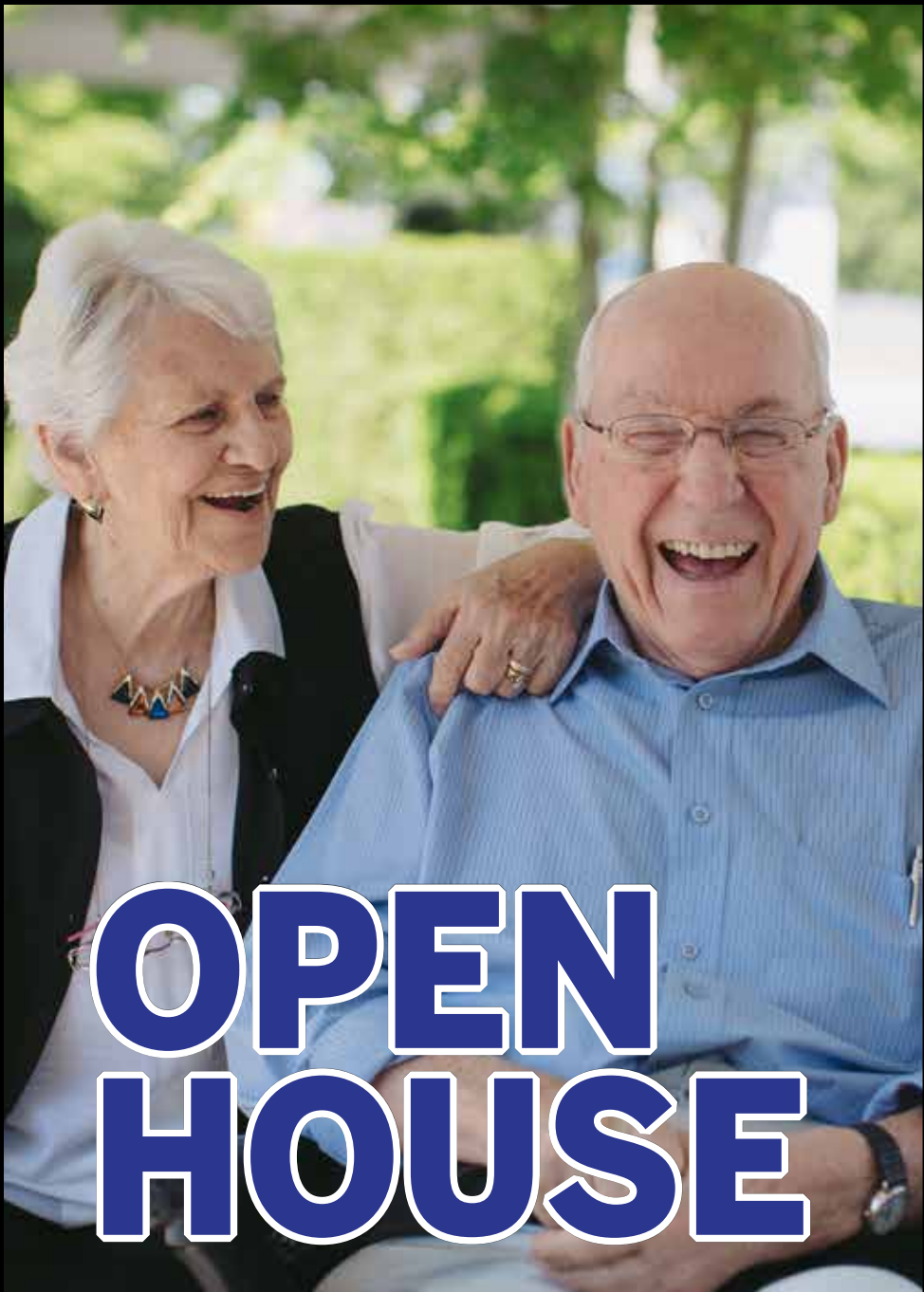
As the dust settled on that fateful day, Jumbo's legacy lived on. His hide found a new home at Tufts College in Medford, Massachusetts, while his massive skeleton became a prized exhibit at the circus and eventually found its permanent home at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

The memory of the gentle giant lingered in the minds of all who had been touched by his presence. As we reflect on this shared history, it is truly remarkable to consider the profound connection our town and the County of Brant hold with one of the world's earliest global icons. To think that we were among the last to bask in the presence of the awe-inspiring Jumbo, a colossal figure whose legacy continues to resonate through the corridors of time, speaks volumes about the enduring impact of his visit. In honouring his memory and the bond we share with this remarkable creature, we celebrate a moment in history that has etched itself into our community, forever intertwining our story with that of the legendary Jumbo.



(BRANTFORD EXPOSITOR PHOTO)

This picture, taken on September 15, 1885 show's Jumbo's body lying beside the Grand Trunk Railway right-of-way in St. Thomas, where it was hurled by a train



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Canadian Tire	Paris Branch--County of Brant Public Library	Walter's Greenhouses & Garden Centre
Cobblestone Public House	PrimaCare Community Family Health Team	Wright's Variety Store
Cowan Community Health Hub Pharmacy.	Queensview Retirement Community	Willett Urgent Care Centre
Detour Café Paris	Rexall Pharmacy	BURFORD
Dog-Eared Cafe	Royal Canadian Legion Branch 29	County of Brant Library - Burford
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Zynnia Restaurant Opens in Paris

RUBYYY JONES

Cultural Correspondent

Paris' blossoming restaurant landscape has welcomed a stylish newcomer: Zynnia Indian Dine & Drink on Rest Acres Road. Offering an elevated take on Indian cuisine, the restaurant blends bold flavours with polished service and a sophisticated setting, giving food lovers plenty to celebrate close to home.

Zynnia soft launched their establishment just before Labour Day and have been welcoming guests, dignitaries and friends to sample their fabulous fusion menu and handcrafted drinks. The menu is varied and features small plates in addition to their appetizer and main course options, and the fusion factor is in the innovation and modification of traditional dishes for a range of palettes.

