

The Paris Independent

Issue #223

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Santa steals the show as Paris parade lights up downtown



(CASANDRA TURNBULL PHOTO)

Santa Claus waves to cheering spectators during the annual Paris Santa Claus Parade on Dec. 6. Community groups, organizations and local businesses put their best floats forward, and the crowd was not disappointed. Story and more photos on page 3.

CHRIS WHELAN

Editor

As December's chill gently settled on the town of Paris, the excitement in the air was unmistakable. The annual Paris Santa Claus Parade has always been a cherished tradition, but

this year held special significance for The Paris Independent. Not only were we attending, but we were also given the honour of judging the best float entry—a role that filled us with pride and anticipation. The memories of festive parades gone by mixed with the promise of new moments, stirring a deep sense of nostalgia and

community spirit.

Arriving at the staging area just as the sun dipped below the horizon, the street was already alive with bustling activity. Rows of floats lined the pavement, each one a testament to creativity, teamwork, and holiday cheer. As we walked through the crowd, the glow from twinkling

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

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Wishing everyone a Happy Holiday Season!

County hears concerns, eyes 4.7% property tax hike in 2026 budget planning

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

County of Brant councillors heard hours of financial forecasting, public opinion and community concerns during a special meeting on Dec. 4, as staff presented the updated Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) that will guide the 2026 budget.

The 213-page report outlines spend-

ing pressures, infrastructure demands and resident priorities heading into next year, with councillors facing a proposed property tax increase of 4.7 per cent in 2026, significantly lower than early projections of 13.6%.

As the two hundred paid report is extensive, following the meeting Paris Coun. John Bell shared screenshots on social media showing how the increase is being built,

noting a proposed 8 per cent rise in expenditures balanced by assessment growth tied to residential and industrial development. A comparison of levy impacts shows that while the 2026 levy may rise roughly 8 per cent overall, assessment growth reduces the direct impact on property taxes to 4.7 per cent.

"It reflects the impact of the growth in our community, our tax base is growing, but so are the demands of that growing population," Bell said.

The meeting also included results from a budget engagement survey completed by 216 residents between Nov. 6 and Nov. 24. According to the summary, residents strongly support investment in emergency services, transit, affordable housing, asset management and infrastructure to support growth and congestion reduction. A new hospital for Brantford/Brant ranked as the top priority, with nearly 80 per cent of respondents wanting more support.

However, the feedback also reflected frustration with roads, traffic and development pacing. Many residents said infrastructure is not keeping up with growth in Paris and along Rest Acres Road, while others called for more investment in rural areas, seniors' services and indoor recreation facilities such as a pool.

Rapid growth continues to shape public opinion. Nearly half of respondents support a "growth pays for growth" approach, while 61 per cent believe the County should invest more in rural and farming communities to offset urban pressures.

Survey results show residents are divided on tax tolerance. About 43 per cent favour a zero per cent tax increase even if services are reduced, while only 27 per cent would support increases above two per cent if tied to priority projects. At the same time, respondents strongly favour debt reduction and maintaining healthy reserves.

Those findings highlight what staff described as

"conflicting expectations," with many residents calling for major capital projects and expanded services while also requesting minimal tax increases and lower debt.

Residents are urged to review the full LTFP presentation and follow upcoming budget discussions through Engage Brant.

"There are some in our community that question the ability of County staff and Council to develop financially sound plans and budgets," Bell said in a social media post. "Read the report and you will begin to understand the complexity of managing an organisation with an operating budget of over \$117 million, a capital expenditure forecast over the coming 10 years of over \$700 million, a rapidly growing population, a land area of 820 sq km comprising predominantly rural lands but with a number of urban centres, over 2,000 km of roads - I could go on!"

Under provincial legislation, Mayor David Bailey will present his proposed 2026 budget in January, with council having 30 days to debate potential amendments before adoption. The Dec. 4 report notes that the Long Term Financial Plan remains the best opportunity for residents to influence financial direction. Another LTFP meeting will take place on December 18th before the budget is officially revealed in the New Year.

Residents can view the full long term financial plan meeting online at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zfs-d4oM1uAg>

Copies of the LTFP report, survey results and public engagement summary are available through Engage Brant.

Yes, it's that time again – Christmas is coming fast!



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The magic of the 2025 Paris Santa Claus parade

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

lights and the gentle hum of excited voices set the perfect seasonal mood. It was impossible not to smile as we greeted float participants—volunteers, local business owners, and proud children—each eager to showcase their handiwork.

We spent time chatting with the float teams, snapping photos of imaginative displays and smiling faces. The camaraderie was infectious; everyone seemed to know each other, and laughter echoed between conversations about last-minute decorations and costume adjustments. Every encounter brought another joyful moment, reminding me why this parade is such a beloved event.

With so many stunning entries, judging was no easy task. Criteria like originality, craftsmanship, festive spirit, and crowd engagement guided our choices, but more often than not, heartfelt effort shone through in every float. Each team had their own story to tell, whether it was a nod to local heritage or a playful twist on holiday traditions.

We mingled with participants, asked about their inspiration, and watched as children handed out candy with gleeful abandon. It was heartwarming to see neighbours supporting neighbours—offering tips, lending tools, and cheering each other on. My notepad quickly filled with favourites but narrowing them down felt nearly impossible.

After much deliberation, one entry stood out among the rest—the Rotary Club of Paris's float, 'Rotary Flyer.' This masterpiece captured the imagination with its vibrant colours, intricate details, and a truly magical design that seemed to soar above the crowd. The volunteers aboard the float

wore their Rotary pins with pride, waving to onlookers as their creation rolled by.

In recognition of their outstanding work, the Rotary Club of Paris will be awarded a \$250 Canadian Tire gift certificate generously sponsored by the Paris Volunteer Firefighters Club. Their float not only delighted spectators but also embodied the spirit of giving and community that the parade celebrates.

While 'Rotary Flyer' claimed the top honour, the competition was fierce and the variety astounding. The Kiwanas Club presented a float full of cheerful elves and Rudolph the red nosed reindeer himself, while the Paris Wolfpack brought a sense of adventure with their wolf-themed decorations and team spirit. The Paris Beavers charmed the crowd with a winter wonderland scene featuring playful beaver mascots.

Local businesses added their own special touch: Home Building Centre's float showcased a miniature festive home; Canadian Tire dazzled with twinkling lights and a towering truck and their familiar logo; Legends Sports Bar brought a lively, sporty twist to the festivities; and Cedarview Church inspired with a heartwarming nativity display. Every float told a story, and every participant brought something unique to the parade.

As the parade made its way through the bustling streets, candy flew through the air in the hands of costumed children and smiling volunteers. The crowd—young and old alike—lined the sidewalks, bundled up in toques and scarves, waving, clapping, and singing along to holiday tunes. The festive atmosphere was palpable: laughter, music, and the scent of hot chocolate mingled with the cool December breeze.

The turnout was impressive, with a re-



(CASANDRA TURNBULL PHOTOS)

The Rotary Club of Paris's award-winning float, "Rotary Flyer," wowed judges and spectators alike at the annual Paris Santa Claus Parade. Volunteers waved proudly from the vibrant, high-flying display, which earned Best Float honours and a \$250 gift card to Canadian Tire Paris, sponsored by the Paris Volunteer Firefighters Club.

markable number of float entries and spectators braving the winter evening. It was clear that Paris's community spirit was alive and well, as families, friends, and neighbours came together to celebrate the season and support one another.

Looking back on the 2025 Paris Santa Claus Parade, Cindy, Jeff and myself are filled with gratitude for the opportunity to be part of such a cherished tradition. Judging the floats was a privilege, but the real joy came from witnessing the dedication, creativity, and unity that make our town so

special. Whether you were building a float, handing out candy, or simply waving from the crowd, every moment contributed to the parade's magic.

Thank you to the Paris Firefighters Club for organizing the parade, Pelton Brothers Transport once again for providing tractor trailers for some of our community float entries and all the participants, volunteers, and spectators who made this year's parade unforgettable. Here's to many more years of festive celebrations, generous hearts, and the timeless spirit of Paris.



Players from the Factory Basketball Academy brought slam-dunk holiday spirit to the Paris Santa Claus Parade on Dec. 6, waving to the crowd (with their one free hand!) and keeping warm in style. The Legends Taphouse & Grill float served up a full helping of Christmas cheer, complete with gingerbread décor, twinkling lights and plenty of smiles from the crew. No karaoke machine required — this musical Santa filled the streets with song and seasonal joy, accordion in hand, during the Paris Santa Claus Parade hosted by the Paris Firefighters Club.



The GrandBridge Energy crew lit up the night — literally — as their brightly decorated bucket truck rolled along the parade route. A parade favourite, the Wigglebums bus turned heads once again, complete with holiday décor and a very good dog stealing the spotlight. Young parade-goers got the best seat in town aboard the Ridder & Son Construction float, featuring a mini excavator decked out in Christmas lights. The crew waved to the crowd while showing off some serious holiday horsepower.

County pushes to move on from amalgamation talk

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

County of Brant officials say a newly released amalgamation report, commissioned and authorized by Brantford Mayor Kevin Davis under Strong Mayor Powers, reinforces what County residents have long argued: merging the two municipalities is not in the County's best interest.

The Brantford-Brant Amalgamation: Financial Analysis prepared by Hemson Consulting, released November 25, outlines the projected financial impacts of forming a single-tier municipality. The report concludes that while Brantford res-

idents would likely face higher taxes and utility fees under an amalgamated government, Brant County residents could see modest savings - though those savings would come with significantly higher urban-style service levels and substantial structural changes to rural governance and service delivery.

County of Brant Mayor David Bailey said the analysis confirms what County Council and residents have consistently voiced.

"While we acknowledge that the report is founded largely on assumptions, we are pleased that Mayor Davis has concluded that amalgamation is not the answer for the

residents of the City, as we have long been aware it is not the answer for the residents of the County of Brant," Bailey said. "We are ready to move on from this conversation and focus on what matters to our residents."

County officials pushed back on a key suggestion within the report - that residents would benefit from "enhanced levels of service," particularly in emergency services, transit and policing. The County says that framing misrepresents both how rural services are delivered and how satisfied residents are with existing models.

"These insinuations highlight a lack of understanding about how the County delivers services," the county-issued statement said. "It suggests our residents are not proud of, or have confidence in, the dedicated first responders who serve our community...This could not be further from the truth."

