


# SIMCOE ADVOCATE

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## Water capacity upgrade projects pushed back

LUKE EDWARDS

*Grant Haven Media*

While slower growth could mean Norfolk fails to hit its long-term targets, it has allowed Norfolk County to delay planned water and wastewater expansion projects.

Darnell Lamber, director of engineering and asset management, presented a water and wastewater service monitoring report to councillors at the March 24 meeting. He called the update a mix of good and bad.

“It is fair to say that our growth projections are more aggressive than are actually being realized,” he said.

Lambert outlined several revisions to the expansion plans based on new growth projections. Improvements in Simcoe have been pushed back from 2035 to the early 2040s.

Increased water supply for Port Dover isn’t expected to be needed until after 2051 instead of the previous date of 2041. A Phase 2 wastewater expansion project is also moved back from 2033 to the 2040s.

Expected expansion needs for Waterford, Delhi and Courtland have also been pushed back.

“Overall the county’s water and wastewater facilities are able to meet the near-term demands of forecasted growth,” he said.

Lambert said it’s a balancing act between ensuring capacity’s available when needed but not spending money before it’s needed.

“Done properly our plant expansion will be timely,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

The Multicultural and Heritage Association of Norfolk announced its logo contest winners on March 31. From left are Olha Dilechuk and Jon Kloepfer, MHAN members, first place winner Tyson Bond, second place winner Paige Wilson, runner-up Peighton Brady, and MHAN’s Judy Schaeffer. Absent for the photo: third-place Lane Veitch and runner-up Sloan Grozelle.

## MHAN announces logo contest winners

CHRIS ABBOTT

*Editor*

The Multicultural and Heritage Association of Norfolk wanted something new, something fresh, something that represents the county’s multicultural identity.

They wanted a new logo and they wanted the talented youth of Norfolk County to design it.

Reaching out to high school and elementary students, MHAN came up with a logo contest in November-December 2025. Winners were announced March 31st at MHAN’s

first meeting of 2026 at the Delhi Polish Hall.

“The logo design contest began as a way to refresh the club’s branding to help us better reach out and be recognized by the community,” said Olha Dilechuk, MHAN secretary, who was credited with the idea of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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**This Easter may Hope and Faith bring comfort as we honour the lives we hold dear.**



# New logos revealed for Multicultural & Heritage Association of Norfolk - a fresh look

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

updating their logo.

Tyson Bond's design, a Grade 12 student at Holy Trinity Catholic High School, was the first-place winner.

"It's a maple leaf with all the flags in it," said Bond, an art student at HT with experience painting oils and acrylics. "It's a mix... a collage of different flags."

After sketching his idea, Bond used Canva graphic design software to create his digital design.

"What inspired me was the cultures of different countries coming together into Canada. So I mixed the ideas of Canada - the leaf - and the flags which are in the exterior of the leaf."

Bond learned he was the grand prize winner during a slide show of winners.

"They (MHAN) did say there was an event today, which got me hyped because I knew something was going to happen. I'd show up and talk to everyone... or maybe even win, so that was exciting. It's an honour. It makes me happy to see my talent will be used for things other than actual artwork.

"I liked the wide variety of everybody's submissions - a lot of them stood out. The one that came second was one of my favourites - in my opinion, it just grabs the attention. It's sleek. A good logo has to be simple, but it has a message."

Bond will be graduating from HT this year and plans to attend Mohawk College in the fall.

"I'm going to keep graphic arts and arts in general as a hobby, definitely."

Second-place winner Paige Wilson, a Grade 8 student at Lynndale Heights in Simcoe, was the only elementary student in the Top 5.

"I didn't really want a picture," said

Wilson, explaining her design inspiration. "So I started off by using a big piece of text... because the main message is MHAN. But I had to make it clear what it actually meant, so I wrote the name underneath it. I had to make that small, it wouldn't fit across."

First inspired by an art teacher she had from Grade 2 to Grade 6, Wilson said she would like to take art in high school (although those plans will have to wait until Grade 10).

She was pleased and proud of her Canva digital design results.