Zynnia is owned by husband-and-wife team, Aman and Omkar Deep, who fell in love with Paris when they first moved here, and are passionate about flavourful and accessible Indian Cuisine.

"We wanted to make our menu inviting for many kinds of people and also, we wanted the fusion of our menu to represent and honour the delicious options and flavours available in Canada too. We have created a few dishes specifically for people who love all the flavour and complexity of Indian food but can't handle the spice - any dish can have the spice level adjusted in fact," they shared.

"We wanted to cater to those who love Indian cuisine and wanted to pair it with the fine dining experience; we're excited to be offering something that is needed by the community and will, hopefully, be enjoyed very much."

With so many tempting options on the menu, narrowing down our choices was no easy task. We settled on a shared appetizer and main dishes with sides, guided by our attentive and knowledgeable server, who also suggested a complimentary small



The Canape Chaat at Zynnia features a house-baked tart shell filled with Granny Smith apples, Moong sprouts, and other crisp components.

plate to sample. To our delight, the experience began with an outstanding amuse-bouche—beautifully presented and bursting with flavour.

Those bursts of flavour were so stimulating and satisfying, the amuse-bouche alone blew my mind with its balance of elements and compact complexity. The Crispy Yogurt Globes, which are panipuri shells - a popular street food filled with layers of chutneys and rich yogurt - almost served as a whole meal in one bite.

The menu offers a wide range of meat and vegetarian dishes, from traditional favourites to creative fusion plates, so we decided to sample a little of both. For our appetizers we had the Chicken Tikka Tacos, which were fresh, tasty and had a satisfyingly crunch. The Canape Chaat, which is a house baked tart shell filled with Granny Smith apples, Moong sprouts and other yummy and crisp components, including in-house made pineapple 'caviar' was a dazzling starter that delivered both in pre-



The Canadian Korma, a mild and creamy dish featuring slow-roasted chicken, is one of Zynnia's signature mains.



(RUBYYY JONES PHOTOS)

Owners of Zynnia Indian Dine & Drink, Aman and Omkar Deep, welcome guests to their new fine-dining restaurant on Rest Acres Road in Paris.

sentation and flavour.

For our main course, we wanted something fusion and something more classic so we went with Lamb Changezi, Zynnia's take on an Old Delhi Changezi, and the Canadian Korma, a very mild and creamy dish with slow roasted chicken. The latter was specifically created with sensitive tummies in mind and would be the perfect choice for someone who likes Indian food but can't - or no longer can - handle spicy dishes. Both dishes were amazing, and we recommend you get the Pulua rice with whatever you end up ordering because it was phenomenal too.

Service is one of the elements of fine dining that can sometimes be overlooked. While it's always friendly, true fine dining

demands more—and Zynnia's team delivered. From their knowledge of the menu to polished etiquette, they managed to blend small-town hospitality with the grace of an upscale dining room.

With food so flavourful, we happily went home with enough leftovers for a second dinner and probably someone's lunch. Layer upon layer of flavour and care made the evening unforgettable, and it's a delight to see such an experience flourishing in Paris.

Zynnia - Indian Dine & Drink is now ready to welcome you, open seven days a week from 12 pm to 10 pm, with options for dining in, take out and even catering for your next party or event. Follow them on social media, @zynniaofficial or visit www.zynnia.ca

The Paris Independent SPORTS



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Paris course shines as 64 junior disc golfers compete over Labour Day

GEORGE LE GRESLEY

Sports Reporter

The Augusta National Golf Course, where the Masters golf tournament is played and whose holes are adorned with pine trees, must have the same aroma as Paris' Dwayne Bereziuk Memorial Disc Golf Course; at least that's the imagery that ran in my imagination. Instead of pro golfers and an extensive gallery of fans, over Labour Day weekend, there were 64 amateur youth disc golfers and their families for the Ontario Disc Golf Junior Championship tournament.

During the COVID pandemic, I thought I would try the game and bought a beginner set of discs. As I did in my youth and beyond, playing with a Frisbee, I threw my discs with no accuracy or distance, eventually quitting when I lost my so-called driver in the bush. This game requires some skills that I couldn't develop, as every shot attempt went the distance of a paper plate.



Brooklyn O'Krafka launches a powerful drive at the Dwayne Bereziuk Memorial Disc Golf Course in Paris, finishing five under par to qualify for the Canadian Championships.

The competition is comprised of boys and girls, whose ages range from 6 to 18 years old. All the players were friendly and eager to practice and play in the tournament, but more importantly, to reconnect with their friends. One competitor was eight-year-old Lillian Booth-Salmon, who, with her dad Kyle, who also serves as her caddie and coach, made the trip from Coburg to Paris. For Lillian, happiness was seeing and playing with her friends she had met in previous tournaments, as well as competing.

Then there is Paris' own Brooklyn O'Krafka, who won a Silver Medal at the Professional Disc Golf Association Junior World Championship in Emporia, Kansas. Entering Grade 9 at Paris District High, Brooklyn has been playing the game since the COVID-19 pandemic, as a way to get out and get some fresh air and exercise. As time went on, she began to improve her game. With encouragement from her mother, Jaimie, and her dad, Trevor, who is also her caddie, she sought expert coaching and even installed a disc golf target basket in their backyard to improve her putting. Brooklyn finished the tournament with a five under par score, qualifying her for the Canadian Championships in Port Hope, Ontario, starting September 12. I'm sure that the coach of the Paris High Ultimate Frisbee team, who went to Ontario High championships last season, will be making a recruitment visit!

On August 31st, the Green Lane course hosted the Paris Memorial Golf Tournament, which hosted the adult players. The Memorial is to honour the memory of Dwayne Bereziuk, who was a driving force in getting Paris' disc golf course built.

Here are some of the Paris entrants and their results:

Jennifer Snow came in first in the Women's Pro +40 category with a score of 4 under par. Mark Cizek finished third in the Men's Pro 50+ category.

Brooklyn O'Krafka played again on Sunday and was 6 shots under par in the Women's Amateur category and Daniel Gray came in 6th in the Mixed Amateur 40+ category.

