

The Paris Independent

Issue #233

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ONE NATION, ONE GAME (SAM BARRETT PHOTO)
Young minor hockey players wave Canadian flags and clutch their noisemakers at Legends Tap House and Grill on Sunday, joining millions of Canadians who tuned in to the gold medal showdown. These young fans watched every moment of the thriller, which ended in a heartbreaking 2-1 overtime loss for Team Canada. Pictured from left to right (front row) Jarome Burke, Beau Dakin, Jakobe Barrett, Sawyer DeVries, (back row) Rlyn Armstrong, Shelton Lerno, Marshall Lerno, Cameron Tate, Jax Ferguson, Liam DeVries, Everett Hall and Alex Scherer.



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North of the Nith project clears first hurdle

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

A long-term vision for trails, restoration and recreation north of the Nith River has the support of most councillors, following a detailed presentation and strong public input at the Feb.

17 Administration and Operations Committee meeting.

The North of the Nith Trails and Open Spaces Master Plan lays out a 20-year roadmap for the 344-acre site owned by the County of Brant and the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), guiding future trail development,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Speed camera program left \$700K surplus

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

A new County of Brant report concludes that Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) cameras reduced speeding in a local school zone and generated a significant surplus before the province banned the program last fall.

The Administration and Operations Committee received Report RPT-0086-26 on Feb. 17, outlining the safety and financial impacts of the ASE program and next steps following its removal.


The County launched ASE on Feb. 3, 2025, beginning with a camera on Silver Street in Paris near North Ward Public School. A second location on Beverly Street in St. George became operational in September 2025 before the Province passed Bill 56, banning municipal ASE programs effective Nov. 14, 2025.

Despite the ban, staff continued to collect and analyze traffic data to assess the program's impact.

According to the report, speeding prevalence at the Silver Street location dropped significantly while the camera was operational.

Prior to ASE installation, between 61 and 68 per cent of vehicles were recorded speeding in the zone. After the camera went live in February 2025, that figure fell to 45 per cent and


CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



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Balancing recreation and conservation: First look at the North of the Nith Master Plan

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

environmental protection and community partnerships.

Stacey Ellins, Director of Parks and Recreation and project manager for the master plan, opened the public meeting by introducing members of the project team, two First Nation partners, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and Six Nations of the Grand River, and 10 community groups involved in shaping the plan.

“Through our engagement with public and community partners We heard that balancing recreation with conservation is a top priority,” said Ellins. “Alongside a strong interest in seeing mountain bike trails throughout the North of the Nith, the community also discussed a desire to have variety of trail types and experiences.”

Chris Veres, lead landscape architect with Scatliff + Miller + Murray, provided an overview of the site and its constraints before council heard public delegations.

“The land is really defined by various eco systems,” said Veres, noting it does have constraints like the Land Transfer Station and lands owned by Amrize and the GRCA.

“Through the process the number one message we heard was the need to balance recreation with conservation,” Veres reiterated.

The property includes lands owned by the County and GRCA, while Amrize (formerly Lafarge) holds an active extraction licence in the southern portion of the site. According to the staff report, the area includes wetlands, floodplains and natural heritage features that support species at risk.

The master plan centres around five major components, referred to as five big moves: Loops and Links, the Mountain Bike Trail Park, Environmental Restoration and Protection, the Penman’s Pass Extension and the Park Entrance.

The plan recommends approximately 15 kilometres of primary trails, including 12 km of shared-use trails, one kilometre of pedestrian-only trail and two kilometres

dedicated to a Mountain Bike Trail Park. With anticipated secondary trails, cyclists could ultimately have access to up to 21 kilometres of trail within the site.

According to the project charter, one of the key benefits of the master plan is to utilize available lands for recreation and trails close to the urban boundary of Paris, providing safe and accessible opportunities for residents while formalizing currently unauthorized use.

Phillip Mete, General Manager of Community Services, said the final document reflects the wide range of public feedback received over the two-year process.

“At the end of the day, we put out a good mix of what the community wanted.”

He reminded council the document is a master plan framework and that specific projects will come forward in phases over time.

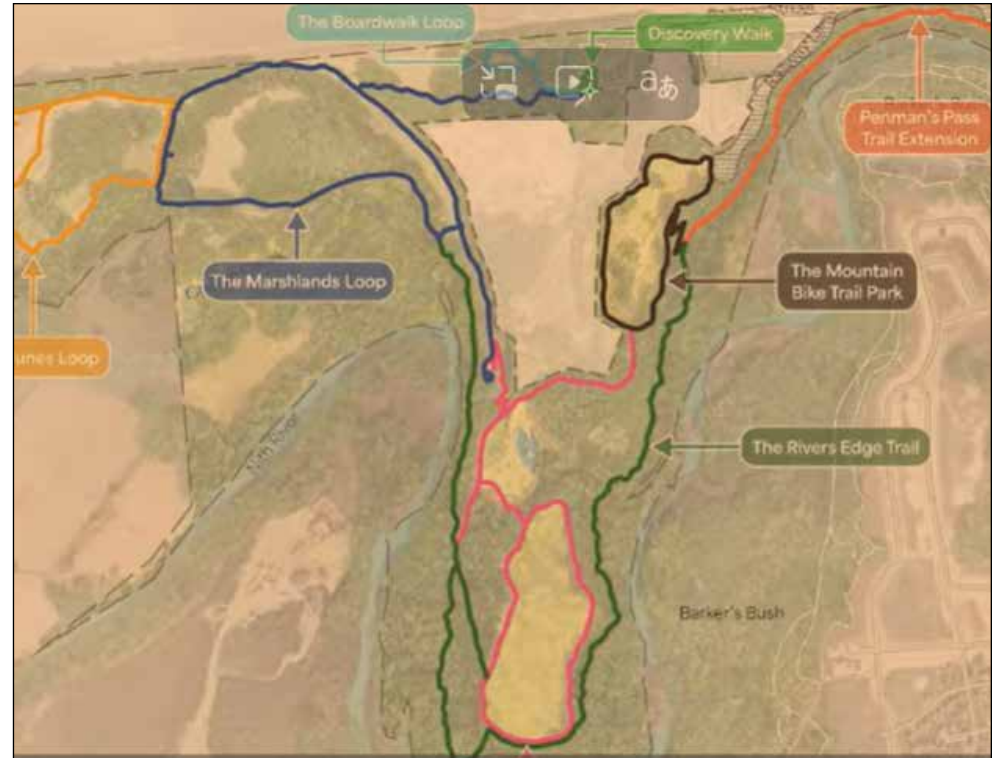
The implementation strategy outlines 30 projects over three phases, with an estimated total cost of \$8.3 million, subject to future capital budget approvals. How much of the project will be funded by the county or through community partners remains to be seen.

Beyond recreation, the charter outlines environmental benefits including restoration of natural heritage features, improved ecological linkages and buffers, invasive species management, and mitigation of flood risks through wetland enhancement and erosion-reducing plantings.

“I’ve been doing community projects for 20+ years and it’s probably been the best input I’ve ever seen on a community project. There’s so much interest,” said Mete. “We are so excited about this project.”

The project charter also identifies educational opportunities tied to the cultural and ecological history of the Nith River, recognizing its designation as a Canadian Heritage River, and calls for early and ongoing Indigenous relationship building.

Safety is another central benefit, with the plan aiming to provide safe and legal public access, reduce conflicts between user groups, define operational lands at the Paris Transfer Station, and secure areas cur-



Called Loops & Links, the idea for this section of the project is to develop a trail network with certain themes that are based on certain ecologies out there.

rently impacted by unauthorized ATV and dirt bike use.

Public delegations reflected the range of interests tied to the property.

Duncan Ross of the Brant Cycling Club requested council receive the draft master plan as information and authorize staff to research a Community Led Initiative (CLI) model, including delegated authority for the planning, fundraising, implementation and management of the North of the Nith Singletrack Trail Network and Nature Park, with oversight provided by senior staff, and report back to council by June 1, 2026.

Dana Darnbrough of the Brant Waterways Foundation asked for a review of community-led initiatives and their operating models, with a report back to council by June 2026. Darnbrough also advocated for purposeful inclusion of single-track mountain bike trails and parking in the northeast areas in Phase 1, while deferring Penman’s Pass remediation activities.

Laurel Winger and Ed Wilson of Brant for Nature urged council to create a multi-use recreation area that is safe for all and protects the unique flora and fauna of the property, and asked that necessary scientific studies be conducted to ensure sensitive species are not impacted.

Individual speakers also weighed in.

Simon Stolarski voiced support for the development of a single-track mountain bike trail network, while Chris Stewart called for quicker action and more mountain bike trails. Chuck Beach asked for the stoppage of motorized vehicle environmental harm, not to purpose Penman’s Pass and to provide political assistance with Amrize. He said he believes the project appears stymied because Amrize has mining rights to a majority of property designated for environmental restoration.

Jeff Leader encouraged council to accept

the plan and work with the wider community to enhance the natural heritage and educational potential of the property.

Following the delegations, council members brought forward comments and questions.

Coun. David Miller asked how information presented by delegations would be incorporated into the plan, noting they were some of the best delegations he had seen in some time.

Mete responded, “We are going to take everything that came in today into consideration. We are going to work together with all our partners moving forward. We have a framework set out – should community partners want to start.”

Coun. John Bell commended staff, calling it the best staff report he has seen in seven years on council, describing it as balanced and detailed. He referred to the plan as a tremendous opportunity.

No where else in the county do we have this type of acreage to dedicate to recreation activities, he stated. “We owe it to all of our residents to make it a place that is available, and attractive to all residents.” He added that to achieve that, it needs to be maintained as a county-led project.

Coun. Robert Chambers asked for clarification on exactly what council was approving. Mete confirmed they were approving a roadmap for the next 20 years, with individual projects to return to council in stages through the normal funding approval process. Chambers also questioned whether council was premature in approving a plan that includes lands not fully owned by the County, such as GRCA property and areas affected by aggregate licensing.

In the end, the staff report was received as information and the North of the Nith Trails and Open Spaces Master Plan was approved by the committee. It will go to council for formal approval.



An aerial map outlines the proposed study area north of the Nith River, including Barker’s Bush, Charlie Creek and lands identified as the County Operational Zone, situated between downtown Paris and surrounding rural properties.

County analysis shows ASE improved compliance in school zones

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

continued to decline to 23 per cent by October 2025.

Average and maximum speeds also decreased during the period ASE was active. During school hours, average speeds dropped by approximately 7–8 km/h, and the maximum recorded speed fell from 100 km/h to 65 km/h.

The analysis found that while early post-removal data shows an increase in speeding since Nov. 14, speeds have not immediately returned to pre-ASE levels, suggesting the tool may have had a lasting behavioural impact.

Staff cautioned that more time and data are required to fully assess long-term trends.

The financial review shows the program operated on a revenue-positive basis.

Between February and Nov. 14, 2025, the County issued 13,066 tickets, averaging 46 per day. As of Dec. 31, 2025, 10,540 tickets or 81 per cent, had been paid.

After deducting the victim surcharge and MTO search fee, total revenue from fines issued was \$1,168,813. Program expenses, including software, staffing and administrative costs, totalled \$461,099 over 2025 and 2026.

The report estimates a total program surplus of \$707,714 by the end of 2026.

In accordance with the County's Road Safety Reserve Fund Policy, council is being asked to transfer the surplus into the Road Safety Reserve Fund to support future traffic calming initiatives.