"Usually whenever I do something like that, I think 'Oh, I could have fixed this...' I didn't have any of those thoughts."

\*\*\*

Winning logos will be used on MHAN letterhead, clothing, banners, online content and more.

"It is an important component of the association, as increased public awareness will allow us to better serve the community," said Dil-etchuk.

"We would like to especially thank all the students, teachers and faculty who helped us spread the word and submit their designs. It was great to be able to partner with the youth of Norfolk and see the creativity you are capable of."

MHAN wanted the contest to be fun, and at the same time they wanted Norfolk youth to think about cultures and heritage in the county, and its importance in their own lives.

"It suggests a new life for us. We want new members to be involved in our club, and we wanted the youth to be involved. Multicultural & Heritage has been here... I don't even know, decades, and we need something fresh."

MHAN thanked SCS teacher for Jeremy Lewis for his enthusiastic

support of the logo contest.

## MHAN LOGO WINNERS

- **FIRST:** Tyson Bond, Holy Trinity Catholic High School
- **SECOND:** Paige Wilson, Lynndale Heights Public School
- **THIRD:** Lane Veitch, Simcoe Composite School
- **Honorable Mentions:** Peighton Brady, SCS, and Sloan Grozelle, SCS

## JINGLE DANCING & INDIGENOUS CULTURE

The Multicultural and Heritage Association of Norfolk is welcoming Professor Robyn Michaud to the Delhi Tobacco Museum and Heritage Centre (200 Talbot Road, Delhi) on Saturday, April 25, 1-3 p.m. Michaud will talk about the rich heritage of Indigenous people in Canada, diversity within Indigenous culture, and the power of dance as an expression of heritage and identity. The event is open to the community, \$10 admission.

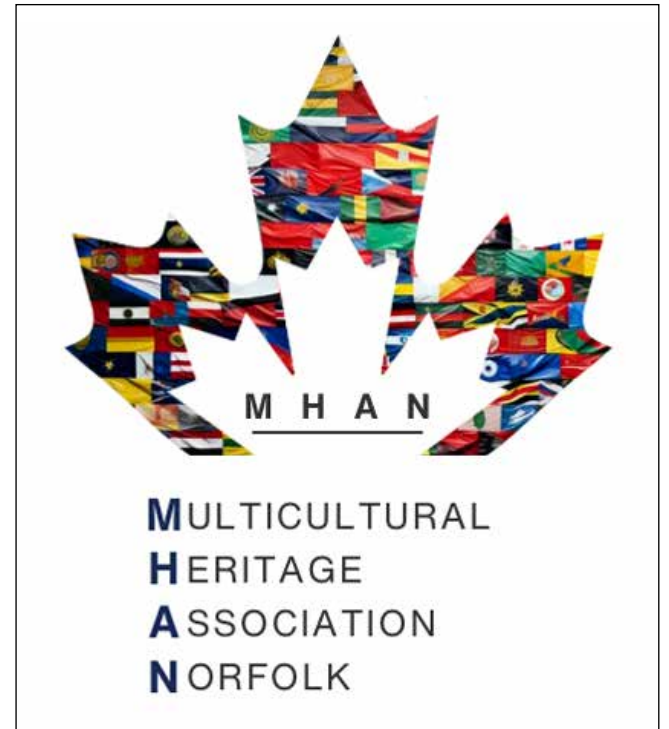
"She (Michaud) is amazing... she is wonderful," said Judy Schaeffer, noting Michaud is a teacher at UWO and Conestoga College. "It is well worth the \$10 admission - if you can come, please do."

## MULTICULTURAL FOOD FESTIVAL

Save the date - June 6 is the Multicultural & Heritage Association of Norfolk's second annual Food Festival at the museum in Delhi.

About 700 people attended last year's festival and they hope it will be even bigger this year.

"There is music throughout the whole day," said Schaeffer. "I think we have about 12 different food vendors. Please check our Facebook page and also the museum - we work so well together."



Tyson Bond's first-place MHAN logo.



Paige Wilson's second-place MHAN logo.



Lane Veitch's third-place MHAN logo.