Shelley Kingma-Kitchen came in second in the Women's Amateur 50+ category. Zachary Barlow was in a four-way tie for second place, and Corey Lehmann came in seventh in the Mixed Amateur 2 category.

For more information on how you can participate in this sport, contact the Paris Disc Golf Club by email at paris-discgolfclub@gmail.com.



Paris teen Brooklyn O'Krafka, fresh off a silver medal at the PDGA Junior World Championships, competed at her hometown course during the Ontario Junior Disc Golf Championship.



(GEORGE LE GRESLEY PHOTOS)

Eight-year-old Lillian Booth-Salmon of Cobourg and her dad, Kyle, show off some of their discs during the Ontario Junior Disc Golf Championship at Paris' Dwayne Bereziuk Memorial Disc Golf Course.

Dusters close out season with gala, gags and glory

SID LUCKMAN

Paris Independent Contributor

It must happen...all good things do come to an end. That even applies to the Dusters. Yes, September 4 marked the end of the fourth season, and yes, not a moment too soon! How on earth a hockey final game can end in a 2-2 tie is an amazing miracle but so be it! That is the way Dusters Hockey goes!

The year-end finale and gala took place at Club 221 and this year's recipients are as follows:

Overall Season MVP: Goalie Smitty. Yes, Smitty only played in the final game all yeah but gosh he was good.

Empathy man of the season: OPY

Dog of the Year: Russell

Bunyan Award: Chadlatty (one word)

Defensive defenseman: The Stam

Don't let Ryan score Award: Bruce

Farm Team call-up of the Season: Nick

I gotta get home ribbon: Jamieohhhnono

Creeping Official medal: Matt the neighbour

Gout Almighty Certificate: Ryan

Cynicism Personification Coin: JY

The Lord Giveth Medal: Ben Stevenson

The Raymond Charles Offensive Player of the Season: Derek Kewell

The Inappropriate but we understand the source Award: Kenny Muffins

Funny enough, earning a certification from Duster Hockey is as simple as showing up at the year-end Gala!

Folks, the Dusters want to thank our sponsor...The Fit Effect Gym. If you ask any of us, we'll say, you should join that gym and then join us!

Thank you also to the Paris Independent. We love local news, and you have brought that back to all of us!

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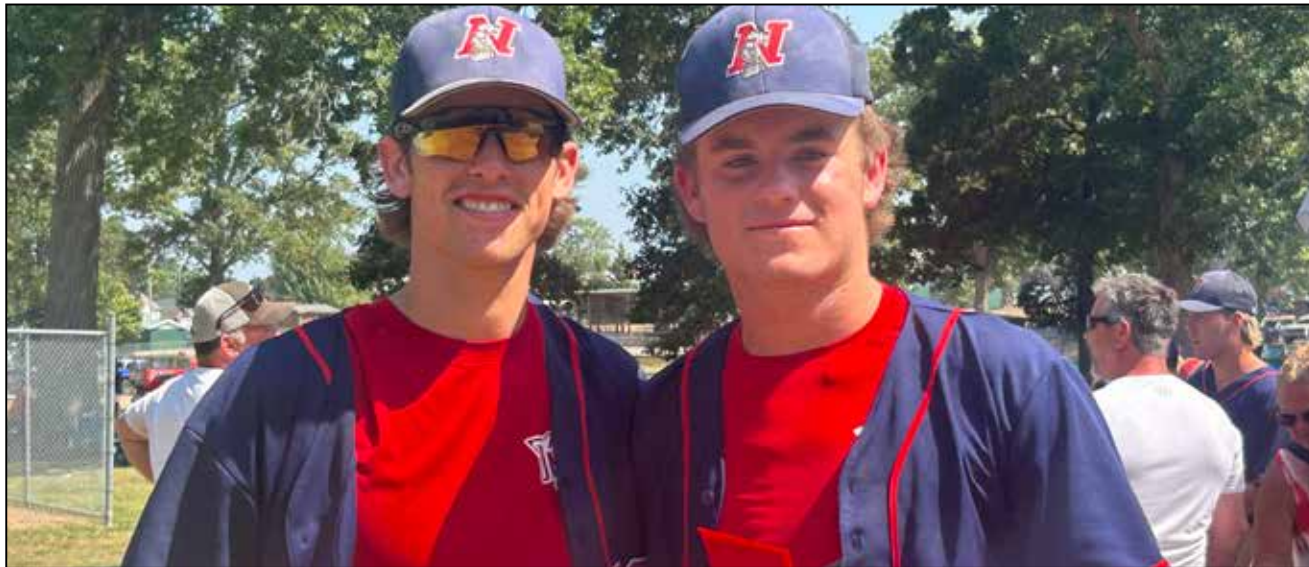
The Paris Independent

CANADIAN TIRE PARIS



ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

St. George teen wins MVP, gold at national fast pitch championship



All-Star Best Pitcher Nate Wylie of St. George, left, and All-Star Best Catcher Matt Airhart celebrate their honours at the U17 Men's Canadian Fast Pitch Championship.

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

A St. George ball player has struck gold at the national level and earned a spot on Team Canada.

Nate Wylie, a Grade 11 student at Paris District High School, helped the U17 Napanee Express capture the U17 Men's Canadian Fast Pitch Championship in August. Napanee closed out the tournament with a 13-2 win over their rival Wilmot Thunder, powered by a relentless offensive attack and steady work on the mound from Wylie.

Wylie, 16, hit .800 in the playoff round and was named the tournament's most valuable player. He was also selected as the All-Star Best Pitcher during round robin play.

"It felt nice to be recognized," Wylie said. "The final out of the game was my favourite moment — it was a pop-up, and I knew we had won gold."

The teen finished the championship

with standout numbers. He started five games and won all five, posting a 2.93 earned run average and a 1.16 WHIP. In the playoff round, he struck out 24 batters in three starts, carried a 2.77 ERA, and allowed just over one baserunner per inning. His batting average for the entire tournament was .533.

The Express faced teams from Newfoundland, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan before the gold medal match against Wilmot. Their only loss came in a tight round-robin game against Nova Scotia 1.