Two Paris councillors also publicly echoed that position last week. John Bell and Steve Howes both issued online statements supporting the County's stance, adding they were pleased to see the amalgamation discussion coming to an end.

The Hemson report notes significant structural and geographic differences between the two municipalities, including Brant's much larger land area and its extensive rural road network—over five times Brantford's road lane kilometres on a per-capita basis—which contributes to higher rural servicing costs.

According to the report, if the two municipalities were amalgamated and service levels remained unchanged ("status quo scenario"), Brantford residents would see little financial impact, while County residents could experience tax and utility savings of roughly 10% per capita by 2035.

Under a "shared servicing" model, where Brantford's transit, police and fire services extend into rural Brant, the fiscal picture shifts:

- Brantford residents would pay 4% more in combined taxes and fees than if they remained separate.

- Brant residents would pay about 7% less, but would move toward a fully urbanized service model.
- Brant's water and wastewater fees, already higher due to fragmented infrastructure, would be blended with Brantford's centralized system over time.

The Hemson report notes the financial pressures for Brantford largely stem from the County's costly water and wastewater system and its significant growth-related infrastructure needs, including a \$150-million expansion of the Paris wastewater treatment plant.

The report also emphasizes that amalgamation could place the combined municipality in a negative net fiscal position—between \$5 million and \$9 million—if tax rates remained unchanged through 2035.

While the report signals the end of the City's political push for amalgamation, Bailey said there remains considerable room for regional cooperation between the two municipalities.

The County pointed to long-standing shared servicing agreements and a history of productive collaboration, including the most recent 2016 boundary adjustment, which enabled Brantford's northern expansion and supported the County's plans for a new industrial district in Cainsville, an area identified in the Hemson report as a future opportunity for regional economic development.

"The County's Secondary Plan to develop a premier industrial area in Cainsville would largely not be possible had it not been included in the 2016 agreement," the statement said. Bailey said he hopes both municipalities can now redirect their attention to constructive priorities.

"Looking ahead, we hope this report serves as an opportunity to move forward with a common goal: providing the best possible services to our respective communities," he said. "When we work together, we can accomplish so much more."

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Street Beat

GEORGE LE GRESLEY

Paris Independent Columnist

Now that Brantford Mayor Kevin Davis has given up on amalgamating the city with the county, what's in Brantford that you would like to see in the county?

Paul and Laura Bowley



A general store like Giant Tiger. More of a police presence in town!

Ben Noonan and Lily Lauzon



More stores and maybe a mall.

Bill Murray



No more big box stores!

Eleonora Kertesz



More delicatessens and different type of stores.

Sarah Pritchard



Nothing really.... maybe an indoor pool!

(CHRIS WHELAN PHOTOS)

Health officials: “Prevention is the best gift” as holidays approach

MEDIA RELEASE

Brant Community Healthcare System

As families prepare to gather for the holidays and the new year ahead, health experts at Brant Community Healthcare System (BCHS) are reminding residents that prevention is the best gift you can give yourself and your loved ones this festive season. While taking steps to stay healthy is the priority, BCHS also wants the community to know that care is close at hand - whether through the Emergency Department or other local health services should illness or injury occur.

“Winter brings unique challenges,” Dr. Tom Szakacs, Infectious Disease Lead at BCHS, explained. “Colder weather means we spend more time indoors, often in close contact with others and shared surfaces. At the same time, seasonal infections like flu, RSV, colds, and COVID tend to rise. That combination makes prevention especially important during the holidays.”

Szakacs emphasized that most prevention strategies are common sense but often overlooked. If you are sick, avoid gatherings to prevent the spread of infections. Hand hygiene is critical not only because of airborne transmission, which became a focus during COVID, but also because of contaminated surfaces.

Dr. Szakacs recommends lathering carefully, paying attention to areas people often miss — like thumbs, and washing for about 20 seconds, roughly the length of the “Happy Birthday” song. Good cough etiquette is equally important: cover your mouth and

avoid coughing toward others.

At the same time, paranoia is not necessary. Hugging loved ones and enjoying family time is safe when paired with sensible hygiene.

Vaccination remains one of the most effective ways to prevent seasonal illness, and the flu vaccine is recommended yearly for everyone. Influenza is a serious respiratory illness with high fevers and severe symptoms. “If you’ve had it once, you won’t want it again,” explained Szakacs.

He further clarified that the flu shot cannot give you the flu; it is made from broken-down virus components, and it takes about two weeks to become effective. Vaccines are widely available at pharmacies and family doctors’ offices, and residents are encouraged not to delay, especially given that flu season is already underway.

For those over 75, he highlighted the availability of an RSV vaccine, which protects against a virus that can cause severe respiratory illness in young children and older adults. The vaccine is free and requires only one shot. People aged 60 to 75 with certain risk factors may also be eligible. COVID vaccines remain available, and while the exact timing of COVID’s seasonal peak is uncertain, Dr. Szakacs advises staying prepared.

Dr. Somaiah Ahmed, Chief and Medical Director of the Emergency Department at BCHS, stresses one key point: “Do not delay seeking care if your condition is not improving at home.” Fear of long waits should never stop someone from getting help.



(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

Emergency Department nurses and staff with Dr. Somaiah Ahmed (fifth from left) and Dr. Tom Szakacs (back row), who are encouraging the community to prioritize prevention this winter.

Begin with your family physician or nurse practitioner, who know your health history the best and may offer holiday hours. Walk-in clinics and pharmacies can also help with minor issues such as coughs, colds, or stomach upset, and pharmacies are a good place to renew prescriptions before the holidays.

Dr. Ahmed recommends the Willett Urgent Care Centre in Paris for non-life-threatening problems. “It can treat fevers, sore throats, ear infections, muscle injuries, minor fractures, and allergic reactions. X-rays and bloodwork are also available.”

However, the Brantford General Hospital Emergency Department is the right place for more severe conditions. The ED follows the Ontario Ministry of Health’s guidelines to ensure the sickest patients are treated first. “Go immediately if you experience severe chest pain, difficulty breathing, stroke symptoms, choking, or uncontrolled bleeding,” advises Dr. Ahmed.

Both urgent care and the emergency department remain open throughout the holidays, though urgent care has adjusted hours. Click here to view holiday hours at The Willett.

Brant invites the community to celebrate with holiday decorating photo contest!

MEDIA RELEASE

County of Brant

The County of Brant is inviting the community to join us in celebrating the holiday season and spreading cheer across Brant by taking part in the Holiday Decorating Photo Contests!

“We welcome residents, businesses and community groups to join us,” said County of Brant Mayor David Bailey. “Let’s make this holiday season extra special by encouraging our family, friends and neighbours to join in all the fun this time of year brings.”

Participants can take part in the contests through the County of Brant’s public engagement website, Engage Brant, at engagebrant.ca/holidays2025. Here’s how you can participate:

1. Snap a photo of your decorated home, yard, business or neighbourhood in the County of Brant.
2. Submit your photo to the Engage Brant website under the appropriate category listed below.
3. Encourage your friends, family and neighbours to visit the page and give your photo a “thumbs up” to vote.
4. A winner in each category will receive a \$100 gift card to a County of

Brant business of their choice!

Photo contest categories and details include:

- Best Traditional Display – A timeless, cozy, classic holiday look.
- Clark Griswold Award – For the “go big or go home” decorator!
- Santa’s Workshop Award – Best kid-friendly, whimsical display.
- Neighbourhood Spirit Award – For a block or group effort that shines together.
- Best Business Display – For local shops or offices joining in the fun.
- Best Theme Display – Think The Grinch, Elf, Frozen or The Polar Express.

The contest is now open. Voting closes on December 31, 2025, and winners will be announced the week of January 5, 2026. Please note that this contest is open to County of Brant residents and businesses only. Visit engagebrant.ca/holidays2025 to learn more and submit your photos.

In addition to our Holiday Photo Contests, we encourage the community to get into the holiday spirit by taking part in special events, Santa Claus parades and opportunities to give back. Visit brant.ca/Community to learn more.



Lights, music, magic! The holiday display at 5 Weston St. in Paris doesn’t just shine — it dances. With colourful lights synchronized to festive music, this must-see home is lighting up the neighbourhood and is a perfect contender for the County of Brant’s Holiday Decorating Photo Contest now underway.

Santa's on Tour: Holiday Magic Hits PDHS



(GEORGE LE GRESLEY PHOTO)

Holiday cheer is popping up everywhere in the County — from Santa sightings at local breakfasts to the annual Santa Claus Parade and impromptu meet-and-greets at Optimist Club events and Wincey Mills market. On December 4, PDHS staff kept the magic going with a festive party in the school cafeteria for staff children, where rumour has it the big guy himself dropped by while kids dove into crafts, activities and even some holiday baking. Pictured is Lennon Bishop, with some very cool face painting, enjoying the activities. There's no better time to be a kid than right now!