## Growth projections revised in Norfolk County

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ly, avoiding moratoriums or the need for emergency expansions and deliver optimal performance that is not over-built," he said.

The slower than expected growth has given staff the opportunity not just to push back planned projects, but also focus on repair and rehabilitation of the existing system. Staff's inflow and infiltration work has also helped increase capacity in the system. However, he cautioned that things can change.

"Five years from now we could be in a different picture, the economy could turn very positive," he said, adding the County needs to be nimble.

Staff are also working with consultants to look at alternatives for the inter-urban water supply project. The major upgrade requires significant funding commitments from other levels of government, which has yet to materialize. Council previously approved having staff look at other options.

An update is expected to come back to council in the coming months.



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# Delhi BIA Easter egg hunt



Emryn Vezensyi, Tillsonburg.

(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTOS)



Brooklyn and Melissa Brighton of Tillsonburg at the Delhi BIA Easter Egg Hunt.



Graham Vezensyi, Tillsonburg.



The Wall family from Delhi at the Delhi BIA Easter Egg Hunt.



The Van Elsacker family from Delhi.



Elliott and Deanna Stein of Otterville.



The Brophy family from Port Dover.



# Bobbi Ann Brady

MPP, HALDIMAND-NORFOLK

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# EDITORIAL

## Soundbites do not fool me

Haldimand-Norfolk

**MPP  
Bobbi Ann  
Brady**



The second week of my return to Queen's Park felt like a watershed moment - not for headlines, but for the groundwork being quietly and deliberately laid.

My team and I are building toward something bigger, something that reflects the voices too often left out of the conversation. From the moment I arrived at the Pink Palace, I made one thing clear: I am not here for self-preservation. I am here to fight for the people of Haldimand-Norfolk, and by extension, all Ontarians, and to restore a sense of hope that politics can still serve them.

I see missed opportunities for taxpayers at every turn. I see a government letting real chances slip by while settling for the appearance of action over meaningful results. And I hear the soundbites—the kind that may fool some, but don't fool me. Because at the end of the day, empty words don't build anything, fix anything, or deliver for the people who depend on us in a time of need.

During Question Period on Wednesday, I called out the

government for its posturing on the federal gun buyback - a hare-brained scheme that does little to improve public safety. Whatever your views on firearms, this policy misses the mark. Law-abiding owners are the ones who follow the rules; criminals, by definition, do not. They don't register their guns, and they won't be lining up to hand them over.

Last month the Premier praised a homeowner who used a firearm to defend himself against an intruder. Many appreciated the Premier's remarks, and he and Ontario's Solicitor General agree with me that law-abiding firearms owners, like hunters and farmers, are not the problem. But that agreement offers little comfort to those anxious about property rights, the effectiveness of the policy, logistical hurdles, and the potential criminalization of previously law-abiding firearms owners.

You do not deserve recycled soundbites on any issue - you deserve real protection and tangible results. That's exactly what's being pursued in provinces like Alberta and Saskatchewan, where Danielle Smith and Scott Moe are taking concrete steps to push back and stand up for their residents, proving leadership can move beyond words and deliver action.

I will continue to press this government to introduce legislation that actually protects law-abiding citizens from what I see as an unconstitutional overreach.

From firearms to farms to the rising cost of living, I also stood in the House highlighting the missed opportunities in Budget 2026. Since trade threats first surfaced, I've been calling on this government to recognize the urgency: it's high time Ontario made significant investments in agri-food processing. Strengthening this sector isn't just smart economics - it's essential for protecting jobs, supporting farmers, and securing the province's food future.

I'm not alone in this view. Following the release of Budget 2026, Ontario's largest farm organization, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, issued a pointed news release, underscoring the missed opportunities.

"We are disappointed by the absence of direct policy aimed at expanding food processing capacity in Ontario. The Budget did not introduce any targeted policies aimed at expanding Ontario's food processing sector."

Earlier in the week I took a few minutes to remind the government that Budget 2026 failed to deliver affordability for you because I hear from far too many families who are barely hanging in on the current economic climate.