Wylie has been with Napanee for three years, choosing to leave St. George Minor Ball at U15 when no team was available in his age group. "The biggest turning point for me was the first year I went to a national championship with St. George," he said. "We won a bronze medal, and I knew I wanted to keep playing at the national level."

His parents, Sam and Tara Wylie,

said his skill was evident early on. "Nate was always being asked to play up with older teams," Sam said. "At 15 he was drafted by Wilmot to play U17 Nationals in New Brunswick, and this past summer he was drafted by the U20 St. George Aces to play in their national tournament in Saskatoon."

They added that behind every individual award is the work of an entire roster. While they were proud of their son for his accomplishments, they both agreed, "I think we were more excited about the team winning a Gold medal at the National level."

Tara added, "This group of players and coaches have worked hard over the years to achieve this. While individual awards are great, and definitely something to be proud of, ultimately, it's a team sport. Every player contributes. We know how hard everyone worked and were so happy for the team."

Nate credits his development to coaches, teammates and players he has competed against in KFL men's league action. He said what sets him apart is his approach on the mound, a steady mindset he leans on in big moments.

Now, the St. George pitcher is preparing for his next challenge. Wylie has been named to Team Canada's U17 squad, which will travel to Argentina in October for international play.

For younger players dreaming of reaching that level, his advice is direct. "You have to work hard," he said. "Even in winter months I am training, pitching and practicing whenever I can."



(SUBMITTED PHOTOS)

Nate Wylie of St. George delivers a pitch during the U17 Men's Canadian Fast Pitch Championship, where he was named playoff MVP and helped the Napanee Express capture gold.

Paris Duffers at Burford Golf Links

SCOOP STEWART

Paris Independent Sports Reporter

Friday August 29th Paris men's golf results...

Milkgate has been resolved:

The two parties in question... rhymes with Brownie and Dino, have fulfilled their obligation and made full payment and they are no longer on double secret probation.

MVP

Cam Stewart, was on fire last week landing 18 out of 18 fairways ... when asked about his outstanding accomplishment, he said "an old wise man told him to keep it where it's mowed!"

Winners of the milk

Congratulations are in order for the victorious pairs of Doug Sinclair and Gerry Hoogstraten, Andy Attlebery and Jason Holmes, Sam Malone and Norm Peterson, Hayden and Cameron Stewart, and Terry Brown and Dick Berg

Shot of the day

Goes to Andy Attlebery with his borrowed putter from the mini put, drained a 36-footer with his eyes closed and standing on one leg, a remarkable feat for a remarkable athlete. Dick and Marcy would be very proud.

Quote of the day

"He's not the brightest fellow; it takes him an hour and a half to watch 60 Minutes" Dino Kitchen

Best Form

Big Ferg seen in the attached photo unleashing another one of his infamous drives.

Good guy award

Goes to the gentleman I saw intervening at Wrights Variety at 4 o'clock Tuesday afternoon as a slightly intoxicated fella was picking on a disabled elderly man... great job! It's good to see people still stick their chin out and help a fellow man. And to the other piece of work, the aggressor, Dean Wormer from Animal House fame said it best "fat, drunk, and stupid is no way to go through life"

This is Scoop Stewart signing off for another week. *Always a pleasure...*



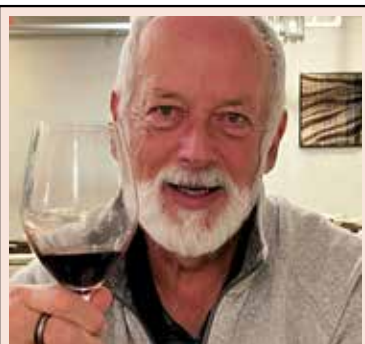
(SUBMITTED PHOTOS)

Andy Attlebery looking to the golf gods after draining a remarkable putt



Big Ferg (Pat Ferguson) in fine form

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Getting behind the scenes with the Blue Jays



By Paul Knowles

Once upon a time, long ago and sometimes far away, I was given a dream assignment: write a book about players on the Toronto Blue Jays. It was published right at the start of regular season, 1986, and it featured chapters about Jesse Barfield, Lloyd Moseby, Tony Fernandez, Willie Upshaw, Mark Eichhorn, and Kelly Gruber, among others.

I was sent to Dunedin for a week in spring training, where I got to know all these terrific athletes – and frankly, terrific people. Then back to Toronto for the weeks prior to season opening.

The book, “Home Run: The Personal Profiles of Champion Athletes,” went into two printings. The foreword to the book was contributed by Gary Carter. Like I said, a dream job.

And why, other than sentimental nostalgia, did I bring this up today? That’s because of a tour we did a couple of weeks ago – a tour of the new parts of the renovated Rogers Centre, home of today’s Blue Jays.

See, when I was hanging out with the Blue Jays, their home

was Exhibition Stadium, open to the elements, terrible seating, and occasional pre-game snow removal challenges.

Not so, today. Rogers Centre (which those of us of a certain age will always call “Skydome”) is a state-of-the-art sports stadium. We joined a pre-game tour of the place, and by and large, it was a pretty interesting experience. Tours are run all season long, several times a day. It’s not wildly expensive – the “classic tour” costs \$40 adults, \$30 seniors, \$25 kids, although you can also spring for a “pre-game tour” at twice that price, which is longer and includes batting practice, or an “ultimate pre-game tour” with a price tag well into three figures. We were hosted by Destination Toronto on the pre-game tour.

As Blue Jays fans know, Roger Centre has just undergone some major renovations. A venue that once was home to other sports apart from baseball, it is now a dedicated space, for baseball (and concerts) only. So the designers were able to change the configurations of the ballpark, and make – so they claim, I think accurately – all of the seats more suited to watching a ball game.

Now, to tell you the truth, I am of two minds about the pre-game tour. There’s a lot of good stuff, for sure. We got to see, up close, the Jays’ World Series Championship trophies. In the same room are housed the Gold Glove trophies of Vladimir Guerrero Jr., José Berriós, Vernon Wells, Devon White, Tony Fernandez and Jesse Barfield.