Holiday sparkle returns as Glenhyrst lights up the season

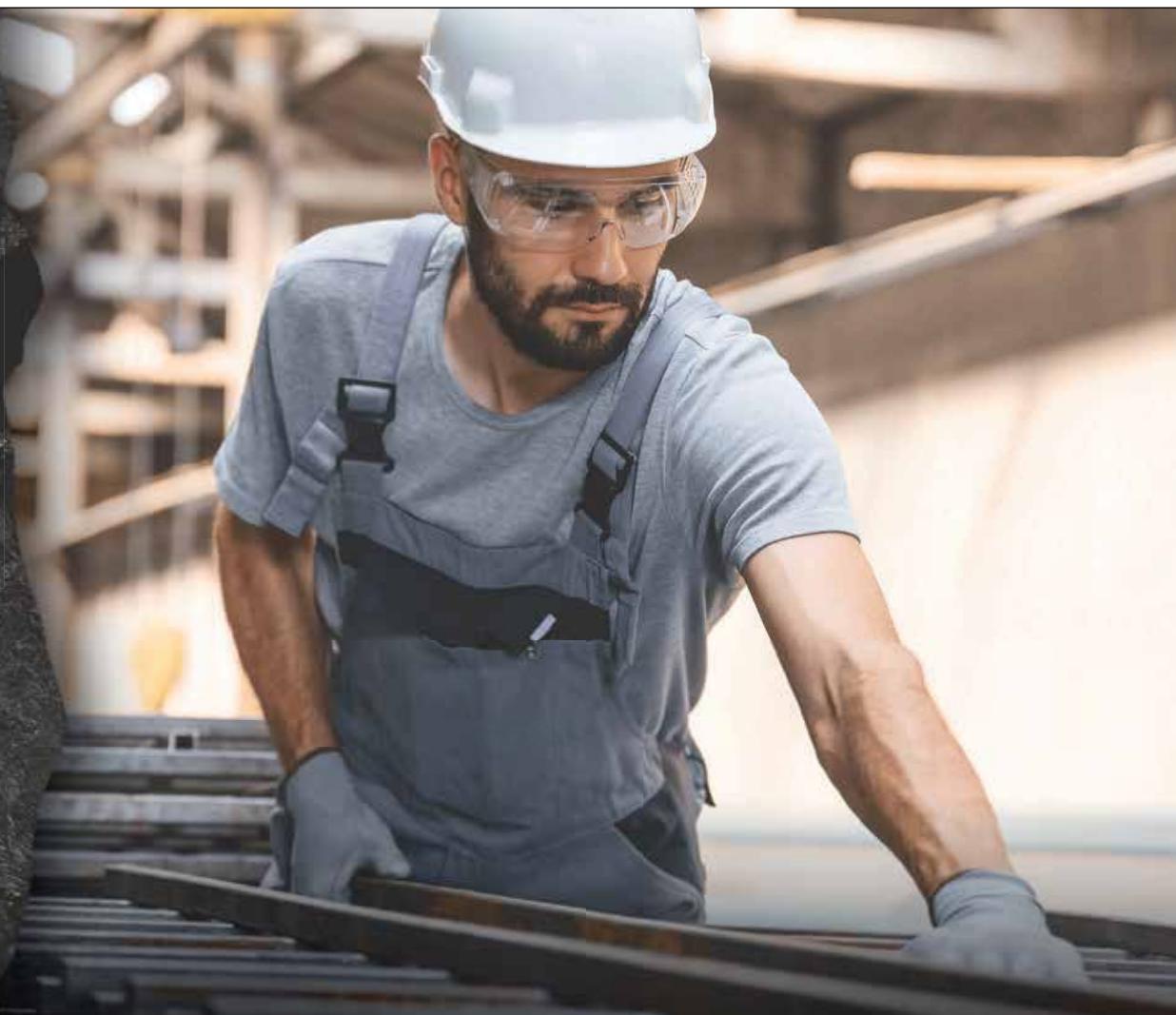


(GLENHYRST ART GALLERY OF BRANT PHOTO)

Lights, art, hot chocolate and holiday magic! The Lights at Glenhyrst Art Gallery of Brant are shining nightly from 6–9 p.m. through January 1, with free admission and seasonal activities including the Merry Little Market, Vibrant Palette art exhibition nights, live music, and community food collection. Bundle up for a winter walk, take a drive through the glowing grounds, and don't miss free coffee and hot chocolate from Altitude Coffee Roasters on select evenings. Voluntary donations help support Glenhyrst's community programming.

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'No parent is meant to do this alone': My Village Collective builds community for local mothers

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

What began as one mother's struggle to find support in a new town has grown into a grassroots network helping families feel seen, connected and less alone.

Danielle Simpson moved to Paris in 2024 with a five-year-old and a newborn, hoping to find a welcoming circle of parents. Instead, she said she quickly discovered "how isolating and overwhelming parenthood can be when you don't have a 'village' around you."

That realization became the driving force behind My Village Collective, a community-based initiative designed to bring mothers together during some of their most vulnerable years.

"I wanted to offer families a space to feel seen, supported and connected," Simpson said. "Ultimately, it was born from a desire to build something rooted in love, trust, and belonging."

Simpson, a yoga teacher, child and youth worker and former preschool educator, wove her background into a range of programming that combines wellness, play and community building. Baby-and-me yoga, toddler playdate clubs, wellness panels and parent support workshops are hosted at spaces across Brant County and Brantford.

At its core, she said, the mission is simple: connection.

"We aim to nurture connection through thoughtful programming, wellness workshops, play-based learning and inclusive events," Simpson said. "My Village is about reminding families that none of us are meant to do this alone."

The organization operates with help from facilitators, ambassadors and local partners, creating what Simpson describes as "a strong web of support." She credits her husband, Trevor, along with community director and market coordinator Kaitlin, and in-house photographer Jordyn of Timeless Joy Photography, for helping the network

grow month after month.

Families attending events often express similar needs: affordable programming, emotional support and a safe space to share the realities of parenthood.

"Many families express a deep desire for connection and a safe space to feel understood," Simpson said. "People want to feel less alone and more empowered."

One of the clearest indicators of the collective's impact comes in messages and small moments of gratitude, she added.

"I'm a mom of two young boys, building this village in the little pockets of 'free time' I can find," she said. "The messages I receive from moms sharing their stories and expressing how this movement makes them feel seen mean more to me than I can ever express."

A growing part of the initiative is the semi-annual Moms & Minis Family Market, which Simpson launched to bring local families and mom-led businesses under one roof. The next market takes place Sunday, Dec. 14 from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Celebration Church, 111 Sherwood Dr Unit 8, Brantford. Admission is \$5 per adult, with children under 12 admitted free. The event includes vendors, speakers, children's activities and community resources, with more than 30 businesses expected to participate. "It's more than just a shopping event," she said. "It was meant to celebrate parenthood and connection."

Vendors are selected based on shared values of community support and family-centred work, which Simpson said helps create long-term relationships between small businesses and local families.

Looking ahead, Simpson hopes to expand programming into other communities and deepen partnerships with local service providers.

"Our long-term goal is to strengthen the village and make support more accessible for every parent who needs it," she said. "Community networks are essential because no parent is meant to navigate this journey alone."



(TIMELESS JOY PHOTOGRAPHY PHOTO)

Families participate in the Explore + Connect series, a 4 week long sensory series that stimulates both mom and child.

Simpson said residents and businesses can support the initiative by attending events, collaborating as vendors or sponsoring programs.

"Everyone has a place here, and every

contribution matters," she said.

My Village Collective is online at www.myvillagecollective.ca and active on Instagram at @myvillage.collective and @myvillage.familymarket.

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Weekend Quiz

By Jake Grant

- How many times does the International Space Station orbit the Earth each day?
- Which Allied codebreaking center famously cracked the German Enigma cipher during World War II?
- What is Tungsten also known as?
- True or False. Most of the dust in your home is made of human skin.
- "The Mighty Ducks" movie and the Mighty Ducks of Anaheim NHL expansion team, both debuted in what year?
- What is the capital of British Columbia?
- What is currently the safest country in the world?
- Tony the Tiger is featured on what cereal brand?
- How often do your taste buds regenerate on average?
- What is the most flexible muscle in the human body?

This week's answers are found on pg. 19

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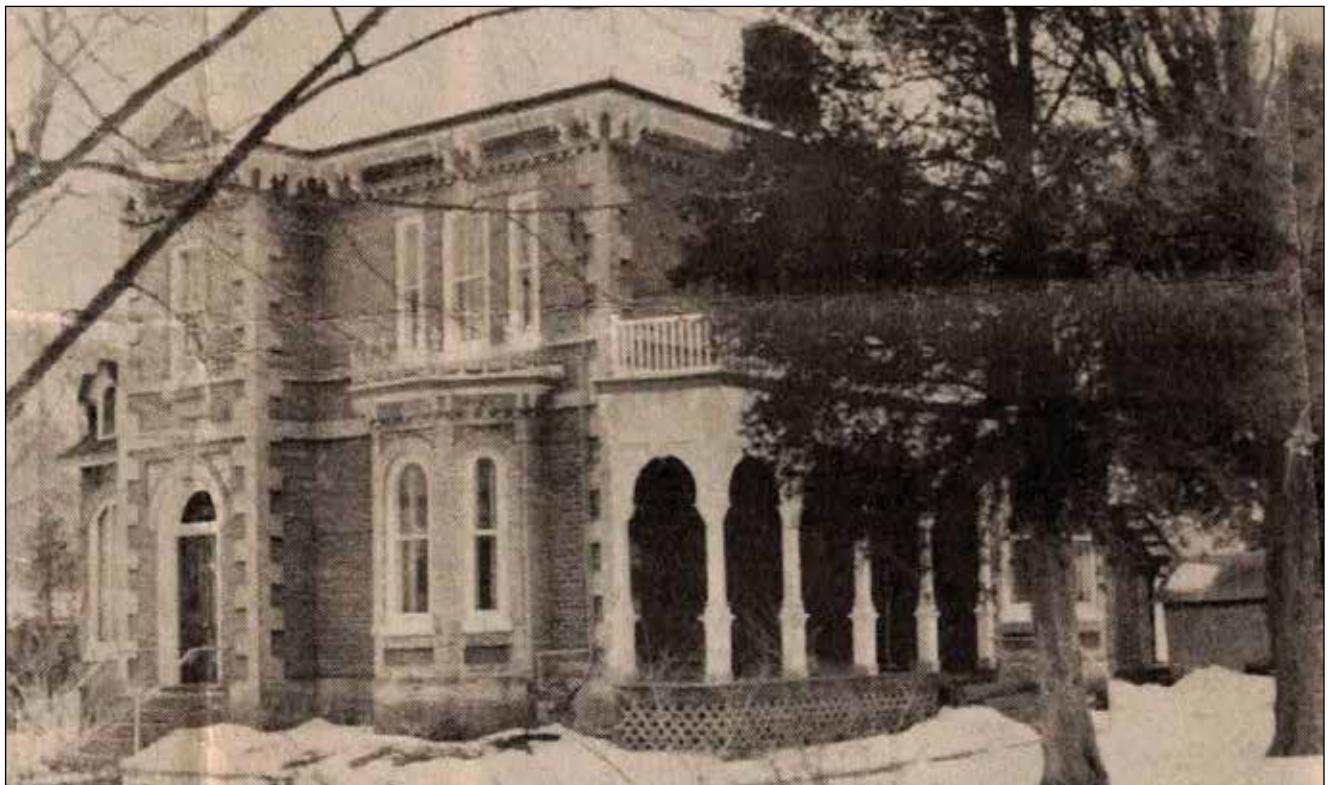
By Chris Whelan

This article originally appeared in The Paris Star on March 28, 1984, it was written by J.P. Pickell with photos and comments by Marg Deans. Thanks to one of my readers, I was able to obtain a copy:

The fascinating house that the writer is describing this week is located at 69 Washington Street and is, as near as we can estimate, 123 years old (1861). It was built by an Englishman and his wife who came from England and hired a well-known local builder, W.T. Thomson, to do the construction. According to a Town of Paris Voters' List in our possession, Mr. George Featherstone and wife occupied the dwelling as long as 1895. In conversation with E.H. Crombie, whose father, E.R. Crombie had a farm just south of the property described the owner was called George Featherstonehaugh, which may have been the result of the English custom of using double family names.