Staff also recommend that ongoing close-out costs, including the screening officer position through 2026, be funded from the reserve, with the role transitioning to the general operating budget in 2027 to support the Administrative Penalty System.

During committee discussion, Coun. John Bell questioned what alternatives would realistically achieve the same results.

"If we can't put ASE in these locations, what would be the traffic calming measures that would achieve the same affect, and can we do it and are we going to do it?" Bell asked.

Greg Demers, Director of Roads for the County of Brant, said staff are working with municipal partners and the province to determine next steps.

"We are talking with our partners around Ontario – we are all in the same boat. Currently we are working with the province, they have sent us signage which we have

installed and hopefully by August flashing lights to install in the area," Demers said.

Demers noted there are unique challenges at both former ASE locations.

Silver Street is a main corridor coming into Paris and accommodates truck traffic, making traditional measures such as speed humps disruptive and impractical. On Beverly Street in St. George, agricultural equipment frequently travels through town, creating similar limitations.

"So some of these schools built on arterial roads we can't do traffic calming measures — that is why they were great for ASE," Demers said.

Bell responded, "So that's the best the government can do is give us flashing lights."

Demers added that the County is still awaiting clarity on the specific limitations tied to provincial funding and how those dollars can be used.

Following the provincial ban, Ontario introduced the Road Safety Initiatives Fund (RSIF), a \$210-million program to support alternative traffic calming measures. The County has already been allocated \$147,028 through the first phase of funding.

Staff are evaluating op-

tions for former ASE locations. Potential measures on Silver Street include raised intersections and raised pedestrian crossings, while Beverly Street may see enhanced signage, radar speed boards and improved pedestrian crossing lighting.

A second phase of RSIF funding is expected to launch in early 2026, and staff are seeking council direction to apply.

The report also notes that the County is exploring participation in a University of Waterloo research project examining the impacts of ASE and its removal across municipalities.

As previously reported, council has voiced opposition to the provincial ban and supported sending letters urging the Province to reconsider its decision.

In the latest report, staff reiterate that the County remains supportive of a comprehensive provincial review of ASE regulations rather than an outright prohibition.

Council is expected to continue monitoring traffic data in former ASE zones and receive a future informational update as additional post-removal data becomes available.

Weekend Quiz

By Jake Grant

- Which fruit is known as the "King of Fruits"?
- A "prickle" is the collective noun for what groups of animals?
- Which singer was known as the "The Empress of the Blues"?
- Which company's original name was "Cadabra," as in "Abracadabra"?
- What is the fastest-growing plant in the world?
- What is the unit used to measure electrical resistance?
- Which actor played Jack Sparrow in the Pirates of the Caribbean franchise?
- At what degrees Fahrenheit does ice melt?
- Which is the only sea in the world that has no coastlines?
- How many distinct phases make up the lunar cycle?

This week's answers are found on pg. 19

The Paris Independent

Guiding Principles

- Everyone has a story
- The news should be free for all to enjoy
- Good news beats bad news
- A Newspaper should be a community effort (contribute to your local paper!)
- Newspapers document history
- Newspapers strengthen communities
- Advertisers, big or small, should profit from their ads (meaning sensible ad rates)
- Newspapers should be locally-owned and operated

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Budget adopted with 4% tax increase, 1% hospital levy

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

The County of Brant's 2026 budget has officially been adopted, locking in a four per cent property tax increase, along with a dedicated one per cent levy for the new Brant-Brantford hospital project.

Council supported the budget without amendment, and under provincial legislation it was deemed adopted as of Feb. 15.

According to a press release issued by the County of Brant on Feb. 18, the increase translates to approximately \$206 per year for the median residential property.

"I know I speak not only for myself, but for all of Council, when I say that we do not take any tax increase lightly," said Mayor David Bailey in the release. "We are at a point in time where thoughtful investments are needed to maintain and renew our aging infrastructure, support our emergency responders, and respond to the growing need for community services and outreach supports. We have also committed to a local contribution toward the New Hospital Project, which is essential to its success and represents a critical investment in the health and well-being of our community."

The 2026 operating budget totals \$164.8 million, with a net tax levy of \$92.46 million, figures first presented during special council meetings on Jan. 22 and Feb. 2. As previously reported, 2026 marked the first time the County's budget process operated

under Ontario's strong mayor legislation.

While the mayor was required to table the budget, Bailey emphasized throughout the process that the document reflected direction already approved through the County's Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP), and that he did not intend to use his veto powers.

Council ultimately endorsed the budget as presented, maintaining the collaborative tone that councillors had highlighted during earlier debate.

Infrastructure remains a central focus in 2026. In the Feb. 18 press release, the County noted that investments include road upgrades and servicing infrastructure in Cainsville to support economic growth and development of a premier employment area.

The budget also provides for the completion of the new Paramedic Services Headquarters and Garage facility, improved accommodations for essential services, and contributions to community capital campaigns, including Lansdowne Children's Centre and the Woodland Cultural Centre.

Emergency services continue to face cost pressures, with previously outlined increases of 10.9 per cent in OPP policing costs and 9.7 per cent in paramedic services. Salaries, wages and benefits are projected to rise 7.9 per cent, driven by negotiated wage agreements, grid progression and benefit cost increases.

Despite those pressures, Chief Adminis-

trative Officer Alison Newton confirmed during budget deliberations that no new staff positions are proposed for 2026.

Community engagement formed part of the 2026 Long Term Financial Plan and budget process through the Engage Brant website.

According to the Feb. 18 county press release, the page received approximately 1,800 visits and 219 completed surveys. A detailed survey report shows 216 respondents participated between Nov. 6 and Nov. 24, 2025.

Survey results indicate strong support for investment in a new hospital, with 170 respondents indicating it should be "better supported," compared to 39 who felt it should be kept as is and seven who felt it should receive less support.

Emergency and enforcement services also ranked high for increased support, with 112 respondents indicating those services should be better supported.

Affordable housing initiatives, infrastructure to support growth, and public transportation were also recurring themes, both in survey responses and written comments.

In open-ended feedback, residents frequently raised concerns about traffic congestion, road maintenance, growth management, policing visibility, and the pace of development. Others called for investments in an indoor pool, expanded public transit connections to Brantford, improved

cycling infrastructure, and greater protection of agricultural land and green space.

Key themes identified through the County's engagement process included infrastructure and growth management, hospital and health care, public transportation and mobility, recreation and community facilities, housing affordability, equity between communities, and financial discipline.

"Thank you to everyone who provided their feedback throughout the approval of the Long Term Financial Plan and the 2026 Budget process," Bailey said in the Feb. 18 release. "Engaged communities provide valuable input that help to inform our decisions, supporting the community now and for future generations."

The 2026 budget marked the first year Mayor Bailey formally presented the document under strong mayor powers.

Bailey said he was proud the process remained collaborative.

"I feel very proud to be a part of this Council," he said. "I believe that no single individual should make decisions for our community, and I am pleased that we were able to come together, with open and honest discussions across all wards, for the greater good of the County of Brant."

Residents can review the full 2026 Budget, including department breakdowns, presentations and meeting recordings, at brant.ca/budget.

Eco-conference returns to Brant Rod & Gun Club

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

After a brief hiatus, the Brant Rod & Gun Club is reviving a long-standing community tradition with its Eco-conference, set for Saturday, Feb. 28 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the club.

The event, themed "Conservation Matters," has historically drawn strong support from residents, environmental organizations and local leaders, including the Mayor, MPP and MP. Organizers say they are excited to bring the conference back after it did not run last year.

The day will feature three keynote speakers offering perspectives on forestry, watershed health and the cumulative impacts of environmental stressors in the Grand River.

Trent Meyers, Forestry Supervisor and Forestry Officer for the County of Brant, will present Building a Municipal Forestry Program, highlighting how the County has worked since 2022 to strengthen its approach to protecting and managing public tree assets. His presentation will explore the development of Brant's "Community Forest" and the steps being taken to ensure long-term forest health in both urban and rural settings.

Aquatic ecologist Jack G. Imhof will speak on Urbanization and Health of Aquatic Systems: Is it a Fish or People Issue?. With more than five decades of experience in watershed restoration, Imhof will examine how communities can plan for growth while protecting wetlands, rivers

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Letter to the Editor

Paris Ringette thanks sponsors, volunteers for tournament success

Dear Editor:

The Paris Ringette Association is proud to celebrate the tremendous success of the recent Paris Ringette Tournament, held on Family Day weekend. This long-standing annual event once again brought together hundreds of young athletes, coaches, families, and fans from across Ontario, creating a weekend filled with spirited competition, sportsmanship, and excellent ringette!

We are incredibly grateful to the many local businesses and organizations whose generous sponsorships made this tournament possible. Their support helps provide meaningful sport experiences for our athletes while strengthening the bonds between community and minor sport.

We want to especially acknowledge the contributions of **IG Wealth Management - Brantford**, and **Nith River Construction**, for their support. Equally im-

portant is the dedication of our volunteers. From the earliest stages of planning and scheduling to the final whistle, our volunteers stepped up in countless ways. Throughout the event, dedicated individuals managed scorekeeping and timekeeping and enthusiastically ran our raffles and 50/50 draws.

We would also like to thank the fans and families who filled the arenas and cheered excitedly for their respective teams. The energy in our stands truly reflected the spirit of the game.

On behalf of the Paris Ringette Association, thank you to everyone who contributed to making this year's tournament such a memorable and successful weekend. We are proud of our athletes, thankful for our supporters, and excited to continue growing the sport of ringette in our community.

- Sincerely,
Paris Ringette Association

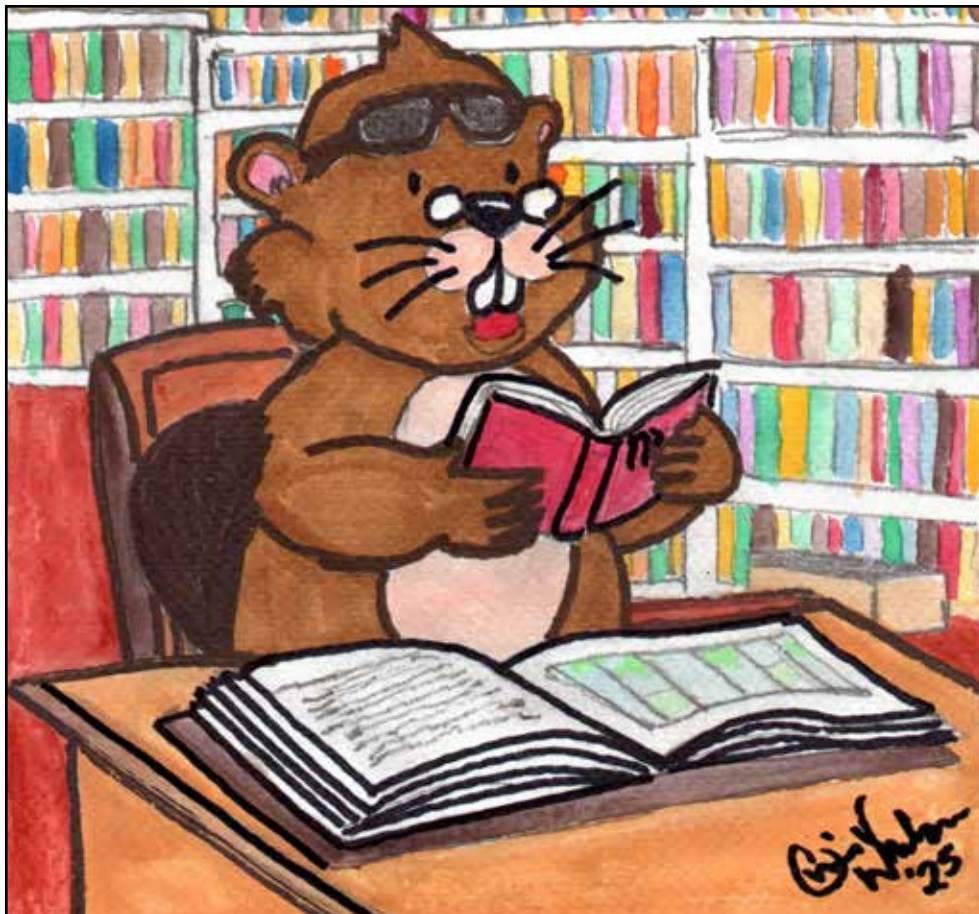
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EDITORIAL

A big moment for a young newspaper



Chris Whelan's editorial cartoon (above) is a finalist for Best Editorial Cartoon in the ONCA's Best Newspaper Competition.