That’s the good news. The bad news, for the average fan, is that these key bits of memorabilia are kept in the Rogers Banner Club, accessible only to folks who have TD Premium Access. Or, to people like us, on a tour.

And that pattern was repeated throughout the tour. We saw the much-touted new wall of Blue Jay baseball cards, but it’s in the Heinz 328 Club (named for the foul pole on the first base side of the park; it’s located 328 feet from home plate, and the base of the pole is right in the wall of the club). The 328 Club is also an “exclusive” venue, open only to members who have paid extra for the privilege.

The tour takes visitors to a few other similar locations, including a very high-end corporate box. You get to see a lot of photos of famous players, and plenty of memorabilia, but at the same time, the tour gets to feel a little like a sales job: “You, too, could enjoy these amenities, at a price.”

For us, the highlight of the tour was to be on the field – although carefully corralled behind a rope – to watch Blue Jays batting practice. And while we were there, the batters up were Vlad, Bo Bichette, George Springer and Daulton Varsho. For true Jays fans, that experience was probably worth the price of admission.

We also had tickets to the game – good seats, but not in a special section. We discovered that once in the stadium for a pre-game tour (for which you also must have game tickets), you can’t leave between the tour and the game. But

again, some good news – it was Loonie Dog night, so dining out wasn’t wildly expensive. And, the Jays won, a tightly contested and exciting game.

So, bottom line – is the tour worth the money? For die-hard Jays fans, I would say, Yes. The chance to get behind the scenes and see trophies, photos, and other memorabilia (including a bat used by José Bautista in the famous bat-flipping game) is somewhere near priceless to the dedicated lover of all things Jays.

And I must confess, I did get a bit nostalgic for those days when

I could actually sit in the Exhibition Park Jays’ dugout before a game, and wander on the field with Tony, Lloyd and Jesse. But for a guy now long disconnected from the team, the tour and the game were highly enjoyable experiences in their own right.

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.



Up (relatively) close to batting practice during the pre-game tour. Bo Bichette at bat.



The wall of baseball cards in the Heinz 328 Club. (PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)



Gold Gloves won by Blue Jays: from top, left to right, Vladimir Guerrero Jr., José Berriós, Devon White, Vernon Wells, Tony Fernandez, Jesse Barfield.



One of the two World Series trophies won by the Jays.



All the bobbleheads! Note “Touch ‘em all Joe” Joe Carter, top right.

Lost over Leipzig, remembered in Paris: A call to mark our heroes' homes



NEIL EDWARDS

Paris Independent Contributor

On a bitterly cold night in February 1944, a massive contingent of 822 British and Canadian aircraft was heading across the English Channel on a bombing run over Leipzig, Germany. The operation was successful, but there were dangers for the aircrews on the way home as well. One Canadian Halifax bomber did not make the return trip to safety. Aboard was Air Gunner Neil Stewart, from Paris Ontario. His plane was either shot down or crashed due to the icy conditions. It plunged into the IJsselmeer, a bay off the coast of North Holland. All seven men aboard were killed in the crash. Neil was 20 years of

age.

But that is not the end of the story. Some time later, 13-year-old Tamme Schenk, who lived in the nearby town of Andijk, was walking along the sea dyke and discovered the body of a Canadian airman. It was the body of Neil Stewart. He reported his finding, and the German occupiers buried his body.

But that is still not the end of the story, because 13-year-old Tamme grew up, and he remained curious about that Canadian airman whose body he found so long ago. In 2004, 60 years later, he became determined to find out more about Neil Stewart from Paris. And his search was successful. He made contact with a member of the Stewart family, and then he visited with several Stewart family members in Paris. There was a photo in the old Paris Star of all of them standing together in front of the Paris cenotaph. And Tamme wanted to set Neil's family's minds at rest about his loss. Tamme said, "he has been lovingly remembered on many special occasions, and fresh flowers have been placed on his grave many a time."

That sentiment will not surprise anyone who has had the opportunity to visit

the war cemeteries in Holland, and to witness what loving care the Dutch people, even children, have shown for the graves of all the foreign soldiers who freed their county from Nazi occupation.

It is with that same sentiment—to honour the courage and sacrifice of the men and women who have served in the military, that the Homes of Heroes project was born. Many men and women from Paris have risked their lives to defend our country and our common values. And far too many of them have lost their lives doing so. And others have risked their lives, not to fight in war but to prevent war, as peacekeepers. They also deserve our remembrance and respect. The goal of Homes of Heroes is to place a sign in front of every house in Paris where a soldier lived while they served, or lives in now. We need to preserve their stories before they are lost. Do you have a story? Then please share it at info@homesofheroes.com. These signs can be like Tomme's fresh flowers. They will ensure that our heroes will not be forgotten. If you have questions, please email them to neiledwards51@gmail.com.



New crossing guards added at Cobblestone roundabout for back-to-school safety

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

Parents and students heading back to Cobblestone Elementary School this fall will notice a new safety measure in place at one of Paris' busiest intersections.

The County of Brant has added a staffed school crossing at Rest Acres Road and Cobblestone Drive, directly at the roundabout. Crossing guards will be on duty before and after school to help children and families cross safely.

The move comes after parents raised concerns last year when the Grand Erie District School Board removed busing for some children living in the Long Lane, Daugaard Avenue and Court Drive area. Families worried about the safety of elementary-aged students navigating the busy roundabout on foot.

"The GEDSB's decision caught County staff by surprise," said Paris Councillor John Bell. "We responded by placing a crossing guard at the existing signalized pedes-



(AUDREY BELL PHOTO)

Paris Councillor John Bell chats with crossing guards at the Cobblestone roundabout on the first day of school, Sept. 2, as the County of Brant launched a new staffed crossing to help students safely navigate busy Rest Acres Road.

trian crosswalk at Laurie Ann Lane and Hanlon Place, but the location was safe yet somewhat inconvenient. Some parents chose to drive their children, while older students braved the Cobblestone roundabout."