At any rate, the years rolled on, and Mr. and Mrs. Featherstonehaugh reached the time in life where they needed help. In the meantime, Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Martin had left their farm and had moved in with them. Mrs. Martin (Amelia Pearn) had a connection with the older couple. At the death of the Featherstonehaugh's, 69 Washington Street was turned over to the Martins for their faithful help to the elderly couple. The Martin's children, Tom and Maggie, inherited the house. Maggie never married and the house came to Tom Martin. He married Jenny Patterson, a member of a well-known Paris family.

On Sept. 4, 1941, Mr. and Mrs. Mark V. Harrison, Brantford, purchased the residence. Mr. Harrison was C.N.R. ticket agent and looked after checking at the freight office. On Nov. 22, 1941, Tom Martin was stricken with a heart attack and died in the Willett Hospital. He was born in Aberfoyle and came with his parents to Paris as a child. He received his education in Paris and served in the 1st World War. He spent his latter years at the family home in Paris. He was Mayor of Paris



in 1936 and held other positions on the council and the P.U.C. He was also a member of the Canadian Legion, St. John's Lodge A.F. & A.M. and the Lions Club.

Mark Harrison's wife, the former Agnes Welsh, daughter of John Welsh, native of Glasgow, Scotland, lived with her family at Wilsonville, Ont., then with a second marriage of her father to Elizabeth Walker of Paris and finally at the Old Mill near Bishopsgate. She met her future husband while employed at Brantford Cordage. Mark Harrison suffered from asthma and complications from his heart. His death occurred in 1966. Prior to that time Mr. and Mrs. Harrison made some necessary improvements to the old, but sound house, such as hooking up to the town water system so that an inside toilet could be installed. For a time, heating was improved with a wood furnace to aid two marvellous black marble fireplaces and a kitchen stove. Following Mark's death, Mrs. Harrison could not manage the wood furnace and a gas one was purchased.

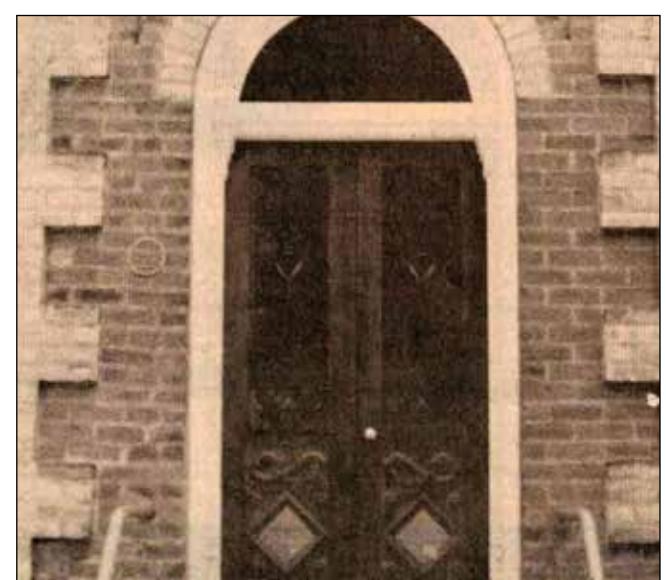
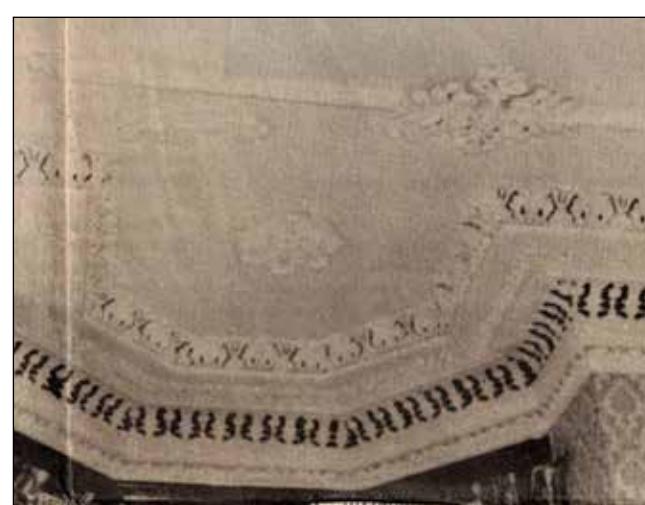
The Harrisons had five children, Dorothy who married Ken Neale and Charles who married Norma Marr, Paris, Elaine Fairfax, Brantford, Robert in Dunnville and Joan Russell in Kitchener. Mark's mother, Ellen Elizabeth Harrison, Chiropractor in Brantford, moved in with her daughter-in-law and son in 1954. Graduating in 1910, she was at the time the only female chiropractor in Ontario. She was 90 years old at the time of her death.

The house, which has been kept in excellent condition,

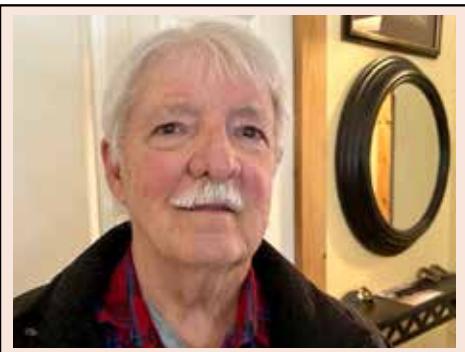
as photos show, and features many of the Loyalist Neo Classic specialties such as keyed eyebrows above windows, doors and bay windows that have cast iron railings backed by windows above. As Marg Deans says that type of architecture can safely be called Victorian. The doors inside and out are framed with lovely inch wide beading. Floors are pine. The dining room and parlor are large rectangular rooms each containing a marble fireplace. These rooms and the hall have ceilings wonderfully decorated with beautiful mouldings. Besides bathroom, kitchen and small bedroom there is a wooden summer kitchen at the back with stove and a woodshed.

It should be mentioned that Tom Martin, during his occupancy used the living room as his trophy room in which he gathered a large number of stuffed animals. These he gave to the Toronto Museum when he left the house. Upstairs there are six bedrooms. Above, is an attic that attracted many raccoons and squirrels which Mrs. Harrison warred with. Following a strike by a lightning bolt that caused a serious fire about five years ago, extensive repairs had to be made. Stronger defences were organized, insulation added and the varmints were eliminated.

Join the journey with Dan Brown House Reconstruction by subscribing to "Reign of the Chatelaine" on YouTube.



THEN AND NOW: Sam Appleby's second block PART 5



By Wayne Wilkinson
Paris Historian / Artist

Over the past few weeks, we have been documenting the commercial history of the prominent businesses housed in the Sam Appleby Second Block, which was originally constructed in 1901. This new structure was built to replace the original block, tragically lost in the Great Fire of September 1900.

This installment focuses on the history of 89 Grand River Street.

The first tenant to occupy 89 Grand River Street was J.R. Inksater. The Inksater name has been intertwined with Paris history since 1854, when George Inksater Sr. established his shoe business on Dumfries Street in the Upper Town. Over the subsequent 160 years, the downtown core has consistently hosted at least one—and often two or three—Inksater family businesses.

James Randall Inksater (J.R.) initially owned and operated his dry goods store, established in 1886, under the sophisticated name, 'Glasgow House.' This location was situated where our town's centre crosswalk is now found. By 1892, the store was simply known as J.R. Inksater.

After losing his premises in the Great Fire, J.R. Inksater seized the opportunity to relocate to the newly constructed

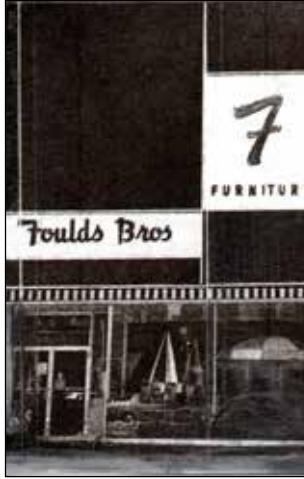
Appleby Block. His dry goods store flourished at 89 Grand River Street until its final closure in 1940. It is worth noting, as his granddaughter Jane Eby once shared, that J.R. leased the store for just \$25.00 per month.

In 1941, the space welcomed the very popular 'Walker Store.' This store was well-known throughout the region; my wife and I, having grown up in Galt, recall visiting their footwear department. I distinctly remember the novelty of slipping my foot under their X-ray machine—a common, yet medically questionable, practice of the time!

Following the Walker Store, Jack Moriarity briefly operated his furniture store here for one year.

In 1957, two well-regarded Parisians, Douglas and Richard Foulds, opened their furniture business at this address. Their significant 10,000 square-foot operation occupied both floors of the building. After two decades of successful trade, the Foulds moved to a spacious new location at the corner of Hardy Road and Highway 2 in 1977.

In the years following the Foulds' move, 89 Grand River Street saw a succession of occupants, primarily operating as various financial institutions.



The year 2010 introduced a landmark change with the arrival of the sweetest shop in town: 'Chocolate Sensations.' Owned by Sarah and John Chalmers, the recent photograph confirms the shop's enduring popularity, which has secured its longevity in downtown Paris.

In Part 6 of "Paris—Then and Now," we will complete our documentation of the Appleby Block's commercial history by exploring the businesses at the final storefront location, 87 Grand River Street.

Note: Some information may have been obtained from the archives at the Paris Museum & Historical Society. Visit the Museum in the Syl Apps Community Centre to discover more history of Paris.



From bingo calls to Jingle Bell Night – A week full of Paris pride

STONES Around Town

By Jeff Johnston
(a.k.a. Stones)

Welcome back, everyone! We're still rolling along and, thankfully, gathering no moss. What a whirlwind it has been! As we head into the winter season, please remember to drive safely and be especially mindful of changing road conditions. On a lighter note, let me extend a big hello to the ladies at Telfer Place Bingo—always a source of smiles and happy faces (and the one place where I'm reliably called Jeff).

My week included a wonderful visit to The Branch 29 Legion for the "Road Back" music event. To all who attended, thank you for supporting a great cause and enjoying some fantastic entertainment! My sincere congratulations go out to organizers Jim Young and the dedicated volunteers, including my old ball hockey champ Jim Wreaks. A special nod to Carolyn Farkas, who won the 50/50 and graciously donated her win-

nings back, and to Miss Marconi's Grade 4 class for their wonderful work decorating the guitar case.