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

When we announced our partnership with Grant Haven Media last March and committed to bringing print journalism back to Paris, we set the bar high.

We said we would deliver meaningful, community-driven news, told with our own style and perspective. We said community news matters. And we meant it.

Today, we are proud to share that The Paris Independent, in its very first year as a print publication and as one of the Ontario Community Newspapers Association's newest members, has been named a finalist in three Ontario Community Newspapers Association Better Newspapers Competition categories.

For a new newspaper, this is no small accomplishment.

Each year, the Ontario Community Newspapers Association (OCNA) hosts the Better Newspapers Competition, widely regarded as one of the premier competitions for weekly community journalism in the province. It recognizes excellence in reporting, photography, design, editorial writing, and more. The competition spans an entire year, with newspapers submitting their strongest work for judging across a wide range of categories and circulation classes. Finalists are announced in mid-February, with winners revealed at the annual awards gala in April.

To be recognized among established newspapers from across Ontario, many with decades of history behind them, is

both humbling and affirming.

We are finalists in the Arts & Entertainment category for Author Jaclyn Desforges Closes Riverside Reading Festival with Workshop on Authentic Writing in the Age of AI, written by contributor Edward Lander and published July 2, 2025. The piece highlighted creativity, technology and the evolving landscape of storytelling. These are themes that resonate deeply in today's media environment.

We are also finalists for Best Editorial Cartoon thanks to Chris Whelan's custom-designed Buster Beaverton comic, connected to an editorial on the important next chapter of the County of Brant Public Library's new main branch project, published June 11, 2025. Editorial cartoons are a long-standing tradition in community journalism. They offer commentary with wit, insight and perspective and we're proud to see local creativity recognized at this level.

And finally, Michelle Malvaso has been named a finalist for Photographer of the Year. Anyone who flips through our pages knows Michelle's work. From high-energy sports action to quiet community moments, from feature news to pictorial storytelling at community events, her images elevate the stories we tell. We submitted a range of her photography across multiple categories and were thrilled to see her recognized among the province's top visual journalists.

For a newspaper that only recently brought print back to Paris, the first since the Paris Star discontinued, this moment

matters.

Becoming an OCNA member last year was an important step. It signaled that we weren't just launching a newspaper; we were committing to the standards, ethics and professional excellence that define community journalism in Ontario. As one of the association's newest members, to be recognized so quickly speaks volumes about the talent, dedication and passion of our contributors and collaborators.

But more than that, it speaks to this community.

A newspaper is only as strong as the stories it is entrusted to tell. Our commitment from day one has been simple: to reflect Paris and the County of Brant with honesty, balance and pride. We are community

members telling community stories, covering council chambers and classrooms, arenas and art festivals, businesses and volunteer efforts because local news is not filler. It is the record of who we are.

These nominations belong to our writers, our cartoonist, our photographer and to you, our readers. Your support, your tips, your conversations and your engagement fuel the work we do every week.

The winners will be announced at the Better Newspapers Competition & Hall of Fame Awards Dinner on Friday, April 24. Whatever the outcome, being named finalists in our first year is already a milestone we are deeply proud of.

We set the bar high. And thanks to this community, we're just getting started.

Letter to the Editor

Giant Hogweed Is Expanding — and Ontario's Rivers Are at Risk

Dear Editor:

The invasion of giant hogweed in Ontario has taken a troubling step forward. The plant is now pushing deeper into downstream river systems, thickening in established patches and colonizing islands once thought to be buffers. Seeds continue to drift downstream from upstream seed banks, and until those sources are addressed, experts warn that communities will remain locked in a costly, recurring cycle of removal and regrowth.

Only a small number of businesses are actively removing giant hogweed from their land. Public land managers, constrained by limited budgets, often lack the resources to respond at scale. Meanwhile, many residents have taken action on their own properties. As a result, infestations within city boundaries often remain relatively stable but not decreasing.

Just beyond those boundaries, however, the situation changes dramatically.

Large rural properties, extensive river frontage, and competing agricultural responsibilities mean county landowners cannot conduct the routine shoreline inspections common in urban neighbourhoods. As a result, infestations outside city limits grow largely unchecked.

Some municipalities have responded administratively — focusing on education, issuing letters, encouraging landowner awareness, and promoting reporting and voluntary removal. While helpful, these measures alone have not slowed the spread.

A Different Landscape, A Different Challenge

In cities, riverfront properties are small,

visible, and frequently used. Residents tend to notice unfamiliar plants early. A lawnmower — while not a safe control method — can sometimes suppress young giant hogweed plants before they mature.

On farms and large institutional lands — including golf courses, quarries, Conservation Authorities, and municipal holdings — the reality is starkly different. Shorelines are often fenced off, unused, or difficult to access. These riparian strips provide ideal habitat for giant hogweed and are frequently left unmanaged.

The plant's growth cycle compounds the challenge. Shoots can emerge as early as March. By early July, plants will already be flowering — often unnoticed.

Where Did It Begin?

The original introduction of giant hogweed into Ontario watersheds is not precisely documented. What is known is that the plant escaped from ornamental gardens in the early 20th century, with early introductions traced to the Bruce Peninsula around 1920.

Government Capacity Is Limited

Although giant hogweed is officially classified as a noxious weed in Ontario, responsibility for control and removal rests largely with private landowners.

Join the Effort

If you value Ontario's rivers — their trails, water access, and natural spaces — your help is needed. Inspecting a piece of shoreline by foot, in April, with a friend or two (for safety) and with landowner consent is an excellent way to start

John Kemp - Founder, Giant Hogweed Mitigation Project (gianthogweed.org)

Community Improvement Plan funding hits record high in 2025

\$257K in grants leverages nearly \$1.4M in downtown improvements

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

The County of Brant's Community Improvement Plan (CIP) program saw a record-breaking year in 2025, with council approving \$257,180 in grants to support downtown revitalization projects in Paris, St. George and Burford.

According to a year-in-review report presented to the Administration and Operations Committee on Feb. 17, the approved funding will leverage approximately \$1.4 million in construction value, marking the highest total grant allocation since 2020.

In total, 19 applications were approved through council or delegated authority, representing a leveraged investment rate of 18 per cent.

The CIP program, established under Section 28 of the Planning Act, allows council to offer financial incentives to businesses and property owners within designated downtown cores to improve façades, accessibility, signage and other property features.

The report notes 2025 was a "record-breaking year" both in terms of application volume and total dollars approved.

Year-over-year CIP funding approved since 2020 shows steady growth, with 2025 significantly outpacing previous

years:

- 2020: \$34,384
- 2021: \$70,098
- 2022: \$98,070
- 2023: \$87,941
- 2024: \$50,326
- 2025: \$257,180

Paris accounted for the majority of 2025 investment, receiving \$241,780 in grant funding, which leveraged more than \$1.36 million in improvements. St. George saw \$13,850 in grants, while Burford received \$1,550.

The report credits several factors for the surge in applications, including an enhanced marketing campaign in Paris tied to the Downtown Dig project and delegated authority granted to the General Manager of Strategic Initiatives for applications under \$5,000. The streamlined process allowed smaller improvements, such as signage, to move forward more efficiently during construction-related disruptions. Letters were also mailed to property owners in all three downtown cores to promote awareness of the program. Among the notable projects completed in 2025 was the continued transformation of 5, 7 and 9 Grand River St. N., where a mixed-use redevelopment created ground-floor commercial space and upper residential units. The property owner received \$103,000 in CIP funding across phases of the project, leveraging a \$4.5 million private in-

vestment into downtown Paris.

Juniper Dining Co. also relocated into the newly redeveloped space in 2025, receiving \$33,700 in CIP funding to support interior improvements and expand seating capacity, including a rear patio. The move represented a \$330,000 investment.

Other funded improvements included:

- Accessibility upgrades at 41 Main St. S. in St. George
- Rear patio construction at the Paris Pub to accommodate Downtown Dig disruptions
- Façade and window improvements along Grand River Street North
- Signage upgrades for several businesses in Paris and Burford
- A new door at Abigails Teahouse in St. George to address security concerns

The CIP capital account remains sustainable, according to the report. As of Jan. 22, 2026, the account balance stood at \$239,675. With \$172,378 in previously approved grants not yet paid out, the remaining balance would be \$67,297 if all outstanding grants are disbursed.

Staff concluded the CIP program continues to be an effective tool to encourage private investment and enhance the public realm in Brant's downtown cores.

Council received the report for information.

Eco-Conference back after one-year hiatus

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

and streams.

Gerald Tetreault, a research scientist with Environment and Climate Change Canada, will address Assessing the cumulative effects of stressors in the Grand River Watershed. His presentation will touch on recent research exam-

ining contaminants, wastewater treatment upgrades and new tools such as environmental DNA to better understand aquatic health.

In addition to the keynote sessions, 10 local environmental and outdoor organizations will host display tables throughout the day, offering attendees opportu-

nities to connect, learn and get involved. Participating groups include the Brant Land Trust, Brant Tree Coalition, Grand River Conservation Authority, Brant Woodlot Owners Association and Ducks Unlimited, among others.

Lunch will be provided, and organizers say the

event is designed to spark conversation and inspire community action around local conservation efforts.

With topics ranging from trees and fisheries to watershed science and restoration, the Eco-conference aims to remind residents that, as the poster notes, "everything is connected."

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HISTORIC PARIS

PARIS PAST: Kay Tew Marshall local writer and historian



By Chris Whelan

Before we dive into this week's piece, I must offer a small but important correction to last week's column. I incorrectly stated that Hiram Capron served as the Mayor of Paris after 1856. While "King Capron" was undoubtedly our founding father, his official political titles were a bit more specific. Hiram served as the village's first Reeve in 1850 and later as a councillor, but he never actually held the office of Mayor. By the time Paris was incorporated as a town, he had largely stepped away from the political arena to focus his legendary energy on farming and his vital millrace waterworks. It was actually Hugh Finlayson who had the honor of serving as the first Mayor of Paris in 1856.

With the record straightened out, I would like to introduce you to a woman who, much like Capron, left a lasting impression on our town and myself, although her tools were a pen and a camera rather than a plow and a mill. This week, we look at the life and legacy of Kay Tew Marshall, local historian, writer, photographer and newspaper columnist.

If you have ever paused to marvel at the intricate, cobblestone buildings that give our community its unique "Old World" charm, you owe a profound debt of gratitude to Kay. To the casual observer, these buildings are simply beautiful structures of stone and mortar. To Kay, however, they were a living narrative of craftsmanship that defined our very identity. She wasn't just a resident of our countryside; she was the self-appointed custodian of our cobblestone buildings.