County staff conducted a safety assessment over the past school year and worked with the school board's transportation team to develop a more suitable crossing protocol. The plan includes two crossing guards — one for each direction of traffic — equipped with larger stop paddles. Button-activated flashing lights will also be installed soon to provide drivers with earlier warnings of pedestrians.

To prepare families, the County released an informational video on its Facebook page ahead of the school year and provided additional training to crossing guards. A large traffic notice board has also been placed on Rest Acres Road northbound, reminding drivers to use extra caution as they approach the Arlington Parkway and Cobblestone roundabouts.

"Initial feedback has been positive, but continuous caution and discretion are necessary," Bell said. "Thank you to County staff and particularly our crossing guards. Drivers, please take care."

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OPP hosting community safety night in Paris to address rise in property crime

CASANDRA TURNBULL
Managing Editor

With a rise in break and enters and thefts reported across Paris and the County of Brant in recent months, local police are inviting residents to learn how to better protect themselves and their property.

Members of the Brant County and Norfolk County OPP are hosting a Community Safety Night on Thursday, September 18, 2025, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Brant Sports Complex, Lafarge Room. The open meeting is designed to provide information, answer questions, and strengthen community partnerships in the fight against crime.

The evening will focus on recent break and enters and thefts that have been impacting the community. In Paris alone, incidents have ranged from thefts of tools and bicycles to more serious residential break-ins. In several cases, items were stolen from unlocked vehicles and garages, underscoring the importance of basic crime-prevention steps.

These crimes not only cause financial loss but also leave residents feeling unsettled in their own homes.

The Community Safety Night will cover topics including:

- Break and enters and thefts
- Project Safeguard, a police initiative focused on reducing property crime.

What to do if you've been a victim of property crime, including steps to report incidents and recover losses.

The evening will also feature presentations from specialized OPP teams, including the Preventing Auto Theft Team, the Community Street Crime Unit, the Scenes of Crime Officer, Crime Stoppers, and the OPP Auxiliary.

Organizers emphasize that community awareness and participation are essential. By reporting suspicious activity, taking preventative measures, and working together, residents can help reduce opportunities for crime.

Event Details

- **Date:** Thursday, September 18, 2025
- **Time:** 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Brant Sports Complex, Lafarge Room
- **Admission:** Free, open to all members of the public

Donation aims to prevent tragedy: Hawkins-Gignac Foundation provides CO alarms to protect Brant families



(COUNTY OF BRANT FIRE DEPARTMENT PHOTO)

John Gignac, founder of the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation for CO Education, presents County of Brant Fire Department with a donation of 72 hardwired carbon monoxide alarms. The alarms will be distributed to local residents as part of the department's ongoing fire safety initiatives. In December 2008, in Woodstock, Ontario, John Gignac's niece, OPP Constable Laurie Hawkins (née Gignac), her husband Richard, and their two children—14-year-old Cassandra and 12-year-old Jordan—died from carbon monoxide poisoning in their home, caused by a clogged exhaust vent from their gas fireplace. The emotional aftermath drove John Gignac, a veteran firefighter, to found the Hawkins-Gignac Foundation for CO Education. He also became the catalyst for Ontario's Bill 77 known as the Hawkins-Gignac Act, mandating carbon monoxide alarms in homes with fuel-burning appliances, fireplaces, or attached garages. Learn more about the County of Brant Fire Department at brant.ca/Fire



WEEKLY

Horoscope

September 10 - September 17 2025

ARIES
Mar 21 - Apr 20

You are seeing things more clearly this week, Aries. Conversations that felt stuck a little while ago are now moving along more smoothly. A bold decision comes up midweek.



TAURUS
Apr 21 - May 21

Taurus, you are craving stability, both financially and emotionally. Use midweek to reevaluate your spending or a relationship that may be ready to be taken to the next level.



GEMINI
May 22 - Jun 21

Gemini, you are in your element this week. Communication flows easily, especially by Thursday. A short trip or spontaneous plan could spark something bigger than expected.



CANCER
Jun 22 - Jul 22

Cancer, a quieter energy surrounds you right now. You are being called to pause and reflect. It's a good time to tend to your emotional needs and reflect on what's ahead.



LEO
Jul 23 - Aug 23

The spotlight is on you right now and you are glowing, Leo. You may attract attention and admiration without even putting in extra effort. Use this week to push forward on personal goals.



VIRGO
Aug 24 - Sept 22

Focus on personal goals and self-improvement, and take time to reflect on what you truly want. Set strong intentions for the year ahead and start building the path toward them.



LIBRA
Sept 23 - Oct 23

Libra, this is a great week to get things done. You're focused, detail-oriented and motivated. Use every burst of energy to sort through the clutter in your life.



SCORPIO
Oct 24 - Nov 22

Your social life is buzzing right now, but don't lose sight of bigger goals. A fresh connection or idea could lead to a long-term opportunity if you stay focused.



SAGITTARIUS
Nov 23 - Dec 21

You may feel pushed to take a risk or explore new ideas this week, Sagittarius. Trust your curiosity to take you where you need to be to find satisfaction.



CAPRICORN
Dec 22 - Jan 20

Capricorn, even if no one sees you doing all of the hard work, you know how much effort you have been putting in. The effort will pay off soon enough when results are there for all to see.



AQUARIUS
Jan 21 - Feb 18

This week asks you to look at how you are showing up and helping others, Aquarius. An old friend or partner resurfaces and a current connection could deepen.



PISCES
Feb 19 - Mar 20

Your mind-body connection is strong this week, Pisces. If you have been ignoring rest or intuition, now is the time to focus on your priorities again.



FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

- SEPTEMBER 10

Colin Firth, Actor (65)
- SEPTEMBER 11

Taraji P. Henson, Actress (55)
- SEPTEMBER 12

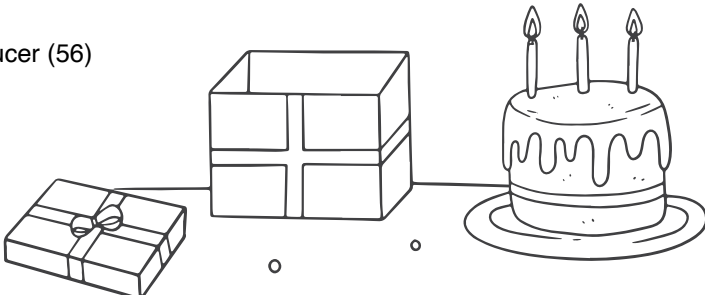
Kelsea Ballerini, Musician (32)
- SEPTEMBER 13

Tyler Perry, TV Producer (56)
- SEPTEMBER 14

Jimmy Butler, Athlete (36)
- SEPTEMBER 15

Tommy Lee Jones, Actor (79)
- SEPTEMBER 16

David Copperfield, Magician (69)



Riddles

-  Why don't leaves mind September?
Because it's when they really get to fall for someone
-  Why was the scarecrow so excited for September?
Because he finally got to show off his fall fashion!
-  Why was the computer so cold in September?
It left its Windows open!
-  What's September's favorite instrument?
The fall-ute!
-  Why did the student bring a ladder in September?
To go to high school!
-  A pie before I'm a drink; I spice up fall more than you think.
Apple (or apple cider)
-  I'm tall in summer, short in fall, and disappear by winter's call
Daylight
-  I'm a blanket on the ground, stitched in red, gold, and brown. What am I?
A leaf pile

Sudoku

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

Solutions on page 23

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PETS OF THE WEEK

MACY & OTIS

Meet our Pets of the Week:

Macy and Otis are sulking on their bed, missing their person who went off to first year university. Luckily she didnt go to far and will be back to visit on weekends.

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



Word Search

AS THE SEASONS CHANGE



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

- September
Autumn
Equinox
Solstice
Harvest
Leaves
Migration
Chill
Renewal
Apples
Pumpkin
Corn
Frost
Acorn
Maple
Transition
Orchard
Football
Chalk
Books

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EMAIL TO INQUIRE [INFO@THEPARISINDEPENDENT.COM](mailto:info@theparisindependent.com)

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

Women Inspiring Women Women's Institute Monthly Meeting - 7-9 PM at the Paris Fairgrounds Community Room. Welcome Back! Grand Unveiling of our Embroidered Coat Project with Artist Marguerite Larmand.

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 13-18

48th Annual Fun Fair at Countryside Camp - Join us in celebrating Harvesting Memories during the 48th Annual Fun Fair at Countryside Camp! This fun filled celebration starts with an online auction September 13-18 and culminates at the camp on September 20, from 10am to 3pm. Your entire family will enjoy the traditional Dutch and Canadian foods, as well as the rides, games, garage sale, auctions, and tearoom treats. Most of all, make this year's fair a destination and an opportunity to reunite with friends you have not seen in years. Please bring a non-perishable food item for the Salvation Army Food Bank. For more information <https://ontariochristiancamp.ca/funfair/> or campfunfair.ca.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

50th Anniversary of Blandford-Blenheim Township's Amalgamation - The Plattsville & District Heritage Society at Chesterfield Museum/Archives, 816661 Oxford Road 22, Bright invites you to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Blandford-Blenheim Township's amalgamation. Yummy food at the free outdoor barbeque, cool drinks and groovy music on Saturday the 16th by Bill & Bev Bell happening from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM. Enjoy the Exhibit in the Museum/Archives "Retro Rewind to the 70's & 80's" from 10 AM to 4 PM every Saturday until the 13th of September, 2025 or by appointment (519-535-1417). Donations appreciated.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

Cemetery Decoration Day - Mount Pleasant and St. George Cemetery.

Paris Terry Fox Run - Sunday, September 14th beginning at 11 am at Paris District High School. Join us on the 45th Anniversary of Terry's Marathon of Hope against cancer. Donate or sign up online at <http://www.terryfox.org/>. Everyone is welcome!

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

Grand Opening of the Brenda Bishop and Family Batting Cage at Paris Lions Park - September 18th at 6 pm. Come check it out, take a few swings, and enjoy a fun evening with the community.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

The Grand River Arts Festival - is a celebration and exhibition of visual arts, music, and theatre, held on the historic grounds of Glenhyrst Art Gallery at 20 Ava Rd in Brantford, Ontario. Visit grandriverartsfestival.com for more information!

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

41st Annual St. George Applefest - There's something a-peeling for everyone at this family fun fall event! Check out the food trucks, over 170+ craft and vendors, a "Kid's Zone" on lower Main Street with inflatables, a petting zoo, dog and reptile shows, foam parties and a massive entertainment line up with performances by Jacob Moon, Voodoo Kings, Bluegrass Sweethearts, Cobby's Kitchen Party, Embrace Albatross Norfolk, Paris Port Dover Band, John Atlee, and Murray Williams. Don't miss the Street Dance on Saturday that begins at 6:30 pm featuring Rock Country, Kerosene Creek, and Dirty Pioneers.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Cemetery Decoration Day - Northfield Cemetery Decoration Day. To learn more email cemeteries@brant.ca or visit brant.ca/Cemetery

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

Knights of Columbus Monthly Meeting - On Tuesday September 23rd, 2025 at Sacred Heart Parish Hall located at 17 Washington Street starting at 7:30 pm. Use the Queen Street parking lot door to enter.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Sensory Spotlight Open House - Sensity invites the community to an open house at its Resource Centre on Friday, Sept. 26, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 50 Main Street, Paris. Guided tours will showcase the organization's work, while a local marketplace will feature artwork created by individuals Sensity supports. From 12 to 2 p.m., enjoy a BBQ with burgers and hotdogs available for purchase, with all proceeds benefiting Sensity's programs and services. Come for a tour, shop the market, or grab a bite — everyone is welcome. Event details: culturedays.ca.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Brant Pride Joy- From 11 am to 3 pm at Lions Park Paris. An afternoon of activities, festivities and communities coming together to connect, celebrate and enjoy the vibrant 2SLGBTQIA+ community of the County of Brant and beyond! Full list of activities featuring more than 25 vendors and artists.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Truth and Reconciliation Day - The Official Unveiling of the Former Mohawk Institute Residential School as an Interpreted Historic Site. To manage capacity and provide a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone, we will be using timed entry for this event. Entry will be on a first-come, first-served basis, as there is no pre-registration for the event. For your convenience, a limited number of bracelets allowing early access can be picked up at our gift shop on September 25th and 26th (while supplies last). More information at www.woodlandculturalcentre.ca

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7

Seniors Lunch and Learn Series - Join adults 55+ for a FREE homemade lunch and interactive learning session, made possible by the Ontario Government. Caregivers welcome. Registration required. Next Session: Tues. Oct. 7, 12-1:30pm Five Oaks Centre, 1 Bethel Rd., Paris. 519-442-3212 | www.fiveoaks.on.ca.