It was a joy to catch up with so many friends: Sue Bohar (always smiling despite her sciatica), Andrea, and Yazzy. The old pool sharks were out in force, too, including Roy Haggart, Doug "Bird" Sales, and Diana, who were celebrating their 39th wedding anniversary. I was so astonished by that milestone, I kissed Bird!

The Legion visit was a true reunion. I got a hug from the legendary PDHS teacher Miss Saveridge and Ginny Moore. Across the bar, I spotted Dale and Pat Kitchen, looking as great as ever, instantly bringing me back to the days of "Band-a-mania" and the original "Broom Stick Band" with their debut at the Legion (RIP Dennis "Bonzo" Smith). It was great company, and it had been too long since I spent five hours enjoying the atmosphere here.

A shout-out to Shawn and his grandson, Chris Starks—Chris, you can play! RIP to your dad; the torch has been passed. It was impossible not to burst out laughing when I saw Lightning Brown doing quick math at the bar, just to confirm his change was correct. So many laughs to be had this past week.

The community is bustling! The "Big Dig" is over, and the Tree Lighting at "Jingle Bell Night" was a fantastic event. Christmas

decorations are now abundant, adding festive cheer everywhere you look. We might be seeing more performances from musician Bob Banks, who has officially retired from his day job. Perhaps he'll even take up the piano! Greetings to Ann at Foodland in Burford and her five cats. And kudos to Paul Barber; thanks for being the responsible one and getting everyone safely back to Canada after a trip to Portugal—I know that feeling!

My observations of Council this week provided a bit of unexpected entertainment. It truly seemed like only one Councillor was fully aware of what they were voting for last week, which gave me a good giggle. From my perspective living in the flats, the noise level is fine. Council, please be mindful of appearances; the cameras are on, so take the time to open your meeting packages.

It's been wonderful connecting with so many people recently. Hello to Matt North, son of Wendy—what a lovely young man. Rika Rechstein (spelling, apologies!)—what a nice surprise. Mark "Wardy" Ward and his son are down in Florida playing ball for Team Canada, while Will Moore (Mike and Lori's son) is playing in Indiana. Greetings to the Hogarth and Oldroyd girls, who always offer a smile. And hugs for Marlene; let the Christmas spirit fill your whole month.

I also ran into Mr. Dave Kerr, yet another great teacher and friend. I joked with

him that for all those Friday afternoons the teachers spent at the Legion after school, not one ever offered me a ride! Special shout-outs to Harvey (Matt) Lesage and Bill and Nancy B.

I had a very touching moment speaking with Erkle this week. He shared a special memory of how my Grandpa Johnston and my Dad would allow his parents, grandparents, and others to run a "tab" at the store. As Erkle explained, back then it was simply part of the service, and Grandpa's philosophy was simple: Nobody goes hungry. He noted Millward's IGA operated the same way. Erkle said this gesture of trust and generosity has always stayed with him, and I thank him for sharing that inspiring story.

Speaking of Grandpa Johnston, I'll close with a quick Butch Poland story. Butch had bought some junk food and pickles on the tab, and Grandpa, being the thoughtful man he was, called Butch's mom just to let her know. Butch got quite the scolding for that one, but he's still with us today, thankfully!

I thank you all for being good sports, and I truly hope you enjoy reading the column as much as I enjoy writing it. As Dobie Gray sings, "Thanks for the joy that you give to me." Seeing you all—the people who make up this community—is what this column is all about. You are the heart of the story.

Merry Christmas to all, and peace be with you. Santa Claus is surely coming to town.

Grand Erie sees third straight year of EQAO gains in math, literacy

MEDIA RELEASE

Standardized test scores continue to climb in Grand Erie schools, with provincial assessments showing improvements in elementary and secondary math, reading and writing for the third consecutive year.

The Grand Erie District School Board reported significant increases across Grades 3, 6 and 9 in Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assessments. The board also saw a four-per-cent jump in Grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) applied results, while academic literacy scores remain steady at 90 per cent.

"We are committed to learning at every level of the district, guided by the moral imperative that students remain at the core of everything we do," said Dr. JoAnna Roberto, PhD, Director of Education. "As a principled learning organization, our progress is rooted in supporting every learner and in our shared belief that learning is continuous."

Roberto said the gains reflect district-wide efforts in math instruction, curriculum alignment and student support.

"This commitment drives us forward as we prepare students to be future-ready. The results reflect our ongoing journey, showing where students are now and where we need to grow as a learning organization to strengthen achievement further," she said. "These positive outcomes demonstrate that every student can learn and reach their potential."

Three-year trend shows steady improvement

Over the last three years, Grand Erie has recorded double-digit gains in math achievement in certain grades:

- Grade 3 math results increased by 10 per cent
- Grade 6 math results increased by 8 per cent
- Grade 9 math results increased by 11 per cent
- OSSLT applied results increased by 5 per cent, while academic results remain at 90 per cent

Year-over-year results from 2023-24 to 2024-25 highlight continued momentum in reading, writing and math:

- Grade 3 math increased by 8 per cent
- Grade 6 math increased by 4 per cent
- Grade 9 math increased by 9 per cent
- OSSLT applied literacy scores rose by 4 per cent

Provincial comparisons

While Grand Erie continues to trail provincial averages, the gap narrowed across several categories this year.

In Grade 3, 60 per cent of students met or exceeded the provincial standard in math, compared to 64 per cent provincially. Grade 6 math improved to 45 per cent locally, versus 51 per cent across Ontario. Grade 9 math climbed to 50 per cent, up from 41 per cent last year, while the provincial average sits at 58 per cent.

Literacy results were mixed. The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test Results showed an overall success rate of 74 per cent in Grand Erie, down slightly from 76 per cent the previous year, and below the provincial 85-per-cent level. Applied literacy scores rose to 60 per cent, matching the provincial average. Academic literacy remained at 90 per cent, just one point below the Ontario rate.

Leadership praises educators

"The most significant contributors to this success are our educators, whose passion continues to shape environments where students learn, lead, and inspire," Roberto said. "The gains in achievement highlight curiosity in action, confident exploration, and creative, critical thinking."

Board Chair Brian Doyle credited classroom and school-level staff for the improvements.

"On behalf of the Board of Trustees, the results show continued growth in Grand Erie's journey of excellence in motion," Doyle said. "With a collective effort by educators, administrators, instructional coaches, support staff, system leaders, and the Senior Leadership Team, they're to be commended for their outstanding commitment to student achievement every day in classrooms across Grand Erie under the leadership of our Director of Education."

Roberto said further work is already underway, including strategies in early literacy, math development and graduation pathways.

"Grand Erie continues to delve deeply into mathematics and reading with an emphasis on individual student growth," she said. "The 2025-26 Annual Learning and Operating Plan is responsive to student learning and includes specific strategies to improve learning results in early literacy, math, and graduation pathways."

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Annual No Road Back event hits \$4K for cancer transportation program



(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

Branch 29 Legion president Barry Humphrey presents No Road Back organizer Jim Young with the Legion's \$500 contribution to the Canadian Cancer Society, part of this year's successful fundraiser in support of Wheels of Hope. The 2025 No Road Back music event raised \$4,165 to help provide transportation for local residents travelling to cancer treatments. Hosted annually by the Paris Legion on the third Saturday of November, the long-running live-music fundraiser continues to bring together local bands, volunteers, and supporters in a night of community spirit and generosity.

Grand Erie clarifies transportation and transition supports for French immersion students

This is a follow-up to The Paris Independent's November 12 story headlined: "Parents fight French Immersion relocation plan."

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

Weeks after parents went public with concerns over the relocation of Grand Erie District School Board's French Immersion (FI) program from North Park Collegiate (NPC) to Brantford Collegiate Institute (BCI), the board has responded with clarifications, contradicting some information shared by local families affected by the program change.

In email responses to a series of questions from The Paris Independent, Ryan Strang, Senior Manager of Communications and Community Relations for Grand Erie, said information has already been provided to affected families, and that long-term data, declining retention and expanded course options drove the decision.

But parents and the board continue to present starkly different versions of key points, especially transportation, timing and transparency.

Parents interviewed in November said they were told there would be no busing for Paris students attending BCI, calling it "one of the biggest concerns" and "a major barrier."

The board disputes that characterization. "Yes, information has already been communicated with all families currently at North Park," Strang said, adding that Paris-area FI students transferring fully to BCI will receive transportation from Paris to BCI.

Where the confusion lies is within the current Grade 9 student base, who beginning next year have the option of fully transitioning to BCI or taking a hybrid approach of attending BCI for half a day, for one semester throughout their remaining high school years to graduate with a French

Immersion Certificate while still attending North Park Collegiate as their main school base. The board confirms there will be no transportation for the students who choose a half-day arrangement - attending BCI for FI credits and NPC for remaining classes - a phased option parents requested to minimize disruption.

"No, transportation will not be provided for students who elect to stay at North Park part time," Strang said.

Parents say not every family can realistically transport their child midday between two Brantford schools.

Parents previously told The Paris Independent they were not given a reason for terminating FI at NPC and have been unable to access documents used to make the decision.

"We still don't know the reason why this decision was made," parent Celeste Bilbao-Joseph said earlier this fall.

In his response, Strang referred to the Secondary Program Review conducted in 2022 and said declining retention at NPC was central to the decision.

"As the report indicates, over the past five years, the French Immersion retention rate at Brantford Collegiate has increased to 86%, whereas the retention rate at North Park has steadily declined to 57%," Strang wrote.

He points to the Secondary Program Review Report which refers to data that shows that FI students attending BCI are more likely to stay with the program, compared to those at NPC. The Review goes on to state these findings were 'based on the review that included the disaggregation of data undertaken, using the Guiding Principles of the LTAP, The French Immersion Review by Watson & Associates Ltd. and the recommendations of the Special Ad-

Hoc Committee on French Immersion.' Strang said these findings were communicated to families prior to course selection for the 2026-27 school year. That report is posted online at www.granderie.ca/board/board-and-committee-meetings/policy-and-program-committee

The school board says that consolidating FI at BCI strengthens programming because one site supports "a greater number of French Immersion course options" and ensures students can obtain necessary credits before the February course selection deadline.