An hour-long academic interview partway through the week, with Dr. Mario Levesque, gave me a moment to reflect on why I entered public life in the first place. It is simple - I want to see people hopeful again. I want our children and grandchildren to grow up in an Ontario that is familiar, strong and full of opportunity - the Ontario we once knew and must restore.

\*\*\*

As you, the hardworking taxpayer of Ontario, continue to bust your hump to provide for your family - juggling rising costs, longer hours, and growing uncertainty - the only solace being offered by your provincial government is that they are standing on the sidelines, first aid kit in hand, offering bandages instead of real solutions.

On Thursday, March 26, the Ford government delivered its 2026 Ontario Budget. At first glance, it feels less like

a fresh plan and more like a rerun of recycling last year's messaging without even the effort of a new title, once again branding it A Plan to Protect Ontario.

What is new, however, is the projected deficit for the coming year, which has nearly doubled to \$13.8 billion. Just one year ago, that figure was projected at \$7.8 billion. For a government that brands itself as fiscally conservative, that is a hard pill to swallow.

One of the simplest ways to make a dent in this \$13.8 billion deficit would be to stop subsidizing electricity bills for those who do not need it... billionaires like Galen Weston for example. Each year, taxpayers hand over \$6.9 billion to cover hydro costs for everyone. Targeting the subsidies only to those who need them could wipe out half of this year's deficit, while freeing up money for healthcare, education, and our municipalities, all without raising your taxes. I was looking for measures in this budget that would translate into real affordability measures. I was hoping for items that would genuinely ease the pressure on household finances, but I am hard pressed to find anything that will bring your costs down.

Representing a riding built on the backs of hardworking farmers, during pre-budget consultations I pressed this government to invest in agri-food processing - an investment that would shield us from tariffs, strengthen local supply chains, and secure Ontario's food sovereignty. Any mentions of agriculture in this year's budget were, in fact, recycled announcements from previous years. I remain perplexed as to why Ontario's government does not show the respect our farm industry deserves when it is the largest and most diverse in Canada.

As for the government expanding the homebuyer tax break, I am convinced this is the clearest example yet of a bandage being pulled from the provincial first aid kit where they are offering a quick fix instead of addressing the deeper, systemic issues that are driving housing costs through the roof. Without knowing the full details of this rebate, I cannot help but be suspicious that it may be a little more than a bailout for developers struggling to off-load small undesirable and expensive condominiums in the city. For homeowners thinking of putting a 'for sale' sign on their existing property, be aware you will now be competing in an even hotter, artificially propped up housing market.

In speaking with a local builder, the fear is real that in one year's time this government will have decreased the equity in each of our houses by at least \$100,000. Red tape is worse than ever for builders, development charges have doubled and tripled in some municipalities and skyrocketing land transfer taxes are the real barriers to housing affordability and market movement. Unless these items are addressed, when that bandage is ripped off in a year's time, the wounds might well be deeper than before the bandage was applied.

On a positive note, I was heartened the government finally listened to those of us in the opposition benches calling for a reduction in the Small Business Tax Rate (SBTR). Our small businesses need this boost, and I hope the government sees fit to continue reducing the SBTR.

Ontarians are hardworking people, yet the government we rely upon to support and reward that effort is missing opportunities, resting on its majority status and content to hand out bandages instead of solutions. I will continue to unpack Budget 2026 in future articles.

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**Publisher**

Stewart Grant • [stew@granthaven.com](mailto:stew@granthaven.com)

**Editor**

Chris Abbott • [chris@granthaven.com](mailto:chris@granthaven.com)

**Graphic Design / Sales Inquiries**

Michelle Foster • [info@simcoeadvocate.com](mailto:info@simcoeadvocate.com)

**Business Development**

Heather Dunbar • [heather@granthaven.com](mailto:heather@granthaven.com)

**Administration**

Jen Gaetan • [jen@granthaven.com](mailto:jen@granthaven.com)

**Contributors**

Lisa Timpf, Brenda Moser, Luke Edwards,  
Leah Bauer, Paul Knowles

36 Water St. St. Marys, ON, PO Box 2310 N4X 1A2  
[info@simcoeadvocate.com](mailto:info@simcoeadvocate.com) | 519.655.2341 | [granthaven.com](http://granthaven.com)



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CHRIS ABBOTT AT [CHRIS@GRANTHAVEN.COM](mailto:CHRIS@GRANTHAVEN.COM)**

# Woodway Trails subdivision approval goes against developer's wishes in Simcoe

LUKE EDWARDS

Grant Haven Media

A Norfolk council decision to approve a draft plan of subdivision actually went against the developer's wishes.