Kay is perhaps best-known outside of Paris for her definitive research into the lost art of cobblestone masonry. She spent decades documenting the legacy of Levi Boughton, the American mason who migrated here in the 1830s and brought with him a specialized technique of setting fieldstones in tidy, horizontal rows. Because of Kay's meticulous cataloging and her refusal to let these details fade into obscurity, we have a comprehensive record of about a dozen structures—ranging from modest family homes to the majestic Paris Plains Church. It is largely thanks to her advocacy and documentation that Paris earned its reputation as the "Cobblestone Capital of Canada." Her seminal work, *Cobblestone Buildings in Paris, Ontario*, remains the absolute "bible" for local heritage enthusiasts and restoration experts today.

Yet, Kay's interests were never confined to the technical side of masonry. She possessed a keen eye for the "human" side of history—the stories that happen from rural countryside as well as in our little town. In her book, "Sitting on the Curb", a collection of columns Kay Tew Marshall wrote for *The Paris Star*. She captured the essence of local daily life with a warmth that moved beyond cold dates and names. She had a rare flair for documenting the "modern" shifts of her time, often touting herself as the last of her generation to ride to school in a horse drawn buggy, un-



(PARIS MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY PHOTO)

Kay Tew Marshall taking Pictures for the Paris Star at the Paris Lions Club Soapbox Derby on Station Hill Paris (Broadway St.) ca 1950s

derstanding that today's mundane events were tomorrow's precious history.

One of her most cherished stories, frequently cited by the Paris Museum and Historical Society, recounts the chaotic "Christmas Rush" of 1959. This was a bittersweet moment in our town's timeline—the final holiday season for the old post office on Grand River Street before the service moved to the then-modern facility on Mechanic Street.

Kay described a scene many long-time residents will still feel in their bones: a lobby packed to the rafters, the unmistakable scent of wet wool coats, and the frantic scratching of pens on brown paper packages. She didn't view the postmaster and his clerks as mere bureaucrats; she described them as the "engine room" of the town's holiday spirit, navigating mountains of mailbags with nothing but grit and candlelight. She captured the heavy "thud" of the wooden doors and the frantic energy of a town on the move.

It was this ability to blend the "bricks and mortar" of architecture with the "blood and bone" of the people that made Kay's work so vital. She made Paris feel like a living, breathing character. If you want to see our town through her eyes, I highly recommend finding a copy of "Sitting on the Curb" available at the Paris Museum in the Syl Apps Community Centre. It serves as a beautiful reminder that history isn't just made by the mayors and the businessmen—it's made by the people standing on the corner, watching the world go by.

Special thanks to Tricia Nunan for inspiring me to write about her Grand Aunt Kathleen (as Kay was known by her family). I will endeavour to share more of Kay's columns in future issues.

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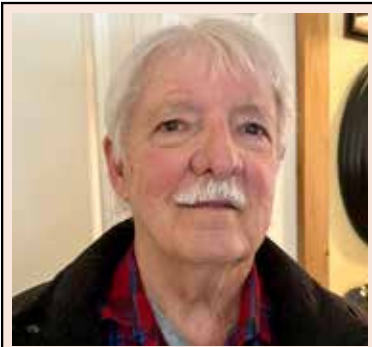
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THEN AND NOW: The evolution of the Cockburn Block - Part 2



By **Wayne Wilkinson**
Paris Historian / Artist

In Part 1, we looked at #65 in the Cockburn block, which was built in 1901. This week, we'll check out #71, the northernmost unit in this historic building.

Before this block was constructed, this part of mid-town Paris already had a long and storied history. If we were to stroll along this location in 1856, we would have found a stove and tinware business owned by John Buckley. As seen in an 1872 advertisement, Buckley was selling the "New American Base Burner." This beautiful stove was built by the Littlefield Stove Co. in Albany, N.Y. During the 1800s, Albany was the hub for stove production in eastern North America. The Littlefield Stove Co. called this decorative design the "Morning Glory," and it would have been the focal point of any 19th-century home.

A local artist in Albany, Hiram Ferguson, made a living drawing these meticulous advertisements for the many stove works in the city. In 1869, Buckley sold his business to Pat Buckley and two partners, who eventually moved across the street in 1875.

The year 1876 saw a pharmacist, Charles Roberts, move into the architecturally unique building shown in this 1885 photo. I've always admired this one-of-a-kind structure with its beautiful window dressings, complete with a mortar and pestle above each third-floor window.

Roberts, along with his wife and six children, lived above the store, sadly losing everything in the Great Fire of September 1900. He never re-established his business but continued residing in Paris on Church St. until his passing in 1930.

In 1901, following the fire, prominent Parisian photographer John Cockburn had the block built that bears his name. It was ready for occupancy in August 1902, and he moved into what is now #71. In June 1904, another well-known photographer, Frank Hurndall, moved in, setting up his studio and selling souvenir books of Paris scenes. In 1914, Cyril Plomley, a widely known photographer specializing in children's portraits, moved into the unit.

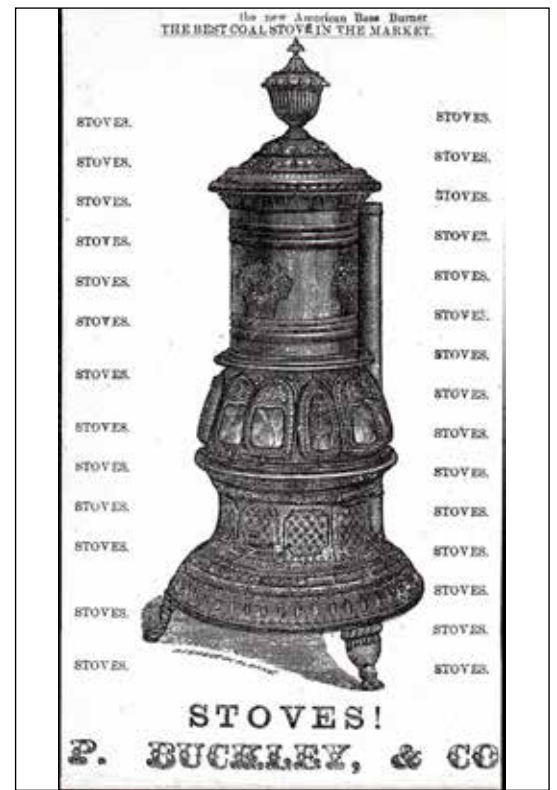
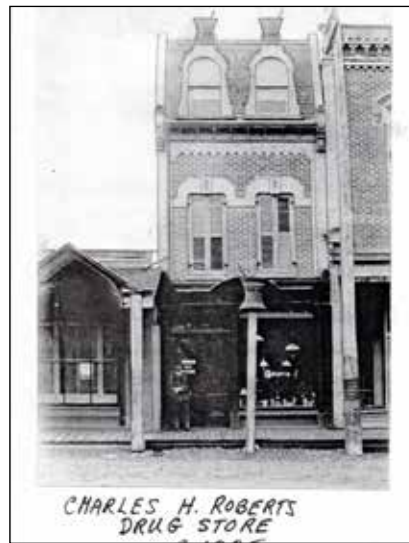
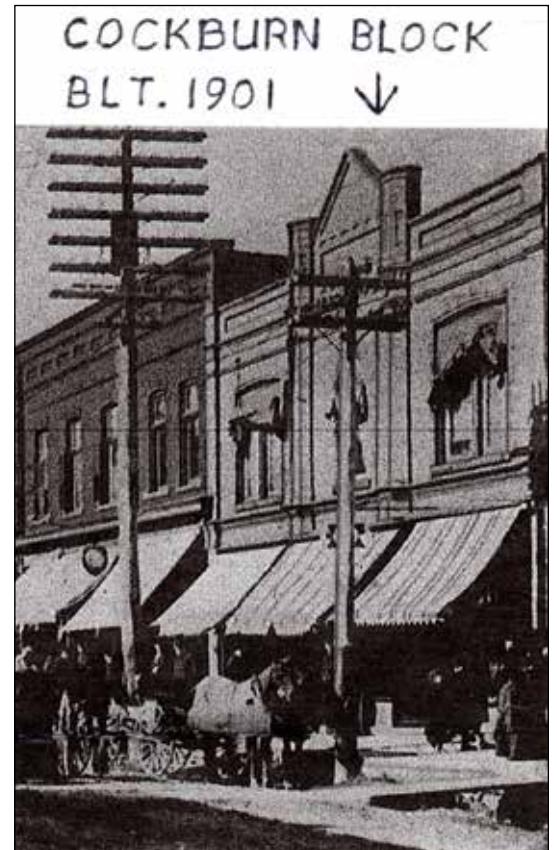
The year 1927 saw McKey's Bakery start here. (I am curious to know if anyone has information on this business or family, as I could find nothing.)

In 1936, Agnes McMillan opened "McMillan's Specialty Shop," selling ready-to-wear women's clothing. Agnes was extremely experienced in retail, having worked for Robert and James Inksater for a total of 22 years. Learning from two of the best, her business thrived for 45 years until closing in 1981—a record of longevity for #71.

Briefly touching on the numerous businesses that have since called #71 home, we have The Video/Movie Place, Paris Travel Agency, and, in 2006, Chasing Rainbows, owned by Shelley Horne. In 2009, sisters Sheryl Wellings and Karen Thorpe opened Leyland's, featuring British fine foods and gifts. The Three Blind Mice Cheese Company opened in 2011, followed by A Swiss in Paris in 2013. After the untimely death of Christof Altorfer, the new owner, Dwayne Covert, carried on the business.

Judy Jeans, a trendy women's wear shop, opened in 2022 before moving to William St. two years later. #71 has been closed since then and has been totally gutted to be completely renovated by "Handkind Construction Co." We now wait in expectation to see how the next chapter plays out at #71.

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.



County of Brant launches call for artists as Music in the Park returns for 2026

PARIS INDEPENDENT STAFF

Staff Contribution

The County of Brant is welcoming back Music in the Park for summer 2026 and has launched a call for artists for the upcoming season.

The outdoor concert series brings free live performances to Paris Lions Park at the Walter Williams Amphitheatre, offering accessible, family-friendly entertainment for residents and visitors throughout the summer months.

"Music in the Park is more than a concert series — it's an opportunity to bring people together, support local art-

ists, and showcase the County of Brant as a vibrant place to live and visit," said Zach Gable, Director of Economic Development and Tourism, County of Brant. "We're really fortunate to have spaces like Paris Lions Park that let us host events like this right in the heart of our community."

The County is inviting solo artists, duos, bands and small ensembles representing a wide range of musical styles to apply, with the goal of building a diverse and inclusive lineup that reflects the creativity and cultural richness of the community. Applications are open until Friday, March 20, 2026. More information and the online application form is available at brant.ca/musicinthepark.



Music lovers flocked to local parks in 2025 to listen to Music in the Park concerts. If you know someone who would like the opportunity to performer, applications are open for the 2026 line up until Friday, March 20.

Paris Soccer Club wraps indoor season with World Cup-themed showcase

MEDIA RELEASE

Paris Soccer Club's Inaugural Year End Showcase took place on the last week of play for the 2025-2026 Indoor Soccer Season, from Feb. 10-15/26.

This week was devoted to showcasing the players on the field and to highlight and thank our volunteer coaches, while bringing some excitement to all, including the spectators who filled the stands. To hype the games up, an announcer played music while introducing the players before the game and then announced the players who scored and assisted with goals.