The Paris Independent

Contribute to your local community newspaper!
Send articles, sports or event recaps, and photos to
stories@theparisindependent.com

CORRECTION



Emilee Maltby, sponsored by the Paris Lions Club.

In our September 2, 2025 article titled "Grace Auslebrook-Smith crowned Paris Fair Ambassador 2025," we misspelled the name of one of the contestants, Emilee Maltby as "Emilie Maltby." We sincerely apologize for the error and any confusion it may have caused.

MEMORIES AND MILESTONES

Share them with your local community.

Let us help create a meaningful announcement:
info@theparisindependent.com



HOMES OF HEROES: 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.

CLASSIFIEDS

EMAIL TO INQUIRE INFO@THEPARISINDEPENDENT.COM

SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

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QUIZ ANSWERS

1. 1600 points
2. Sapphire
3. 0.2 grams
4. Tom or gobbler
5. New York City
6. Borough of NYC
7. Grade point average
8. Oro-Medonte, ON
9. Jawbone
10. The sea otter

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I will pay cash for antiques and collectibles. Coca Cola, Pepsi or any pop company. Brewery items - Kuntz, Huether Labatts, etc. Old radios and gramophones, wristwatches, pocket watches, old fruit jars - Beaver Star, Bee Hive etc. Any old oil cans and signs - Red Indian, Supertest etc. Any small furniture. If you are moving or cleaning out stuff please contact me - 519-570-6920.

COMING EVENTS

2025 SEPTEMBER HARVEST MARKET - at The Paris Wincey Mills 31 Mechanic St. Paris. For more information call 519-774-0600 or email eliether.rivera@gmail.com
DATES: September 28

ETONIA PRINCETON UNITED CHURCH ROAST BEEF DINNER - on Tuesday, September 23, 2025, from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. at 101 #2 Hwy., Etonia. The meal includes roast beef with pie and refreshments. Tickets are available at the door: \$25 for adults, \$6 for children 12 and under, and free for preschoolers. Takeout will be available, and the venue is wheelchair accessible.



COMMUNITY SAFETY NIGHT

Members of the Brant County and Norfolk County OPP will be in attendance to discuss:

- Recent Break and Enters
- Thefts
- Project Safeguard
- What to do if you've been a victim of property crime

Featured presenters include members from

- Preventing Auto Theft Team
- Community Street Crime Unit
- Scenes of Crime Officer
- Crime Stoppers
- OPP Auxilliary

This is an open meeting. Members of the public are encouraged to attend

SEPTEMBER 18, 2025
6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
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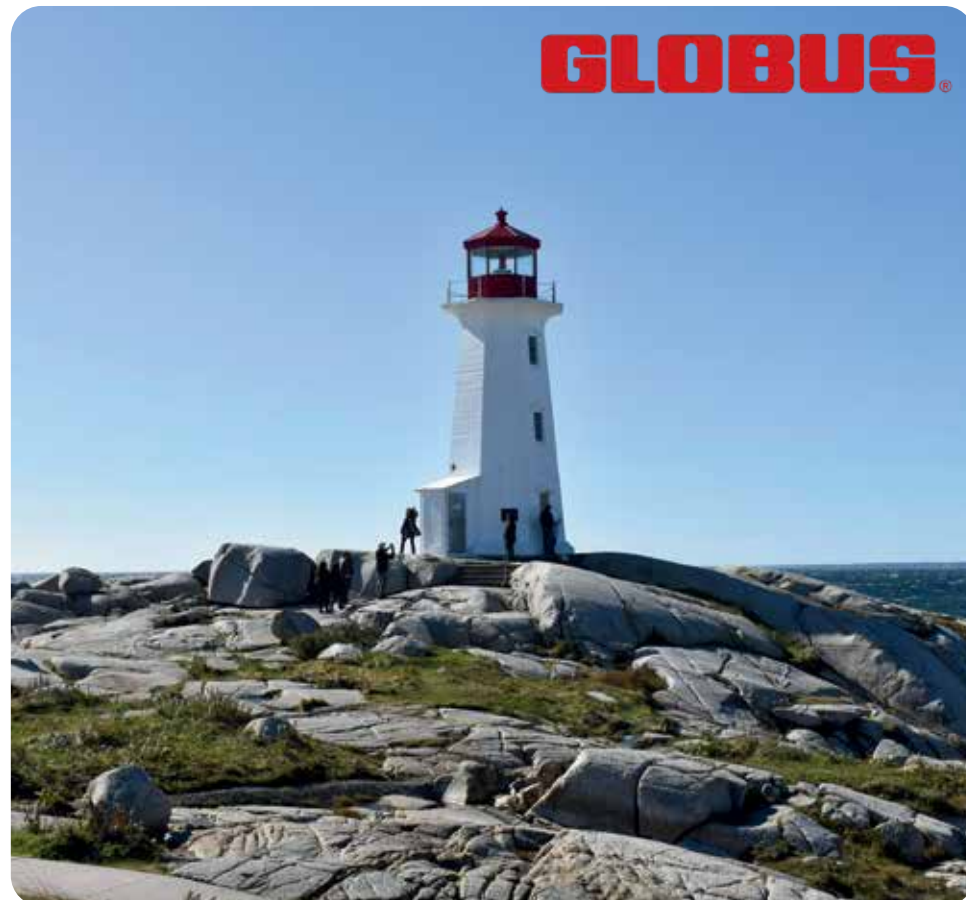
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