In an unusual twist, consultant John Vallee requested only a partial approval for his client's Woodway Trails development at the March 24 council meeting. Vallee urged councillors to only approve an initial phase - 108 of the total 453 units planned for the southeast Simcoe land - instead of the entire plan.

Vallee offered a few reasons for his request, but most centred on a servicing easement that will be required and a quad-party agreement between his client, the County, and two developers to the south and southeast.

"We believe that it's simply not reasonable to have this developer give that servicing corridor to the County until that quad-party agreement is in place," Vallee told councillors. The staff recommendation included a long list of conditions, several of which Vallee said touch on aspects of the proposed quad-party agreement. Vallee said he was concerned that some of the conditions for development in the area could be appealed by the other nearby landowners to the Ontario Land Tribunal, and he didn't share staff's confidence that they'd be able to successfully defend any

appeals.

"If they're waived then there's absolutely no ability for Norfolk to force these developers into a cost sharing agreement with our client and he's already provided the servicing corridor that's required," Vallee said.

For their part, representatives for the other two developers suggested they were open to a fair cost sharing arrangement through a quad-party agreement.

"We are fully prepared to participate in cost sharing between all neighbouring land owners," said Ashley Sud, principal at Calibrex, one of the developers involved in the quad-party agreement discussions.

"We see no problem with that at all."

Sud said the servicing easement is vital to ensure proper planning for future municipal infrastructure in the area.

"While phasing is common, approving Phase 1 without protecting the servicing corridor would limit how infrastructure is extended in the future," he said.

LIV Communities' Ben Jones agreed, and also said approval gives Norfolk a level of control.

"The county can be in the driver's seat and intervene if necessary," he said. In addition to the concerns over the servicing corridor and the agreement, Vallee also said basic bureaucratic logistics could cause problems. With only 20 building permits issued by Norfolk in Simcoe last year,

he suggested capacity would be stretched in an effort to get moving on the entire development.

"The simple math is that it's just not attainable. This is too big and needs to be reduced in scale," he said.

The overall project includes 453 units that's mostly a mix of single detached homes and townhouses. There's also a block set aside for a future 36 units that could take the shape of a mid-rise or group townhouse condominiums.

Some concerns had previously been expressed by councillors and members of the public. They revolve around the number of units, traffic concerns, parkland, environmental, and archaeological. However, councillors offered few comments on the report, when it came forward. Coun. Alan Duthie said it was frustrating to hear talks about the quad-party agreement were still in a very preliminary phase, and added residents appreciate being able to look at a proposal in its entirety. County planner Fabian Serra was also critical of an email he said the Woodway Trails developers sent to councillors offering an alternative plan.

"This is highly inappropriate and circumvents the correct process. It doesn't allow for public feedback and doesn't allow for any of the public consultation," he said.

# Road rehabilitation temporarily takes priority

LUKE EDWARDS

Grant Haven Media

A cruel winter has convinced Norfolk councillors of the need to take a temporary and minor deviation from established county policy.

Councillors directed staff at the March 24 meeting to set aside \$1 million in the expected budget surplus from 2025 to improve roads that were battered by Mother Nature in recent months. Typically, any surplus dollars are used to improve reserve funds or fund projects that otherwise be paid for through debt. This is based on a policy the county officially adopted in 2023. However, at a previous meeting Coun. Chris Van Paassen asked staff to look at ways it could use \$1 million from the projected surplus to focus

on road rehabilitation. A cold winter and several freeze-thaw cycles have left many of Norfolk's roads in worse conditions than a usual spring.