This year's theme was FIFA World Cup 2026, which meant that our teams chose a country, who will be competing at the World Cup with the same jersey colour, to represent for their final game. Teams, players and their spectators really took in the spirit of this fun, as there were waving flags, fan wear, cheers in multiple languages and international music that filled the stadium.

Post game presentations, in the lobby, allowed for coaches to recognize all of their players this past season and then present their "Player of the Game" medal to one of their players on this final game. Team standings were close in a few divisions which meant that some teams had to wait it out for all remaining games, in their division, to be played out before game results were accounted and season standings were determined.

Congratulations to all teams for the great 2025-2026 Indoor Soccer Season. The results are in!

The U4 players received Tim Bits participation medals and were surprised by a special guest appearance by An-

drew Gray, former professional soccer player who shared some inspirational messaging about how he played for Toronto FC, Canada's Men's International team and other teams throughout his career.

The U6 players received Tim Bits participation medals in the lobby and then posed with their medals for individual player and team photos.

This season's U8 division had four teams battling it out for 1st and 2nd place in the season, with the Grey (England) team, sponsored by Tim Horton's taking 1st place, while the Red (Canada) team, sponsored by Canadian Tire - Paris claiming 2nd place.

In the U11 division there were six teams competing for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in the season, with just one point difference between the first and second team. Royal Blue (France) team, sponsored by Twisted Treats was victorious capturing 1st place, while the Red (Canada) team, sponsored by Mary Maxim secured 2nd place and Sky Blue (Italy) team, sponsored by Hall Telecommunications grabbed 3rd place.

Finally, the U14 division, the largest division with an impressive eight teams, had some great games over the course of the season, after battling it out on the field, the Orange (Netherlands) team was a clear 1st placed winning team. The second and third teams, at the end of their last games in the season, were tied at 26 points each, which meant that goal differentials between both teams needed to be reviewed to determine a clear winner. The Gold (Columbia) team was successful in capturing 2nd place and 3rd place went to the Yellow (Brazil) team.



(SUBMITTED PHOTOS)

Pictured during the U8 Ceremonial coin toss are coaches Ryan Nolan and Rob Lambert, referee Bennett Sellar and players Jasnoor Kaur (grey jersey) and Henry Stuart (red).



U14 players wait anxiously for the outcome of the ceremonial coin toss ahead of their championship matchup, the final step before kickoff. Pictured are coaches Mike Encarancao, Eric Encarancao and Erin Jones, referee Jay Jeong and players Dawson McDonald (goalie) and Joehan Diniz (gold).



Pictured during the U11 Ceremonial coin toss are coaches Paul Petricca, Mike Koning, Diego Montano and Lisa Wilson. Referee Avery Alonzo and players Locklan Miller (blue) and Charlie Adam (green).



Andrew Gray, a former professional soccer player, shared an inspirational message about his career with the young stars in the Paris Soccer Club's U4 division.



House League Standings - Week of February 16 - Finals

7-8 Year-Old (House League)

Bronze medal: Warriors defeat Fruit, 22-8
Gold medal: Lakers defeat King Pineapple, 16-14

This week's top scorers:

1. Ryder, Warriors, 10 points
2. Jaime, Fruit, 8 points
3. Hukam, King Pineapple, 8 points.

9-11 Year-Old (House League)

Bronze medal: Tigers defeat Raptors, 37-34
Gold medal: Warriors defeat Lakers, 28-16

This week's top scorers:

1. Bryce, Raptors, 22 points
2. Aiden, Tigers, 14 points
3. Benson, Warriors, 12 points



The Lakers defeated King Pineapple, 16-14 to win Gold in the Factory Basketball Academy's winter session, 7-8-year-old house league.



The Warriors defeated the Lakers, 28-16 to win Gold in the Factory Basketball Academy's winter session, 9-11-year-old house league.

Legion Ladies aim for the heart at Galentine's dart night



Away from the dartboard, the festivities continued with treats, prizes, and a guessing game brought in by Booner, which was ultimately won by Cynthia. Between the high scores and the Galentine's treats, the evening was a bullseye for the Paris Legion community.

The atmosphere at the Paris Legion was painted red on Thursday, February 12, as the Ladies Dart League traded traditional competition for a celebration of "sisterly love." The Galentine's Day themed event brought out the best in the players, both in spirit and on the scoreboard.

The night was defined by a display of pure determination from veteran player Trish. Despite her foot still being in a cast due to a recent fracture, Trish refused to let an injury keep her from the game. Competing from a seated position at the end of the night she battled through the pain and found her rhythm, proving that a steady hand matters more than a standing stance.

The scoring was as sharp as the festive outfits. Nancy C. stole the spotlight by firing off the night's high score of 128, an especially impressive feat considering it was only her third appearance with the league.

The "doubling out" category saw heavy competition:

- Sharpshooters: Linda B and Shari E were the models of accuracy, each doubling out 3 times.
- Consistent Closers: Booner and Patti S weren't far behind, doubling out twice each.
- Team Finishers: Cheryl, Lori, Annie, Tracy, and Debbie K all secured crucial wins for their respective teams by doubling out once.

When it came to match play, the duo of Annie and Bev were the ones to beat. The pair remained undefeated throughout the evening's rotations, cementing their status as the night's powerhouse team.

The following week, on Feb 19th, the atmosphere at the Paris Legion Branch 29 was nothing short of electric this week as the Ladies' Darts League took to the floor for another high-stakes round of competition. With the darts

flying "hot," the evening's primary focus was the precision-heavy game of "Bullseye."

The leaderboard saw plenty of action, but two names rose to the top of the bullseye tally. Both Patti S. and Debbie K. showed remarkable consistency, each finding the center of the board twice. They were supported by a strong field of single-shot accuracy from Tracy T., Annie M., Cree, Nancy B., Booner, Cheryl F., and Lori S., all of whom recorded a bullseye during the night's play.

When it came to sealing the deal, the "doubling out" phase provided its usual share of drama. Linda B. and Debbie K. (capping off a stellar night) both secured two wins for their respective teams.

Other key finishers included Cheryl F., Nichole B., Shari M., Annie M., Cree, and Bonnie M, each delivering a crucial double to add to their team's win column. One of the loudest moments of the night, however, was reserved for Liz L., who hammered home a double out to the thunderous approval of the "peanut gallery."

In one of the most anticipated matchups of the evening, local veteran Nancy B. faced off against her daughter and protege, Bryanna K. While the competition between the two is always fierce, youth took the win this time as Bryanna came out on top, earning a well-deserved victory over her mentor.

Are you looking for a fun night out with the girls? The Paris Legion Ladies Dart League is always looking for new faces to join their ranks. Whether you're a seasoned pro or a total beginner, come out for a night of laughs and friendly competition. League meets Thursday evenings at 6:45 pm to 9 pm at the Paris Legion.

Paris Rink Wins Bob Dale Memorial Bonspiel



(PARIS CURLING CLUB PHOTO)

A Paris team captured top honours at the Bob Dale Memorial Bonspiel held at the Paris Curling Club on February 20. From left: Greig Graham (second), Paul Barber (lead), Sam Sheardown (vice) and Wayne Turnbull (skip). The annual event, hosted by the Paris Recreational Curlers Association, is open to curlers aged 55 and over and celebrates friendly competition and camaraderie among senior players.

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Thunder shine on home ice at Paris Ringette tournament

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

The Paris Ringette Association welcomed teams from across Ontario for its annual home tournament, held Feb. 12–15 at the Brant Sports Complex, Gaukel Memorial Centre and Burford Community Centre.

From the Fun 2 division to U19A, the weekend showcased the depth of the association's program, celebrating player development, teamwork and competitive success.

At the Fun 2 level, the emphasis was on participation and community spirit. No scores were kept, and all 51 participants received trophies.

Parent volunteers and coaches, with help from a few players, organized a pancake breakfast, fun games, a dressed-up coach competition and a cheer-sharing activity that had teams showing off their creativity. The weekend was a reminder that sport at its best builds friendships and confidence alongside skills.

The Fun 3 team delivered an impressive round robin, finishing 2-0-1. Paris opened with a 6-4 win over the Tillsonburg Twisters (Jacko), followed by an 11-4 victory over the St. Catharines Comets, and a hard-fought 2-2 tie against the St. Marys Snipers.

In the championship final, Paris battled back from a 3-2 second-period deficit against Tillsonburg, tying the game in the final minutes to force overtime. The Thunder ultimately fell 4-3 in extra time, earning silver after a resilient performance.

With no U12A division in this year's



Paris Fun 2 players, pictured, celebrate a weekend of fun at the Paris Ringette Tournament, where all 51 participants (from multiple teams) took home trophies after enjoying games, cheers and a community pancake breakfast.

tournament, the U12A squad played an exhibition game only. The team continues to enjoy a strong season, despite a short bench and several brand-new players. After being moved up from the B to A division at the start of the second half, the group has embraced the challenge and continues to grow in confidence and cohesion.

Similarly, the U14B team competed in an exhibition game, as only a U14A division was offered. While the season has presented challenges, coaches note steady

improvement both individually and collectively, with players continuing to develop their skills and team play.

The U16B team went 0-3 in round-robin play, falling 7-2 to the Cambridge Turbos, 7-0 to the Burlington Blast and 8-1 to the Tillsonburg Twisters. Despite the results, the team demonstrated perseverance against strong opponents and continued to compete hard in each outing.

The U19B squad also finished 0-3 in round-robin action, dropping a close 5-3 decision to

the Burlington Blast and 5-1 games to both the Elora Fergus Edge and St. Catharines Comets. The scores did not reflect the effort level, as the team battled throughout the weekend and gained valuable experience against tough competition.

For the U19A team, the Paris tournament marked the final qualifying event of the season, with round-robin games contributing to provincial ranking points.

Paris delivered wins over Mississauga, Timmins and Oshawa, along with a tie against Sunderland, advancing to Sunday's semifinal where they once again faced Sunderland. In a hard-fought contest, Paris came up short of the final, but the results were enough to secure a major milestone.

The tournament solidified Paris U19A as one of the top six teams in Ontario out of 17, officially earning a berth at the Provincial Championships, set for March 13–15 in Waterloo/Kitchener.

The team currently sits fourth in regular-season standings with a 10-3-2 record and five games remaining. After consistently competing against top-ranked opponents all season, the group heads into Provincials with momentum and belief.

Go Thunder.



Paris Fun 3 players celebrate their silver-medal finish at the Paris Ringette Tournament after an exciting overtime final on home ice.



Members of the Paris U19A Thunder pose with roses before a game at the Paris Ringette Tournament, where the team secured a top-six provincial ranking and earned a berth at the upcoming Provincial Championships.



The U14B team played an exhibition game at the Paris tournament, showing they are continuing to build skills and develop as a team.



Paris U16B players battle hard during round-robin action at the Paris Ringette Tournament, showing determination and teamwork against strong competition.

Ready for a *Spring Refresh?*

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- ... just need a colour suggestion or two?
- ... just need a second opinion on furniture layout, or a new light
- ... just need a jump start for sprucing things up after this looong winter
- ... just need to shuffle a few things around
- ... just need to pop a new item or 2 into the mix, like a vase or new picture.
- ... just need a little wallpaper.

Lucy Elzinga
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More than medals: Lessons from Team Canada

GEORGE LE GRESLEY

Sports Correspondent

If you're feeling disappointed in the Canadian men's hockey team, don't be. Aside from a slow start off the draw in the gold medal game, they outplayed and outshot their American rivals, delivering all the drama, momentum swings and intensity you'd expect in a championship showdown.