Strang said the full Long-Term Accommodation Plan (LTAP) is available online at www.granderie.ca/board/publications#LTAP. Parents have consistently asked for a grandfathering method to allow current Grade 9 students to finish FI at NPC, while new FI students begin at BCI.

The board's current "phase-in" option permits Grade 9 students to take FI courses at BCI while remaining at NPC part-time in Grades 10, 11 and 12.

However, with no transportation provid-

ed for those students, parents say the option is effectively inaccessible to many.

Strang also noted that transition supports are being built into the relocation plan.

"To support current North Park French Immersion families and students, an open house was held at Brantford Collegiate Institute, where staff and students showcased the program, the school community, and the available opportunities," he said.

He added that the BCI principal "has personally visited the North Park students," FI teachers may be able to transfer, and "support will be available for any individual students who require additional support with transitions."

Parents interviewed earlier described the move as "emotionally destabilizing," especially for students who have already changed schools multiple times throughout their FI education.

Strang reiterated that he understands change is not easy and "as always, we will work closely with students, families, and staff to ensure a seamless transition to a positive experience for all."

The Paris Independent Pick Up Locations

PARIS

Brant Sports Complex

Brave Waves Swim School

Canadian Tire

Cobblestone Public House

Cowan Community Health Hub Pharmacy.

Detour Café Paris

Dog-Eared Café

Egg Smart

Elberta Farms Country Market

Farah Foods

From The Attic Interiors

Horsfall's Auto Service

Jay's No Frills

John M Hall The House of Quality Linen

Le Petite Marché

Mary Maxim

Northville Pharmacy

Paris Beer Company

Paris Health Store

Paris Inn

Paris Jewellers

Park Lane Terrace

Paris Branch--County of Brant Public Library

PrimaCare Community Family Health Team

Queensview Retirement Community

Rexall Pharmacy

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 29

Sales Decorating

Secret Lunch and Catering

Sobeys

Stacked Pancake & Breakfast House Paris

Telfer Place Retirement Residence

Tim Hortons - Rest Acres

Tim Hortons - Paris Road

Tim Hortons - Grand River St N

The Gem Marketplace

The Grand Bayou Cajun Kitchen

The Paris Wincey Mills Market

Walter's Greenhouses & Garden Centre

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- 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:

- Coming Events Word Ad (50 word max.) - \$10 + hst
- 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

The Paris Independent SPORTS



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Brant Battalion U13A make statement at CCM Nations Cup in Detroit

CASNANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

The Brant Battalion U13A squad turned heads south of the border late last month, rattling off four straight wins at the CCM Nations Cup in Detroit before bowing out in Sunday's semifinal.

The international tournament, which ran Nov. 28-30, featured youth hockey teams from across the United States and Canada battling for national pride in divisions from 9U to 14U. The tournament format featured a round robin schedule followed by a seeding, with North America (Canadian) teams playing United States teams on tournament's final day.

Brant opened strong Friday afternoon with a 6-0 shutout over the Aviators Kunkle of Pennsylvania before closing out Day 1 with a 5-2 win against the Rockford Rams of Michigan. The momentum carried into Saturday, where the Battalion posted a 5-1 decision over the Lakeland Hawks and followed up with a 5-3 victory against Belle Tire, both Michigan-based clubs.

The team's unbeaten run came to an end on Sunday, falling 5-2 to the Port Huron Flags. Despite the loss, North

America won the tournament in overall points, meaning Brant helped secure the gold for Canada.

Head coach Tyler Cooper said the weekend was a breakthrough moment for a team that entered Detroit searching for confidence.

"This was a tremendous effort by our boys! As a team who entered the tournament with one win all season, to rattle off four in a row while representing your country is a great accomplishment and has an extra sense of pride tied to it," Cooper said.

Wearing the Team Canada jersey brought added motivation, he added.

"There's a certain element of pride that comes along with pulling that Team Canada sweater over your head, and our boys took great pride in that."

Cooper credited the team's success to disciplined play in their own zone and contributions throughout the lineup.

"Success in hockey always starts from the back end," he said. "From our fantastic goaltending, to our shutdown defence and hard back-checking forwards. We defended successfully as a team and that was a key contribution to our success in Detroit."



Members of the U13A Battalions include (in no order) Shelton Lerno, Carter Loucks, Nick Scocchia, Hudson Collins, Blake Borden, Maddox Porter, Mason Field, Kieran Patel, Ollie Crouch, Simon Young, Tucker Vanfleet, Will Schoeman, Blake Stanley, Max Bloomfield, Emmett Cooper, Emmett Kloepfer, and Nash Young-Badanjak.



House League Standings - Week of December 1st

7-8 Year-Old (House League)

Lakers (Team 2) Defeat Fruit (Team 1), 22-4
King Pineapple (Team 3) Defeat Warriors (Team 4), 24-6

This week's top scorers:

Hukam, King Pineapple, 24 points, Gavin N, Lakers, 14 points
Leah, Lakers, 8 points

9-11 Year-Old (House League)

Warriors (Team 2) Defeat Tigers (Team 1), 26-12
Lakers (Team 3) Defeat Raptors (Team 4), 28-16

This week's top scorers:

Laith, Tigers, 12 points, William, Lakers, 10 points Spencer,
Lakers, 8 points



PARIS MINOR HOCKEY

SCOREBOARD - WEEK OF NOVEMBER 30TH

Sunday, November 30

- U13LL1 Wolfpack lose 8-1 against Tillsonburg Tornadoes
- U15LL Wolfpack tie 4-4 against Delhi-Norwich 59ers
- U18LL2 Wolfpack lose 9-7 against Six Nations Blackhawks

Monday, December 1

- U11LL2 Wolfpack win 6-3 against Tillsonburg Tornadoes
- U13LL1 Wolfpack win 12-0 against Waterford Wildcats
- U18LL1 Wolfpack tie 2-2 against Waterford Wildcats

Tuesday, December 2

- U9MD Wolfpack lose 4-0 against Delhi-Norwich 59ers
- U15LL Wolfpack lose 1-0 against Ayr Flames

Thursday, December 4

- U11LL2 Wolfpack lose 2-1 against Simcoe Warriors 2
- U11LL1 Wolfpack tie 3-3 against Ayr Flames 1

Saturday, November 29

- U11LL3 Wolfpack lose 8-1 against Ayr Flames 3
- U11LL1 Wolfpack lose 5-1 against Six Nations Blackhawks

Burford rallying behind hometown hero Emma Woods

PARIS INDEPENDENT STAFF

Staff Contribution

On Sunday, December 14, the Emma Woods jersey-retirement ceremony will take centre stage at the Burford Community Centre (14 Potter Drive, Burford). The event kicks off at 4:00 p.m., just before the U18 game, and will feature the presentation of a commemorative jersey honouring her outstanding career, followed by an autograph session with Emma for fans and aspiring young athletes from the community.

A proud Burford native, Woods got her start on the ice playing with the local Burford Minor Hockey program - the Coyotes - through Bantam levels before advancing to the highest echelons of women's hockey. She now skates professionally for the Toronto Sceptres in the Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL).

Her journey has taken her from a small-town upbringing to championship-winning squads and now back home, where the community that helped shape her can celebrate in person. Woods is not only a skilled forward but also a passionate advocate for youth hockey, working with the Grindstone Award Foundation to help make the sport more accessible for girls.

Big credit goes to the Burford District Minor Hockey Association for organising this tribute and giving locals a rare chance to see a hometown athlete shine, share her story, and inspire the next generation.



(PWHL PHOTO)

Emma Woods, now playing professionally with the PWHL's Toronto Sceptres, returns to the Burford Community Centre on Dec. 14 for a special jersey ceremony organized by the Burford District Minor Hockey Association.

Paris Titans earn weekend split with back-to-back 5-3 results

JIM BROWN

Sports Correspondent

The Paris Titans split a pair of weekend road games in Provincial Junior C Hockey League play – both ending with a 5-3 score.

Friday evening the Titans were in Norwich where they fell 5-3. The Merchants took a 1-0 lead in the first period on a power play goal by Brandon Bolazs. They added to that lead in the second with two goals from Thomas McEvoy and Logan Van den Akker at 9:20 and 10:28 respectively.

Trevor McDowell got the Titans on the scoreboard at 10:28 of the second period with Keegan Clarke and Aiden Switzer earning assists. Clark Dunford put the Titans one back at 18:21 on the power play with Kayden Blacquiere and Ryan Gardiner-O'Keefe adding assists.

Clarke netted the equalizer at 6:47 of the third period with the Kersey brothers, Jack and Cole earning assists.

A minute later, Simon Otaki netted the winner for the Merchants at 8:05. Bolden Brimmell tallied an insurance marker at 10:27 with the man advantage.

Ethan Maden stopped 37 of 42 shots he faced in the Titans goal while Norwich's netminder made 33 saves.

The Titans were handed nine penalties while the Merchants were assessed seven penalties.

Saturday evening the Titans were in Wellesley and three unanswered third period goals lifted the Titan to a 5-3 decision over the Apple Jacks.

The game was at two all tie after the first period of play. Blake Kersey opened the scoring at 1:28 of the first period. Wellesley's Ben Morton made it 1-1 at 8:48. Dunford responded to give the Titans a 2-1 edge over the Applejacks. The period almost closed with a Paris advantage, but Hudson Parkert would even the score at two at 14:20.

Wellesley struck first in the second period with a marker



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTO)

from Kian Harron but that would be all they could muster before the Titans exploded with three unanswered goals to score a 5-3. Christian tied the score at three at 11:35 of the third period, assisted by Jake Semiwiolos and Jack Russell. Jay Metler put the Titans ahead by one at the 19-minute mark with Adam Switzer getting the assist. Clarke netted the insurance marker, an empty net tally at 19:57. Gardiner-O'Keefe assisted.

Madden stopped 30 of 33 shots he faced in the Titans net while Logan MacMillsn made 32 saves in the Wellesley net, facing 36 shots.

The Titans were handed four penalties and the Apple Jacks received three penalties.

The team is back in action on Friday, December 12 for a home game against Hespeler beginning at 7:45 pm, followed by another home game on Saturday, December 13 against Woodstock. Puck drops at 7:30 pm.