"I believe the conditions Mother Nature gave us last year put the need for this ahead of sticking to the policy right to the letter," Van Paassen said at the March 24 meeting.

The report offered up six specific sections of road for work, three for hot mix paving and three for surface treatment.

The hot mix paving sections included: Argyle Street from Pond Street to Basil Avenue, various sections of Ireland Road, and Main Street Waterford from Green Street to West Church.

The surface treatment sections included: Front Road from Turkey Point Road to Spooky Hollow Road,

Teeter Street from Teeterville Road to Teeterville Public School, and Charlotteville Road 5 from Turkey Point Road to Water Street. Staff also recommended using \$80,000 for various pothole and rehab work, along with \$60,000 for tree removal.

General manager of public works Andrew Grice said the report was written in a way to give staff leeway should they have extra dollars to spend.

"Should we receive favourable tendering we would expand to include a greater scope of work," he said.

Though staff said they were happy to add the projects to their work plan, CAO Al Meneses did remind councillors of the policy for surpluses and that any deviations adds to the challenge of future financial sustainability.



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# Backus Mill needs restoration assistance

JEFF HELSDON

Grant Haven Media

Backus Mill needs the public's assistance to be the "Next Great Save."

The centrepiece of Long Point Region Conservation Authority's Backus Heritage Conservation Area, and a National Historic Site, the mill did what no other structure of its type did on the north shore of Lake Erie by surviving the War of 1812.

Several theories exist as to why the mill wasn't burned by invading American forces during the war, but the structure now faces a new challenge: structural issues associated with its 225-year-plus age.

"The architectural and structural assessment that we obtained recommends that the mill needs a comprehensive engineering report, temporary structural shoring, and drainage improvements, among various other repairs," said curator Chloe Anna. "LPRCA's priority is to obtain a full structural review and to re-grade the gravel around the building to restore proper drainage and prevent water accumulation to mitigate further deterioration."

## VOTE ONLINE

Enter the 'Next Great Save.'

The Next Great Save is a national program that provides funding to help protect cherished heritage structures. Funded by Ecclesiastical Insurance, the program provides \$65,000 in annual funding, with a first prize of \$50,000, second prize of \$10,000, and third prize of \$5,000. The winner is determined by online voting at [nextgreatsave.com](https://nextgreatsave.com) between April 7 and 24.

"We strongly encourage people to vote once every day during the duration of the competition and to share the news with everyone they know to maximize the amount of potential votes for the mill," said Jessica King, LPRCA's marketing and social me-



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTOS)

**Backus Mill at Backus Heritage Conservation Area needs a comprehensive engineering report, temporary structural shoring, drainage improvements, and other repairs. You can help by voting online daily at [nextgreatsave.com](https://nextgreatsave.com) between April 7 and 24.**

dia associate.

An online donation campaign is also being coordinated at <https://www.canada-helps.org/en/dn/144784>

Anna explained there is no estimated cost yet, as the engineering report will provide the next steps, and at that time, a cost estimate can be completed. Previous restoration work on the mill was completed in 2015 and 2019.

The Port Rowan area mill is a vital part of the Backus Heritage Conservation Area, which attracts thousands of visitors annually, and is also the site of school day programs. It is a prominent feature in the annual War of 1812 re-enactment, and tours were offered of the interior until the mill had to be closed due to structural issues.

"The Backhouse Grist Mill is an extraordinary National Historic Site, surviving

war, weather, and technological changes," Anna said. "It is a time capsule of ingenuity and tells the story of an important family legacy, and the labours of the local community. Today, the mill is a landmark for our local community, acting as a place for people to share interests, values, and history."

"It's so important to keep our history alive and every vote counts," Dave Beres LPRCA's board member. "Vote every day and tell your friends to do the same."



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  - Display Ad - Sizes begin at a Small Classified Display ad (3.3" x 2.5") - \$35 + hst

# Jeff Tribe receives LPRCA stewardship recognition

CHRIS ABBOTT

Editor

Jeff Tribe is the 2025 recipient of Long Point Region Conservation Authority's Stewardship Award, awarded annually to an individual or group for their contribution to the natural heritage within the Long Point Region watershed.