It also brings to mind the historic Canada-Russia series years ago. Kids, that's one for the history section at the library, and how profoundly that rivalry reshaped the game in Canada.

This Olympic showdown must make you wonder how the Americans, who have two-thirds of Canada's minor hockey playing population, are beginning to match or outplay us. Is it the proportion of players'

game/practice time? Food for thought!

Our Canadian short-track teams did really well this year. Why isn't this sport popular across the country? My guess is a lack of ice time and coaching.

Then there is the X-Games style of sports, where you find Nascar-style racing down a snow course, or all styles of speed skating, where you'll see lead changes, wipeouts, and drama in all their heats.

Finally, for retirees, these Olympics have been bad for our health, as they are aired in the morning and afternoon, leading us to ignore our health and exercise regimens by sitting in front of our televisions!

Canada delivered a strong and steady performance across the Games, finishing with an impressive medal haul highlighted by four gold, eight silver and eight bronze medals. Gold medal performances came from some of the country's most dominant

athletes, including Mikael Kingsbury in dual moguls, Megan Oldham in women's big air, Steven Dubois in the men's 500m short track, and Canada's men's curling team. Each gold showcased Canada's depth in freestyle skiing, short track speed skating and curling — sports where the country continues to set the global standard.

Silver medals were spread across a wide range of disciplines, from ice dance and moguls to snowboard cross, short track and team pursuits. Canada's women's hockey team also added a silver, while both the men's and women's curling teams reached the podium. Bronze medals further demonstrated the team's versatility, coming in speed skating, ski slopestyle, halfpipe, short track relay events and figure skating's team competition. Overall, Canada showed remarkable consistency, earning medals in nearly every winter discipline and prov-

ing once again that it remains one of the world's premier winter sport nations.

While many athletes who made the trip to Italy didn't reach the podium, most achieved personal bests and will continue train with the hopes of improving their performance four years from now. We should be proud of these athletes - not just for the medals, but for the discipline, resilience and teamwork they demonstrate on the world stage. Their commitment to excellence is something we can all carry into our own daily lives, whatever our arena may be.

And the journey isn't over. The countdown now turns to the 2028 Summer Olympics, where a new chapter of Canadian stories will unfold. If this performance is any indication, there will be plenty more moments to cheer about.

Titans searching for spark after tough start to playoffs

GEORGE LE GRESLEY

Sports Correspondent

It's playoff time in the PJHL, and the Titans drew the Tavistock for the first round of the best-of-seven series. During the regular season, the Titans had beaten the Braves only once in their four regular-season games. Last Friday, the Titans began their series at Tavistock in front of an enthusiastic crowd. Frankly, the team looked unsure in this environment, not finishing their passes and not in synch with each other.

The Titans opened their series in Tavistock and the Braves opened the scoring early at the 3:30 mark to lead 1-0. A minute later, the Titans had a power play opportunity but couldn't take advantage of the man advantage. In the last six minutes of the period, the Titans took two penalties that the Braves couldn't capitalize on, leaving Tavistock with a 1-0 lead at the end of the first period. In just over a minute in the second period, a Titan found his way to the penalty box; in fact, in total, the Ti-

tans gave the Braves a total of six power plays! Amazingly, the Titans had two power plays negated by taking a penalty on the same play, which, after the play was called, put a Tavistock and Paris player in the penalty box at the same time! In the end, the Braves scored four goals to shut out the Titans. Again, the Paris goaltender, Colton Thomson, was the best player on the ice, making 40 saves, many of them against Braves players attacking the net alone.

Saturday evening, the series moved to the Brant Sports Complex for game 2 of the best-of-seven series. Tavistock outshot the Titans 14-7 and at the end of the first had a 1-0 lead. In the second period, Tavistock scored a power play goal 15 seconds after the opening puck drop. From that point on, the Titans took a measly 4 shots on goal, as opposed to the Tavistock's 18, and gave the Braves four power plays, one of them a double minor for "Roughing," giving the Braves a five-on-three advantage for two minutes. The Braves scored five more goals. The Kersey brothers got the Titans on the board with Cole and Jack

assisting on Blake's goal. Jack Kersey, whilst on the ice to kill a penalty, stole the puck off a Braves player and scored a nice goal short-handed. At the end of the second period, the Braves led 7-2. In the third period, the Titans were down quite a bit, but I thought that the Switzer brothers had good performances, with Aiden forechecking and Owen using his size on defence. The Braves made the scoreboard first, followed

by a Ryan Gardner-O'Keefe goal, where Ben Easson and Jake Semiwolos assisted. The game's final score was 8-3.

The Titan's next game was on Monday at the Brant Sports Complex, followed by a game in Tavistock Wednesday and Friday. Should the Titans survive the week and not be eliminated, they will play Game 6 at the Brant Sports Complex on February 28 at 7:30 PM.

Slippery roads cancel high school playoffs, rescheduled to this week

GEORGE LE GRESLEY

Sports Correspondent

The weather last Wednesday and Thursday, with freezing rain and slippery roads, iced out the scheduled playoff games on those two days. Unfortunately for this reporter, it also cancelled me out from playing pickleball and my yoga class; thankfully the Olympics were on for a good plan "B".

The Paris Senior Boys basketball team was rescheduled to play the AABHN basketball final on Monday (after deadline) against the undefeated Assumption College side. We'll report the results of this game next week.

Also on Monday, the Paris Boys Hockey team faced the Brantford Collegiate side in Quarter-Final play. If they won, the semi-final game is scheduled for February 25, and they will face either Assumption or St John's. We'll also report the results next week. The Championship North Division game is scheduled on March 2, with the time and location to be announced later this week.

Also, on the agenda this week, to be reported in our March 4th edition, is the Panther Girls Hockey team's semi-final game, and if all goes well, the final game, time and location to be determined.

Watch for next week's issue for all these High school sports results!

Girls' Hockey Takes Over Brant



(MICHELLE MALVASO PHOTO)

Teams from across Ontario competed in the Brantford Girls Hockey Association's 44th annual Walter Gretzky Hockey Tournament, held Feb. 20-22 at arenas throughout Brantford and Brant County. Pictured during a Feb. 20 matchup are the U15BB St. Catharines Brock Jr. Badgers and the Sarnia Lady Sting.

McLellans Recognized for Excellence in Farming and Stewardship

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

Four generations. Seven hundred acres. Early mornings that start before sunrise. For Jay and Sara McLellan and their son Alex, farming in Onondaga isn't just a business, it's a way of life. That dedication has earned Jaysar Dairy and J & S Farms the 2026 Brant Farm Award.

The family will be formally honoured at the Brant County Federation of Agriculture's annual banquet on March 7.

The Brant Farm Award recognizes excellence in farm management, environmental stewardship and contributions to the rural community. According to Brant County Federation of Agriculture Vice President Jean Emmott, the nomination form includes a detailed questionnaire "highlighting the farm operation, on-farm best management standards and environmental stewardship" as well as leadership and volunteerism within the community.

An undisclosed panel of agriculture-knowledgeable individuals reviewed the submissions before the winner was announced to directors at the February board meeting, explained Emmott. Jaysar Dairy and J & S crop farms operate approximately 700 acres and provide custom farm work for neighbouring farms, fostering cooperation and mutual support within the agricul-

tural community.

Jay grew up working on the family farm. After marrying Sara in 1984, he joined the family partnership in 1985, operating as Hugh McLellan & Sons alongside his parents and brother. In 2000, the partnership concluded, and J & S Farms was established as a cash crop operation growing corn, soybeans, wheat and hay. A joint venture dairy operation was formed with Bill and Jean Emmott.

"The support of the Emmott family has assisted with the increased size and productivity of our dairy herd, including the addition of a new robotic dairy barn built by them in 2015," the family noted in an interview with the Paris Independent.

"Through share cropping and different opportunities, we increased our cash crop side of the operation considerably. Our son Alex had been working part time for the farm since he was young and he joined the operation full time in 2019," explained Jay.

Today, the farm remains a family-centred enterprise rooted in four generations of stewardship.

"Our family has farmed on the same land for four generations in a close-knit community of neighbours and farmers," said Jay.

Life on a dairy and cash crop farm begins early and changes with the seasons.

"We are at the barn at 6 am to work with the cows. After that our days depend on



A multi-generational Onondaga dairy and grain farm will be honoured with the 2026 Brant Farm Award at the March 7 Brant County Federation of Agriculture banquet in Burford. The McLellan family, from left to right, Madison, Alex, Sara, Annie, Hugh, Jay, Ty and Fred. Absent is Scott and Bella McLellan.

seasonal work. There are on-going building maintenance, cleaning and upkeep of the farm properties throughout the year," said Alex.

"Planning, purchasing supplies, book-keeping and selling crops are a necessary part of some days as well. During the winter we maintain the equipment to ensure that it is working properly when the growing season begins. In the spring, summer and fall, the workday is longer as we work in the fields, preparing the land and planting in the spring, managing the crops and harvesting in the summer and fall. All while maintaining the equipment so it is always ready when needed."

Environmental responsibility is a key component of the award's criteria.

"We have changed our farm practices over the years to use minimal tillage, crop rotations, and cover crops to keep the soil healthy and producing. These practices also help minimize fuel consumption and our carbon footprint," said Jay.

"Involvement in farm committees and attendance at workshops offered by farm organizations keep us updated on innovations in our industry to help us farm in the most responsible way," added Sara.

The use of robotics and technology has also become part of modern operations.

"Research and innovation, robotics and technology are all part of farming today. With a cell phone farmers can see what to expect from the weather and check commodity prices from the seat of a tractor. Advances in technology provide information to the farmer every day," she explained.

Agriculture remains Brant County's leading industry, producing foods from all food groups locally.

"I think agriculture is important to this community because it plays a major role in our economy, there are a lot of jobs stemming from agriculture and into the food industry. 1 in 9 people in Ontario work in the agriculture and food industry, making it one of the largest industries in the province," said Sara. She added, "I always enjoy seeing neighbourhood kids that aren't necessarily from farms come out and help farmers with different jobs. It helps them build a good work ethic that

will in turn help them in future employment."

Beyond the farm gate, the McLellan family is deeply rooted in community service.

Jay has served 35 years with the Onondaga Fire Department and is now Chief. He is also a director with District 6 Grain Farmers, past Chair of the Brant Dairy Producer Committee and of the Brant Milk Cooperative, and has presented the Wheat station for Grade 5 students at Bite of Brant for three decades. Sara is a member of the Brantford Rotary Club and serves on various committees.

Alex has been a firefighter for 10 years and has volunteered at Bite of Brant for a decade. He and his wife Madison also volunteer as coaches with Brant Youth Volleyball.

"We've always felt it takes a community to raise a family, and we've been blessed to be part of a community that is a very supportive close circle. From this we've taken on roles in the fire department and agriculture industry to give back to a community that has helped raise our family and farm," said Jay.

"Our family values have been passed down from generation to generation. As a family, we have all been involved in 4-H from a young age teaching us to use our head, heart, hands and health for our club, our community and our country. Through involvement in community organizations and agricultural committees, our church and community organizations and through other volunteer work we give back to the community that has given so much to us," said Alex. Receiving the award as a family is deeply meaningful.

"We really appreciate being chosen for the award, as we said before the community has really helped shape our family and our farm into what it is today. I would advise anybody to pursue a career in agriculture, as there are many opportunities that don't need any on farm experience," said Jay.