BRANT BATTALION

SCOREBOARD - WEEK OF NOVEMBER 30TH

Sunday, November 30

- U11A Battalions lose 9-0 against Elgin-Thames 73s
- U15A Battalions win 6-0 against Ausable Valley Coyotes

Monday, December 1

- U14A Battalions tie 2-2 against New Hamburg Huskies

Tuesday, December 2

- U13B Battalions win 4-2 against Delhi-Norwich 59ers
- U18B Battalions lose 4-1 against Tavistock Titans

Thursday, December 4

- U18B Battalions lose 3-1 against Twin Centre Stars

Friday, December 5

- U11B Battalions win 13-0 against New Hamburg Huskies
- U16A Battalions XX against Delhi-Norwich 59ers

Saturday, December 6

- U16A Battalions win 5-1 against Delhi-Norwich 59ers
- U13B Battalions lose 2-0 against New Hamburg Huskies
- U11B Battalions lose 4-2 against Norwich Knights 1
- U14A Battalions lose 5-1 against Strathroy Jr. Rockets
- U15B Battalions win 7-0 against New Hamburg Huskies
- U16A Battalions win 4-1 against Mt. Brydges Cougars
- U18A Battalions lose 9-4 against St. Marys Rock

Flashback



(SCOOP STEWART PHOTO)
1980 little league all stars team coached by Dick Attleberry and Jeff Joynes

Panthers seize momentum in girls' hockey; other squads seek bounce-backs

GEORGE LE GRESLEY

Sports Correspondent

Boys Basketball

Last Tuesday, the Junior and Senior Sides travelled to Assumption College, and both teams lost their games. Leading scorers for the Junior Panthers were Blake Cruikshank with 13 points and Calvin Passos and Sawyer Head each with 4 Points. For the senior side, Canaan Sherbino, Nathan Brewster, and Elliott Schiedel were the leading scorers.

On Thursday, the teams travelled to Caledonia to meet the McKinnon Park Blue Devils, and both the Juniors and Seniors lost their matchups. Leading scorers for the Juniors were Blake Cruikshank and Calvin Passos. Girls

Volleyball

The Panther teams welcomed Assumption College to their home court last Tuesday, with the Junior side being swept 3-0. The Senior Panthers put out a good effort, winning the first game 25-23 and the second game 25-20, ending with a 2-0 lead in the best-of-five series. Assumption came back to win the next two games, tying up the series and moving into a 15-point tiebreaker game. In the end, the Panthers lost the game 15-11 and the match 3-2.

Boys Hockey

After a big win over Holy Trinity last week, the team travelled to the Lions' Park Arena to face the Assumption side. The Lions started by spending a lot of time on the Panthers' side, finally scoring the opening goal, and the period ended 1-0.

A minute and 15 seconds into the second period, Panther Keith McRuer ties the game on assists from Jackson Birey and Jack Ward. Paris goalie Ethan Sickle was busy in the net, and with a mad scramble in front of the net, the Lions got the puck into the net to take back a 2-1 lead at the end of the second period.

Assumption scored early in the third period, after he snuck behind the Paris defenders, stretching their lead to 3-1. The Panthers struck back in the fourth minute, when Keith McRuer scores. Jack Ward and Jacob Woloshin assisted, with the Panthers trailing 3-2. Two minutes later, Logan Sinclair ties the game at 3-3. The game ended tied at 3-3, with outstanding play in net by goalie Ethan Sickle, who, after the game, credited his team and a goalpost to keeping this game tied.

Girls Hockey

Last year, the Panther girls' hockey team had a great run to the AABNH finals and is hoping to meet and exceed last year's goals. They opened up their season last Wednesday against the North Park Trojans, who had a very short bench. Two minutes into the game surprisingly opened the scoring to take a 1-0 lead. From that point, it was all Panthers starting at the five-minute mark with a goal off Raegan Charter's stick with an assist credited to Dani Seibert. Raegan didn't stop her goal production as she scored two more goals to get a hat trick. Assists on her second goal were awarded to Alyssa Oakes, and on her third goal to Harley Shuart. Next to score for Paris was Harley Shuart, who potted two more goals, ending the first period with a 5-1 lead. Assisting on Shuart's first goal were Alyssa Oakes and Dani Seibert, and on the second goal, Rowan Worrall and Dani Seibert.

The second period opening goal was by North Park, followed by a power play goal by Lily Goodyear, assisted by Taylor Drinkle. After two periods, the score was Paris 6 and North Park 2.

In the third period, the two teams each scored a goal, giving the Panthers a 7-3 win. Scoring the final Panther goal off the stick of Lily Goodyear, assisted by Raegan Charter and Alyssa Oakes.

Harley Shuart, a grade 12 student veteran of this team, feels that the group is playing well, with steady goaltending from Kenzie Coates, the winning goalie, and Brooklyn



(GEORGE LE GRESLEY PHOTOS)

Panthers standouts Harley Shuart and Ethan Sickle capped off a busy week on the ice, with Shuart netting a hat trick in girls' hockey action and Sickle turning aside key chances to preserve a 3-3 tie for the boys.

Boer. The goal, as always, is to play one game at a time all the way to the AABHN final.

Girls Volleyball

McKinnon Park had come to town to play the Panthers, and that Grinch definitely delivered the coal to the Junior side, who lost the match in three straight games.

For the Seniors, it was a loss: they lost the match 3-1. The team has to work on getting points on their serves to be more successful. Last Tuesday, the Panthers' Junior and Senior sides welcomed the Assumption College squads. The Juniors suffered a loss, while the Seniors took the opposition to a five-game set, losing 3-2.

Paris foursome delivers rock-solid win in Women's Day League



(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

Sweeping the competition clean! The Paris Women's Day League Autumn Draw champs - from left, lead Deb Skoretz, second Angela Stewart, skip Jan McLean and vice Kathy Dreyer - put the "rock" in rock-solid this season. Curling bragging rights secured... for now!

Canadian fiddle champion Scott Woods and his band bringing Christmas Hoedown to Paris

GALEN SIMMONS

Paris Independent Columnist

Local fiddle fans and those who enjoy Christmas music or a good, old-fashioned variety show will have two opportunities next month to catch Canadian fiddle champion Scott Woods and his band perform their Christmas Hoedown.

With a show scheduled for the Paris Agricultural Hall in Paris at 7 p.m. Dec. 17, the Christmas Hoedown promises two hours of toe-tapping family fun sure to set the holiday season off on the right foot.

“It’s been really well-loved; everyone just gravitates to it,” Woods told the Times during a pit stop on the Alberta leg of his cross-country Christmas Hoedown tour. “We started on Nov. 1, which is really quite early for a Christmas show. I was worried it was the day after Halloween; people might not be ready to get into the Christmas spirit. But actually, it was the opposite. The crowds have been great and they absolutely love the show, and they go home singing “Jingle Bells” and all their Christmas favourites.

“The show that we build is a real variety show. You don’t have to be a fiddle fan by any means or a country music fan. That’s sort of the flavour that the Christmas music takes when we present it, but it’s certainly a Christmas show – a family variety show. ... There’s some fast, fun stuff, costumes, lots of humour and some serious Christmas stuff as well with songs and an inspirational story. There’s really something for everybody, even the kids.”

To help bring this show to life, Woods is backed by a

stellar group of artists including his sister, Kendra Norris, on piano, fiddle and vocals, three-time Canadian open step-dancing champion, drummer and fiddle player Leo Stock, Canadian Country Music Awards Guitar Player of the Year Steve Piticco on guitar and vocals, and renowned husband-and-wife bluegrass duo Nadine and Gary Boles – Nadine Boles on acoustic guitar and vocals and Gary Boles on bass and vocals.

Woods says each member of the band brings something unique and entertaining to the show, from Stock’s lightning-fast feet as a world-class step dancer to Nadine Boles’ hauntingly beautiful vocals that bring depth to Christmas favourites.

And while the show is reminiscent of a traditional Christmas concert, there are newer elements that highlight the multitude of talents of the artists on stage.

“Our musical arrangements are pretty retro, they’re pretty old time. We dress with matching outfits on the stage like old-time bands used to back in the ‘50s and ‘60s, and we still incorporate high-tech. We have a great sound and lighting system, and we have GoPro cameras on the stage and big-screen projection so you can see Leo’s feet up close and personal on the big screen while he’s dancing, and Steve’s fingers while he’s playing guitar, and my fingers when I’m playing fiddle. We have other visual images that enhance the songs and the stories we’re telling.

“It’s a real fun, kind of retro but modern approach to Christmas music,” Woods said.

For more information and to purchase tickets for the Stratford show, visit scottwoods.ca/event/stratford-on-christmas-hoedown/.



(SCOTT WOODS PHOTO)

Canadian fiddle champion Scott Woods and his band are bringing their Christmas Hoedown show to Paris on Dec. 17.

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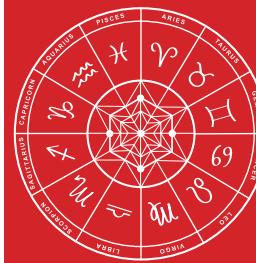
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WEEKLY Horoscope

December 10- December 18 2025

ARIES

Mar 21 - Apr 20

New energy builds quickly, Aries. A timely decision sharpens your direction and boosts your confidence. Trust the momentum—it's working in your favor.



TAURUS

Apr 21 - May 21

Reliable rhythm returns, Taurus. A steady choice brings comfort and peace of mind. Stay patient—your dedication supports lasting stability.



GEMINI

May 22 - Jun 21

Mental energy surges, Gemini. A meaningful exchange sparks fresh perspective and creativity. Chase the thoughts that excite you—they carry purpose.



CANCER

Jun 22 - Jul 22

Inner calm grows stronger, Cancer. Support arrives in subtle but steady ways. Let kindness shape your next steps.



LEO

Jul 23 - Aug 23

Your presence turns heads, Leo. Passion flows freely when you trust your instincts and lead with confidence. Let your light shine—it reaches farther than you realize.



VIRGO

Aug 24 - Sept 22

Focus brings clarity, Virgo. Tackling one detail restores your sense of balance. Forward motion feels smoother when you trust your method.



FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

DECEMBER 10

Bobby Flay, Celebrity Chef (61)

DECEMBER 11

Rita Moreno, Actress (94)

DECEMBER 12

Dionne Warwick, Musician (85)

DECEMBER 13

Taylor Swift, Musician (36)

DECEMBER 14

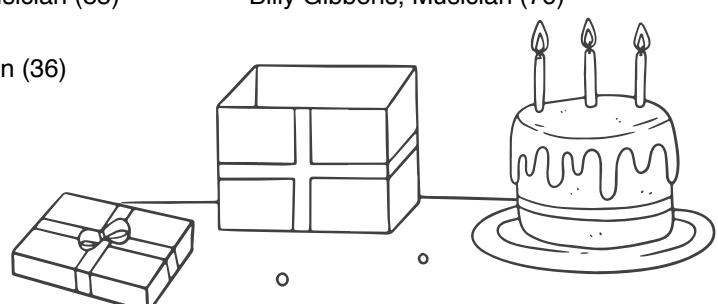
Vanessa Hudgens, Actress (37)

DECEMBER 15

Don Johnson, Actor (76)

DECEMBER 16

Billy Gibbons, Musician (76)





Riddles

What do snowmen eat for breakfast?

Ice Krispies

What do snowmen take when the sun gets too hot?

A chill pill

What do snowmen call their offspring?

Chill-dren

What game do snowmen play at parties?

Freeze tag

Why are snowmen such good listeners?

They're all ears (and a carrot nose)!

Why did the snowman look through the carrots?

He was picking his nose

Why don't snowmen tell secrets?

They'd melt under pressure

What do you get when you cross a snowman and a vampire?

Frostbite

Sudoku

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

Solutions on page 19

Sponsored by:



PET OF THE WEEK



JASPER

Meet our Pet of the Week:

Jasper, the bichon poodle was in for his puppy examination and immunizations. He was such a good boy and we can't wait to watch him grow

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



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

Roll
 Pack
 Stack
 Shape
 Snowballs
 Base
 Middle
 Top
 Carrot
 Coal
 Buttons
 Scarf
 Hat
 Decorations
 Twig
 Arms
 Smile
 Mittens
 Frosty
 Finish

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EMAIL TO INQUIRE INFO@THEPARISINDEPENDENT.COM

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10

Game Café Night at the Wincey Mills - coffee shop area from 7 pm to 9 pm, hosted by Paris Community Church and Paris Beer Company. Event is for all ages, but teens between the ages of 10 to 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Whether you enjoy board games, card games or classics like crokinole and chess, this free event is for you!

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11

Free Will Offering - St. Paul's United Church, 48 Broadway St. W., Paris, invites everyone to a Free Will Offering Soup and Bun Luncheon on December 11th from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. All are welcome!

Women Inspiring Women, Women's Institute Merry Little Christmas Party and Festive Potluck - Thursday, December 11th, 6-9 pm at The Paris Fairgrounds, Community Room. Snowflake craft and festive trivia to follow.

Join us for the launch of "Fail Forward" by Doug Hunt, Larry Brown, and Bernadine Van Renne - Thursday, December 11th at 6:30 PM under the 55-foot stilt display at Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre. Hosted by Dave Levac, the event will include remarks from Mayor Kevin and the PSS Executive Director, a book proclamation by David McKee, and a special reading by Larry Brown. Meet the authors, get your books signed, and enjoy free pizza from Domino's. Books available for \$25, with proceeds supporting Participation Support Services.

Men's Probus Club of Brantford Monthly Meeting - Will be held on Thursday, December 11, 10:00 a.m. till noon, at Walter Gretzky Municipal Golf Course, 320 Balmoral Drive. We will be celebrating a Christmas themed occasion with music and entertainment provided by Brantford's own legendary Sonny Sinclair who will be regaling us with seasonal themed tunes of times past and present. The goal of the Probus Club of Brantford is to provide fellowship, friendship, and enjoyment for people in their retirement and semi-retirement years. Men's Probus Club, website: brantfordprobus.ca.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12

Paris Optimist Club Hosted Youth Dance - The Paris Optimist Club is hosting a Youth Dance at the Syl Apps Community Centre, 51 William St in Paris from 7 pm to 10 pm. This month's theme is Christmas Best Dressed. Dance is for students in Grades 5 to 8 only. Students Grade 9 and older are welcome to attend as volunteers. Dance is chaperoned by adults. Entry fee is \$5.00 with a concession booth for pop, chips, candy and pizza. For any further information and to volunteer as a chaperone or as a high school student, please call 519.757.5020.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13

Brantford Symphony Orchestra with guests The Grand River Chorus perform Handel's 'Messiah' at the Sanderson Centre - 7:30pm. Tickets are \$44 and \$49 for adults, \$10 for students with ID, FREE for children and elementary students, available at: brantfordsymphony.ca.

Owl Prowl for Families - Explore the trails at dusk and learn about local owls on this

family-friendly outdoor adventure. Registration required. Sat. Dec. 13, 5:00pm-6:30pm Five Oaks Centre, 1 Bethel Rd, Paris 519-442-3212 | www.fiveoaks.on.ca

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13 & SUNDAY DECEMBER 14

Paris Optimist Club - Join the Paris Optimist Club as they organize Santa Claus meet and greets. The first event will take place on Saturday, December 13th with a Storytime reading of 'Twas the Night Before Christmas and Rudolf the Red Nose Reindeer, and sing-song event held at the Optimist Club House at 2 Elm St in Paris from 1 pm to 2:30 pm. Don't miss the chance to get that photo op with Santa! The second event takes place on Sunday, December 14 from 10 am to 2 pm at Wincey Mills where children can have their photo taken with Santa, participate in a Christmas activity and receive a treat bag.

SUNDAY DECEMBER 14

Traditional Christmas Service - Please join us on Sunday, December 14/25 @ 2:00 pm for our Traditional Christmas Service in the historical St. Paul's Chapel, 1159 Hwy 54, Middleport. Fellowship and Refreshments following the service. Everyone welcome! Please bring a non-perishable donation for the Caledonia Food Bank.

Yuletide Harmonies - Invites you to step away from the holiday rush and embrace the peace, hope, and joy of Christmas through music with the St. George Pro Musica Choir. Enjoy a beautiful program featuring choral selections, a trio of two harps and flute, organ and piano duets, a piano solo, vocal solos, and a special opportunity for the audience to join in song. December 14, 2025 | 3:30 p.m. | St. Paul's United Church

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

Live Music Afternoon at The Paris Pub - In Support of the Food Bank - Join The Paris Pub on Sunday, December 21, 2025, for a festive live performance by The Kings of Adequate. Enjoy upbeat holiday tunes on the year's shortest day, with music playing from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM. There's no cover charge, but cash or food donations for the local Food Bank are warmly welcomed. For more information, please contact The Paris Pub.

DECEMBER 21, 23 AND 24TH

Candlelight Service at Paris Community Church - J164 Grand River St N beginning at 6:30 pm- Join us in celebrating Christ's birth through song and reflection. Experience the Christmas story with family and friends at one of our candlelight services on December 21st, 23rd or 24th.

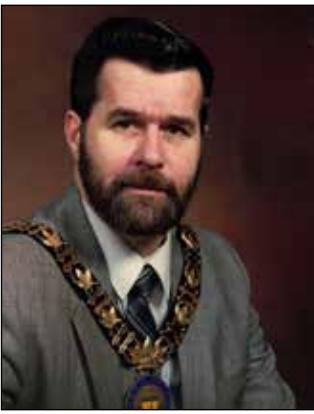
1 & 3 TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

The Brantford Stamp Club - In Support of the Food Bank - The Brantford Stamp Club meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday September to December and January to May as well as the 1st Tuesday in June and December. Meetings are held at The Branlyn Community Centre 238 Brantwood Park Drive in Brantford. Doors open at 7pm and meetings start at 8pm.

OBITUARY

Gibson

Gibson, Gordon Harry



Peacefully, at Oakwood Commons, Brantford on Saturday November 29, 2025, formerly of Paris, in his 86th year.

Gord was very active in the Town of Paris, a true entrepreneur. He served Paris as a Warden, and Councillor for many years. He was active in Freemasonry with St. John's Lodge No. 82, the Shrine to name a few bodies he belonged to. The loved Western Movies and Model Trains.

Beloved dad to the late Lisa Dalpe (Paul (Emily)) and Shawn; cherished grandpa to Phil (Marianne), Zac (Cassandra), and Ben (Celsey); and GG to Brooks, Avery, Beau, Declan, and Beckham. Dear brother to Carol Licksai (the late Ernie); Also survived by many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Predeceased by his parents May and Jim Gibson, a sister Barb Muckler (Bill) and a brothers Doug (Leita), Billy and Infant sister Joan Anne.

Cremation has taken place. A family service was held with interment Paris Cemetery.

Donations to Stedman Hospice would be appreciated.

Online condolences and donations may be arranged through www.wmkippfuneralhome.com or by contacting Wm. Kipp 519 442 3061.

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COMING EVENTS

WHAT'S BREWING THIS MONTH AT THE PARIS BEER CO. 

DECEMBER	
TUES DAYS	HAPPY TUESDAYS ↓ Happy Hour all day long with \$7 pints & food specials
THURS DAYS	LIVE MUSIC IN THE TAPROOM ↓ 7pm, check website for who's playing
WED THRU FRI	HAPPY HOUR 4-6PM ↓ \$7 pints & food specials
EVERY SUN	BRUNCH 11AM-2:30PM ↓ a la carte brunch menu plus the regular menu
ALL WKDS	SIP & SHOP IN THE MARKET ↓ Fri, Sat & Sun plus later market hours

BOOK A TABLE HERE 

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. 16 times	6. Victoria
2. Bletchley Park	7. Iceland
3. Wolfram	8. Frosted Flakes
4. False	9. Every 10 days
5. 1993	10. Tongue

WANTED

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.

SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

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Dan MUYS

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
FLAMBOROUGH-GLANBROOK-BRANT NORTH

PARIS Mobile Office Hours

My office has hosted these weekly since October to communities around the large geographic riding of Flamborough-Glanbrook-Brant North. We will add more pop-up office locations in the new year, such as Glen Morris.



Upcoming pop-up office dates in Paris:

**At Scott's Family Restaurant
74 Scott Ave, Paris**

Every Friday – 9:30am to Noon

- Fri. Dec 12
- Fri. Dec 19
- More pop-up offices in Paris in January, February and March following the Christmas Break. Watch this space for more details in the January 14th edition.



**Constituency Office in St. George
Brant North office since May 2025**

6 Main St. South, St. George
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WE'RE HERE TO HELP WITH FEDERAL SERVICES:

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- Canadian Dental Care
- Veterans Affairs Canada
- Federal Small Business Programs
- Federal Student and Apprentice Loans
- Any issues you may have with other federal departments
- Commissioner of Oaths

*Merry
Christmas*

**Merry Christmas to you and yours
– from Dan & Tracy**

Dan Muys, MP for Brant North

519-448-1483

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