A journalist, photographer, videographer, content creator and farmer, Tribe is passionate about the environment, said Doug Brunton, chair of the LPRCA board of directors, presenting the award at the LPRCA Annual General Meeting March 6 in Tillsonburg.

With the help of Ducks Unlimited Canada, Tribe facilitated a wetland restoration project on his family farm resulting in 1.4 acres of newly created wetland, including two wetland cells, several smaller water features, and 8.9 acres of surrounding upland habitat.

Around the wetland, 450 trees and shrubs were planted. Most recently, another 550 trees were planted through Forests Canada's 50 Million Tree Planting Program.

"Supporting the conservation of natural resources in the Long Point Region watershed is critical, optimizing and maintaining the health of the watershed," said Brunton. "Thank you for your valuable contributions, Jeff."

"My dad (Harry Tribe) was a tree planter who saw himself as a steward rather than owner of the land," said Tribe, noting the family's 'duck ponds' have been formally named 'The Harry & Jessie Wetland' in honour of his parents.

"Dad spent his lifetime bringing surviv-

ing maple saplings along. It's a 'thing' to me that I tapped those trees for the third year on Wednesday, and with help from Harry's great-grandchildren, continue to produce maple syrup from their sap."

Tribe said the family's association with LPRCA is also multi-generational.

"Dad sourced trees to plant a wood break, I can remember hoeing as a small child, somewhere around 60 years. The LPRCA planted 500 walnuts and 270 red oak, infilled with white pine... around 40 years ago. More recently, there were the 450 mixed trees and shrubs."

He noted the help of several organizations, including Stewardship Oxford and LPRCA, was important in creating the wetland/tree area.

"The wetland has attracted a variety of ducks and geese... and we have received much enjoyment from the thought a wide range of other wildlife enjoys the habitat – frogs, turtles, fireflies, birds, and even snakes..."

Collaborative partnerships with organizations like the LPRCA help make it happen, he said, "providing consultation, expertise, guidance, and 'boots on the ground.'"

"I would also like to emphasize the importance of long-term relationships with LOCAL representatives like Paul Gagnon. Paul is helpful, knowledgeable and informative. His years of lived conservation experience in this area are a huge benefit to both the CA and the land owners he interacts with.

Tribe made it clear he was not a fan of Ontario consolidating its Conservation Authorities, first announced in the fall of 2025, and recently amended on March 10.



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

**Doug Brunton, chair of the LPRCA, on the left, presents the 2025 Stewardship Award to Jeff Tribe on March 6.**

"It concerns me when I hear there is a plan to consolidate the CAs across Ontario. As a land owner,

I don't want to dial 1-800-Rent-a-Parachute-Consultant when we're considering a project for the Tribe Ranch. We want Paul – or other local (staff) we've had the

pleasure of dealing with over many generations."

People who live here, Tribe concluded, and people who have a passion for conservation in this area, "create a level of comfort, trust and confidence to move forward."

## Province finalizes changes to conservation authorities

JEFF HELSDON

Grant Haven Media

Ontario's 36 conservation authorities will be reduced to nine under sweeping changes finalized by the province on March 10.

The initial proposal was to reduce the number of conservation authorities to seven. Locally, the Long Point Region Conservation Authority (LPRCA) would have been grouped in a new entity that would have stretched from Windsor to Niagara.

The final decision was altered slightly to create an Eastern Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority and Western Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority, while grouping the eastern end of Lake Erie in with the Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority. There will be nine conservation authorities in total and a new Ontario Provincial Conservation Authority. More specifically, this will translate into the amalgamation of LPRCA with Kettle Creek Conservation Authority, Catfish Creek Conservation Authority, and Grand River Conservation Authority.

Details from the province provide a broad outline of the process, including the formation of a transition committee, and that the new conservation authorities would be established in 2027.