"Without the support of family and community our operation would not be what it is today. Our community is giving back to us in such honourable way by choosing J & S Farms as the recipient of the Brant Farm of the Year Award," he added.

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Recreation programs see sharp rise in registrations as demand grows across Brant

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

Registered recreation programming in the County of Brant surged in 2025, with participation up 89 per cent over the previous year, according to a report presented to the Administration and Operations Committee on Feb. 17.

The Recreation Services Program Summary, prepared by Manager of Recreation Services Sarah Dredge, provides a year-over-year comparison of 2024 and 2025 participation levels, highlighting growing demand, expanded offerings and ongoing resource challenges.

Overall registered recreation climbed from 9,919 participants in 2024 to 18,767 in 2025. The largest increases were seen in general recreation programs, which grew by 304 per cent, and aquatics, which rose 68 per cent. Summer camp participation increased 19 per cent, while the After School Program remained steady.

The report attributes the growth to strategic program changes, expanded offerings and increased community demand. In 2025, the Recreation Services Division expanded popular programs such as gymnastics, ice programming and fitness classes, while introducing new sports leagues for children and adults. The Brant Ventures in Nature Program was also expanded to include initiatives such as Eco Kids Club and angler programming.

While registered programs grew, drop-in participation declined by 17 per cent, from 25,146 participants in 2024 to 20,392 in 2025. Staff note the decrease reflects a strategic shift rather than reduced interest, as several programs previously offered as drop-in were transitioned to registered formats to improve planning, staffing efficiency and participant accountability.

Summer camps, offered in communities across Brant for more than 20 years, continue to face strong demand. In 2025, staff increased capacity where possible, reallocated resources to high-demand programs and monitored attendance to fill last-minute vacancies from wait lists. Despite those efforts, the County reports it has reached capacity

within existing indoor facilities and schools that meet space requirements, limiting further expansion.

Aquatic programming at the Paris Community Pool also saw significant growth. In addition to a 68 per cent increase in registered participation, drop-in aquatics rose nine per cent. Lane swims were expanded to seven days a week, and additional “bonus swims” were introduced to improve access. Staff also managed a wait list of 171 participants by creating additional high-demand classes and adjusting lesson offerings.

The Swim to Survive program, delivered in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Lifesaving Society of Ontario, served more than 2,500 Grade 3 and 7 students from both local school boards in 2025. The program operated at capacity throughout June, with added timeslots limiting the ability to accommodate other school trip requests.

The After School Program remains highly valued, with 159 of 190 available spaces filled for the 2025–2026 school year and a wait list of 23 participants. Staffing challenges and facility space requirements have prevented the County from opening additional spots at high-demand locations.

Seniors programming also experienced notable growth, with total registered participation rising 20 per cent year over year, from 3,968 to 4,763 participants. Workshops more than doubled, increasing by 119 per cent, while new offerings such as seniors’ tournaments and memberships at the Seniors Drop-in Centre contributed to overall gains.

In 2025, the County launched a Seniors Drop-in Centre at Sojourn Church in Paris through funding from the Seniors Active Living Centre Program. The centre recorded 206 memberships and 1,925 member visits between September and December, hosting 174 programs ranging from fitness and arts to educational workshops and social gatherings.

The report notes that as the County of Brant continues to grow, addressing staffing, facility space and budget

constraints will be critical to meeting rising demand and ensuring continued access to recreation for all residents.

Committee members received the report for information.

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OBITUARY

Tomblin

March 8, 1937 – February 15, 2026



TOMBLIN, James Gordon

“Jim” has gone on his final fishing trip at the age of 88. Jim was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and friend whose affable presence and creative spirit left a lasting mark on all who knew him.

Jim was a loving and devoted husband to Vivienne (née Tapley) for 64 years. He will be forever missed by his children: Dean (Barb), Steve (Renee),

and Denise Hamill (Allan, deceased). He was a proud grandfather to Alexandra (Bryan), Elise (Eric), Cole, and Zachary (Linh). He is also survived by his brother Chuck; his sister-in-law Norma; his brother-in-law Jimmy Tapley; and many nephews, nieces, friends, and neighbours. He was predeceased by his sisters Elaine Wilson and Joyce Tomblin.

A lifelong resident of Paris, Ontario, Jim was a man deeply rooted in his community and family. He built a respected career in the lithography (printing) industry at Walker Press and Superior Engravers. Jim met his wife, Vivienne, at Walker Press, and after marrying in 1961, they spent many happy years together.

An exceptionally skilled woodcraftsman, he filled his home with handmade furniture and mastered the art of intarsia woodwork. Though he took on many projects, his most significant was the family home he built with his own hands and has been filled with decades of warmth and memories.

An avid outdoorsman, Jim loved fishing, especially “Guys Fishing Trips” at Lake Temagami. He was also a passionate aviation enthusiast, a founding member of the Brant Flyers RC. A devoted Toronto Bluejays and Maple Leafs fan, he spent winters coaching minor hockey and building neighborhood ice rinks. Jim leaves behind a legacy of immense talent, kindness, and a life truly well-lived.

Jim brought immense pride to his community, his craftsmanship, and the life he built for his family.

He is going to be missed so very much.

Cremation has taken place. A celebration of Jim’s life will be held at Bean Park this summer.

In lieu of flowers, donations to Stedman Community Hospice would be appreciated. Online condolences and donations may be arranged through www.wmkipppfuneralhome.com or by calling 519-442-3061.



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From Paris, Ont., to Antwerp: A Belgian native shares her favourite hidden gems

MARIA WHEELER

Paris Independent Contributor

When it comes to travelling to Europe, Belgium is often overlooked as a destination. Unless of course you have been invited to attend a function at NATO headquarters in Brussels. I'm sure I personally will never receive such an invitation, so I tend to stick to family visits. I am an immigrant from Belgium, and have lived in Canada for some 25 years, these last 15 years in lovely Paris, Ontario, which has become my home.

My husband Tim and I have a daughter in Toronto, and a son who lives in Belgium. My mama sadly passed away in February 2025 age 91. All my family lives in or around Antwerp and I fly over as often as I can. Unfortunately, due to a stroke my mama suffered in 2023, some of these were emergency trips. But even then, you need some time away from it all, and so I always try to add in a little outing here and there to take the stress out of things.

Most folks who tell me they've been to Belgium mention they visited Brussels or Bruges and how wonderful that was. To be fair, they are great destinations. But there are so many more hidden gems - things you will never get to see in North America. Old culture, history, architecture, tasty food, people watching on outside patio's, bicycling along canals and rivers, following the bicycle network. There is something for everyone to enjoy. So, I'm going to tempt you with some teasers!

When I fly to Belgium, I tend to select the most inexpensive flights. Mind you, I'm not really fond of multiple stopovers or really early morning departures, so I'll skip those. Flying direct is not usually in the cards, so recently I have travelled via Kevlavik in Iceland or Dublin in Ireland and then on to Brussels. Those two airports are small and you don't need a long layover. Two hours will do the trick. You may even have time for a coffee while you're there. But make sure you have a jacket at the ready, because you may have to walk the tarmac from the plane to the terminal, and Kevlavik early in the morning can be pretty darn cold.

When my family cannot pick me up, I take the train from Brussels International to Antwerp. Easy peasy, and it's just a half hour ride. I know you will be jetlagged, but take a few minutes to admire Antwerp Central's train station. It is a majestic art nouveau building that is often considered



(MARIA WHEELER PHOTO)

The exterior of Antwerp Central Station — often hailed as one of the world's most beautiful railway buildings — stands as a striking architectural landmark in the heart of the city.

one of the world's most beautiful stations. Be sure to take some selfies in the downstairs entrance hall. You'll be able to showcase it to your friends when you return home!

Antwerp is not a large city and you can walk to most places. If you prefer to use public transit, the trams are a very efficient and inexpensive way to move from place to place. You can hop on your first tram right at the train station and make your way to your hotel.

Antwerp offers some of the best shopping anywhere, along the Keyserlei and the Meir, the wide boulevard that takes you from the train station west towards the river Scheldt. You will also find many lovely boutiques and cosy eateries in "De Wilde Zee", a collection of charming streets across from the "Boerentoren" (built in 1931, art deco, and the first skyscraper in Europe). Did I mention that the Meir and De Wilde Zee are traffic free? Make sure to stop along the way to rest your tired tootsies and enjoy a cappuccino coffee - I'm all for Tim Horton's, but to have coffee served in a proper cup and saucer with a cookie or chocolate is a lovely treat.

According to AI, Antwerp is a "vibrant, multicultural hub blending rich Flemish heritage with avant-garde fashion and a historic, diamond-trading legacy". I can recommend so many things that will strike your fancy!

Antwerp was the home of the "Antwerp Six", six people educated at the Antwerp Academy who rose to world fame as avant-garde fashion designers. Some still have a shop in town. Our daughter is currently translating a book about these designers. It will probably be published in English later this year. If you love fashion, do also visit the Fashion Museum (MoMu).

Many centuries before the "Antwerp Six", another world-renowned artist made waves: Peter Paul Rubens was a 16th century painter whose home you can visit on the Wapper (a traffic free street which is also a lovely place to have an outside lunch or dinner). Rubens' huge canvasses can be admired in the Cathedral of Our Lady, a majestic gothic gem that is at its most magnificent when you see it reaching high into a clear blue sky, or when its spire is lit up into the night sky.

Art lovers can also check out the Royal Museum of Fine Arts. It houses Flemish and Belgian art from the 14th to 20th centuries: masters such as Anthony Van Dyck, Jan Van Eyck, Pieter Paul Rubens, Quinten Matsys, James Ensor, and René Magritte.

There is more: the MAS, the "Museum aan de Stroom", was built in one of the docks at the river Scheldt. Its collection features history, art, and culture of the port city of Antwerp. The FoMu, the Fotomuseum, is known as one of the most prestigious in Europe. I was personally very impressed by the Red Star Line Museum. It is located in the authentic building of the Red Star Line and tells the stories of migrants from all over Europe who were headed to a new start in the US and Canada at the beginning of the 20th century. I also visited the DIVA (Museum for Jewellery, Silver, and Diamonds) which showcases fantastically ornate pieces and offers most interesting information about those precious metals and stones.

On my wish list for future visits are the Bunkermuseum, which housed the German 90th army corps during WWII, and the Plantin-Moretus Museum, the original home and studio of the Plantin-Moretus publishing family, which illustrates the history of book printing and exhibits some of the oldest printing presses in the world.

For something entirely different, take a tour of the Antwerp sewer system. My son and I signed up for one a few years ago. You'll be outfitted with overalls, boots, and a tablet. A guide (in our case an extremely funny one) will take you below to learn about the sewers, and how they connect to the city's history. We found it a most amazing tour. A word of advice: take a backpack for your stuff, and a clothes peg for your nose. If you have a fear of rats, brown or black, skip this tour!



(MARIA WHEELER PHOTO)

The soaring spire of the Cathedral of Our Lady dominates Antwerp's skyline, a Gothic masterpiece that houses several monumental works by Peter Paul Rubens.

Antwerp is also a city of ambiance. The "Zomer van Antwerpen" (the Summer of Antwerp) is a festival that runs each year from June to end of August and offers circus performances, music in the streets and on market squares, theatre, family spectacles, and much more. Throughout the year, you enjoy a drink at one of the hundreds of cozy cafés, some with live entertainment. In wintertime many patios are heated. For a yummy Flemish meal don't expect anything Parisian or overly fancy. Flemish people mostly favour hearty local dishes such as "steak frites", "witloof met ham" (Flemish endive with ham), "koninginnehapjes" (chicken and mushroom vol-au-vent), goat cheese salad, or mussels with fries if you're into seafood. You will find fries shops at every other street corner if you fancy something handheld on the go, or what would you say to a steaming waffle?

Oops, I almost forgot to tell you that there's a chocolate museum as well, right across from the train station - and you will find many chocolate praline shops along your route. Don't forget to take some for your friends back home. They would be pretty mad if you forgot!

About the columnist: Maria Wheeler is a Belgian Canadian who has lived in Paris since 2011. She loves family, travel, colours and beautiful sights. Along with her husband Tim and lab Raven she has recently been exploring Ontario in their travel trailer. They hope to make it to the West Coast later this year.

Riddles

What word is spelled incorrectly in every dictionary?

Incorrectly

I have one eye, but cannot see. What am I?

A needle

If you have me, you want to share me. If you share me, I no longer exist. What am I?

A secret

Which word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it?

Short

What has a head and a tail, but no body?

A coin

I can be cracked, made, told, and played. What am I?

A joke

Sudoku

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

Solutions on page 19

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PET OF THE WEEK

LUNA

Meet our Pet of the Week:

Luna is a 2 year old boxer who has been battling a non healing injury to her eye for the last 3 months. Luna and her owners are celebrating with lots of treats and a new toy now that it has finally healed. Slow healing eye injuries are actually a common occurrence in this breed.

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



Word Search

THINGS I LOST THIS WEEK

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

- PhoneCharger
- HouseKeys
- CarKeys
- LipBalm
- LibraryBook
- GroceryList
- FlashDrive
- WaterBottle
- HairElastic
- ReadingGlasses
- LeftSock
- WorkBadge
- Motivation
- Notebook
- TVRemote
- MeasuringTape
- Umbrella
- Receipts
- CoffeeMug
- EarbudsCase



WEEKLY Horoscope

February 25 - March 4 2026

ARIES

Mar 21 - Apr 20



Energy rises steadily, Aries. A bold decision sets events into motion and invites fresh opportunity. Stay decisive—it builds momentum and fuels lasting progress.

TAURUS

Apr 21 - May 21



Stability comforts you now, Taurus. Familiar habits ground your thoughts and ease tension. Value reliability—it strengthens patience and keeps your spirit centered.

GEMINI

May 22 - Jun 21



Ideas flow quickly, Gemini. An unexpected exchange inspires creativity and renewed enthusiasm. Chase inspiration—it encourages learning and meaningful connection.

CANCER

Jun 22 - Jul 22



Gentle support surrounds you, Cancer. Meaningful rest renews emotional strength. Step forward softly and believe.

LEO

Jul 23 - Aug 23



Natural charisma radiates. Progress unfolds when you act with courage, vision, and heart. Embrace attention—it highlights your ability to inspire others.

VIRGO

Aug 24 - Sept 22



Organization brings comfort, Virgo. Handling details creates peace of mind and stability. Rely on preparation—it helps you navigate changes smoothly and with quiet confidence each day ahead.

LIBRA

Sept 23 - Oct 23



Harmony grows stronger, Libra. Thoughtful communication improves understanding and trust. Maintain fairness—it clears tension and encourages unity ahead.

SCORPIO

Oct 24 - Nov 22



Insight deepens within, Scorpio. Subtle shifts reveal hidden opportunities for growth. Trust intuition—it quietly directs meaningful transformation.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23 - Dec 21



Adventure calls gently. New possibilities awaken ambition and curiosity within. Take initiative—it uncovers experiences that broaden perspective.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22 - Jan 20



Steady progress continues. Consistent discipline produces measurable achievement. Remain focused—the structure you build supports lasting success.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21 - Feb 18



Innovation guides you, Aquarius. A unique approach opens doors to collaboration and advancement. Embrace individuality—it strengthens influence and impact.

PISCES

Feb 19 - Mar 20



Quiet awareness grows, Pisces. Honest reflection restores inner balance and compassion. Accept subtle insight—it carries you forward with steady hope, wisdom, and serenity.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

FEBRUARY 25

Ric Flair, Wrestler (77)

FEBRUARY 26

Michael Bolton, Musician (73)

FEBRUARY 27

Josh Groban, Musician (45)

FEBRUARY 28

Luka Doncic, Athlete (27)

MARCH 1

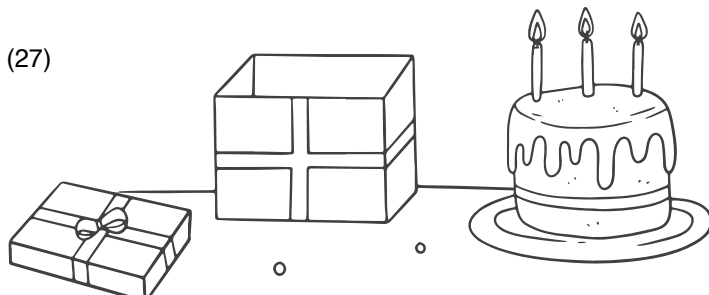
Justin Bieber, Musician (32)

MARCH 2

Jon Bon Jovi, Musician (64)

MARCH 3

Julie Bowen, Actress (56)



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EMAIL TO INQUIRE INFO@THEPARISINDEPENDENT.COM

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Free Drop-in Dodgeball - Dodgeball at North Ward School (Paris) from 6:30–7:30 pm, for ages 7–12.

The Brant County OPP is hosting a Community Safety Information Session - From 6:00 to 8:00 pm at the Cainsville Community Centre (15 Ewart Avenue, Cainsville) in the half hall WEST room. This session will provide valuable information to help keep you and your property safe. Representatives from several OPP units will be presenting on key community safety topics. This event is open to all members of the community. Questions and concerns are welcome and encouraged.

TUESDAY, MARCH 3RD, 10TH, 17TH, 24TH & 31ST

The Brant Men of Song Will Be Holding Their Choir Practices - on Tuesdays on March 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th and 31st at the First Baptist Church 70 West St., Brantford from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. New members are always welcome to attend and enjoy some singing.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

Paris Horticultural Society Monthly Meeting - Our General Meeting is March 4th at the Paris Fairgrounds, social time at 7 pm. We welcome Catherine McGill as our guest speaker, Catherine is a trained Horticultural and Design judge, so yes, she knows a little about a whole bunch of plants, past Director of District 6, back on the board as 2nd Vice President. Her program for the evening is "Weeds, Friend, or Foe". The program will start at 7:30 pm. Be our guest and join us for a very informative evening. You may decide to become a member of PHS.

FRIDAY, MARCH 6

The Paris Optimist Club Monthly Youth Dance - Friday March 6, 2026, from 7 pm to 10 pm. The Dance is held at the Syl Apps Community Centre, 51 William Street in Paris with adult chaperones to make sure everyone has a great time. The theme for this dance is St. Patrick's Day (wear green!). The dance is for students in grades 5 to 8 only. Grade 9 and older students are welcome to attend as volunteers. Entry fee is \$5.00 with a concession booth for pop, chips, candy and pizza. Tap payment is now available. Please note we have a no re entry policy. All proceeds support the Paris Optimist Club and its projects for the youth of our community. For any further information and to volunteer as a chaperone or as a high school student, please call 519.757.5020.

World Day of Prayer Service - to be held at Mt. Pleasant United Church at 11:00am, followed by a time of fellowship with potluck finger foods. Everyone is welcome.

TUESDAY MARCH 10

The Brant County Men's Probus Club Meeting - is on Tuesday, March 10th, 2026 at 10 AM at the Sherwood Restaurant 799 Colborne Street in Brantford. The guest speaker will be John Gilmore who will talk about Military History. New members are always welcome.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

Catholic Women's League Monthly Meeting - The Catholic Women's League will hold their monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 11th at 7 PM in the Sacred Heart Parish Hall, 17 Washington Street, Paris.

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

Free Will Offering Soup Luncheon - St. Paul's United Church - 48 Broadway St W at noon

Brant Heritage Quilters Guild - Will be holding their monthly meeting on Thursday, March 12 at St. George United Church, 9 Beverly St. E., St. George. Doors open at 6:15pm with meeting start time 7pm. New members welcome. Cost for non-members \$5/meeting.

TUESDAY, MARCH 17

Join the Paris Lions Club today! - Want to learn more about the club and how you can get involved? The Club is hosting a new members evening on Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at the Paris Fairgrounds starting at 7pm. Join Lions members for wine, cheese and good conversation. Discover how you can make a difference. You can RSVP to lionsparisrsvp@gmail.com.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

Oxford Philatelic Society OXPEX & OTEX 2026 Stamp Show - St. Mary's Catholic High School, 431 Juliana Drive, Woodstock, ON, N4V 1E8. 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Free admission and parking. Framed and Judged exhibits, Stamp dealers, youth gift bags, Sales Circuit, draw prizes. Contact: dhfe@silomail.com Web: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>

SUNDAY, MARCH 22

Brantford Symphony Orchestra presents Bachamania - Sunday, March 22 (3pm) at the Sanderson Centre. Join us as we celebrate music of the famous Bach family and say farewell to Maestro Sarabura and Concertmaster Leslie Dawn Knowles, retiring at the end of this season. Pre-concert chat 2:30pm, post-concert reception 5pm. Tickets \$44 or \$49 for adults, \$10 for students with ID, FREE for children and elementary students, available

at: tickets.sandersoncentre.ca or by calling the box office at 519-758-8090 12-5pm Mon-Sat.

TUESDAY, MARCH 24

The Knights of Columbus Monthly Meeting - The Knights of Columbus will be holding their monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 24th at 7:30 PM in the Sacred Heart Parish hall at 17 Washington Street, Paris.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

Experience Fanshawe at Open House - All locations are open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 28. Meet faculty and current students from all areas of Fanshawe Drop-in and ask about your program interests, career options and becoming a Fanshawe student Hear from college experts on student life, admissions, financial aid, and more! Explore our campuses at London, Woodstock, Simcoe, St. Thomas, Clinton and Tiverton.

THURSDAY, APRIL 9

Free Will Offering Soup Luncheon - St. Paul's United Church - 48 Broadway St W at noon

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.

SECOND TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

The Probus Club of Brantford - The Probus Club of Brantford with 140 members, provides fellowship, friendship, fabulous guest speakers and fun for retired and semi-retired men. We meet on the second Thursday of each month at the Walter Gretzky Municipal Golf Course, 10:00 a.m. to noon. Find out more at BrantfordProbus.ca

EVERY OTHER FRIDAY

Ingersoll Country Music Jamboree Meeting - In 2026 it's your fix! Ingersoll Country Music Jamboree meeting every other Friday 1-4 p.m. at Masonic Hall, 190 Thames St. S. Ingersoll. Join us, walk ins welcome. Qualifications - love 50-70's country music. Perform, listen, dance & enjoy! January 16 & 30, February 13 & 27, March 6 & 20, April 10 & 17, May 1, 15 & 29, June 5 & 19.

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QUIZ ANSWERS

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Mango or Durian | 6. Ohm (Ω) |
| 2. Hedgehogs & Porcupines | 7. Johnny Depp |
| 3. Bessie Smith | 8. 32 |
| 4. Amazon | 9. The Sargasso Sea |
| 5. Bamboo | 10. Eight |

The Paris Independent

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Email us at info@theparisdependent.com or call 519-655-2341

EMAIL YOUR STORY IDEAS TO OUR EDITOR

CASANDRA TURNBULL AT
STORIES@THEPARISINDEPENDENT.COM

SUDOKU ANSWERS

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



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.

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