The provincial push for the change was to speed permit approval, but the information accompanying the decision states that the changes will also bring improved flood control, electronic permitting, and erosion prevention while maintaining strong environmental protections. A great deal of feedback was received during the consultation process,

with 14,000 comments from municipalities, individuals, and organizations. It was taken into consideration when creating watershed councils that will align more closely with the former conservation authorities' boundaries.

The changes will also see responsibility for paying levies and appointing board members move from lower-tier municipalities to upper-tier. There will also be a cap on the number of board members and a possible limit to the number of representatives from each municipality.

Tillsonburg Deputy Mayor Dave Beres, past chair of LPRCA, said having nine conservation authorities is better than seven.

"Nobody likes change, however, this is much better than it looked before," he said, adding LPRCA is more at home with Catfish, Kettle Creek and Grand River Conservation Authorities.

Norfolk Councillor Doug Brunton, current chair of LPRCA, pointed out they had little in common with areas west of London, which are flatter, have many municipal drains and less forest.

"It's better than what it was," Brunton said of the final arrangement. "It's a little more applicable to where we are. We were originally going all the way down to Windsor."

Beres said there are still many unanswered questions with the new structure.

"There may or may not be elected officials on the boards, that's still to be determined," Beres said.

"They're going to form these boards, but we don't understand entirely how we fit in," Brunton said.

Beres also had questions about the boundaries and how it will work when a municipality is in multiple jurisdictions.

"So how are they going to their municipal partners for funding for a levy if they haven't established this yet?" he asked.

Beres believes many conservation authorities rely on municipal levies for up to half their budgets, and questioned if there would be an increased cost locally.

Brunton echoed that concern.

"I haven't seen the books of the other conservation authorities we will amalgamate with," Brunton said. "We're very not reliant on the municipalities as other conservation authorities are. My fear is that reserves will be blended together, and it will be detrimental to the area."

Brunton spoke highly of the tourism potential of the LPRCA-owned campgrounds in Norfolk, and one in Haldimand County, and hopes that is taken into consideration. Pointing to Backus, he mentioned the education centre teaches about conservation and the school programs hosted in the centre.

"To me, if this amalgamation doesn't allow us to continue with the programs at Backus and the campgrounds, it will be detrimental," he said.

Beres pointed to the future of Backus Mill itself, the only mill still standing on the north shore of Lake Erie that survived burning by American forces during the War of 1812.

"That's yet to be determined. Are we going to turn that over to the municipalities?" Beres pondered.

"This is all about building more homes faster," Beres said. Brunton said meetings are scheduled in the near future with Conservation Ontario, the current entity for all the conservation authorities, and he is hopeful more details will emerge.

# Changes coming to Conservation Authorities

CHRIS ABBOTT

Editor

On March 10, the Ontario Government announced it planned to consolidate its 36 Conservation Authorities into seven, slightly changing direction from its 2025 proposal of nine.

Just four days earlier, the Long Point Region Conservation Authority had held its annual meeting on Friday, March 6, without knowing the announcement would be coming that soon after the meeting.

Judy Maxwell, LPRCA General Manager, Secretary-Treasurer, presenting the LPRCA annual report on behalf of the board of directors, noted, "There has been very little information released regarding the proposed Regional Consolidation of Conservation Authorities."

"The province announced the proposed amalgamations of Conservation Authorities into seven Regional Conservation Authorities on Oct. 31st, 2025," said Doug Brunton, LPRCA board chair, during the LPRCA meeting in Tillsonburg.

"The board of directors does not support the Regional Conservation Authority consolidation proposal that was outlined in the Environmental Registry of Ontario," said Brunton.

In December 2025, LPRCA discussed the consolidation proposal, stating the LPRCA Board of Directors "acknowledges and supports the Province's goals of improved efficiency, consistency and fiscal responsibility in conservation delivery; however, the LPRCA Board of Directors does not support the proposed Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority boundary configuration."

"The LPRCA noted that the proposed boundaries are too large to sustain the ef-

fective, locally responsive services and programs that are currently delivered," said Brunton. "The Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority, in which LPRCA would be consolidated with seven other Conservation Authorities, involves 81 municipalities, which would dilute or eliminate the voices of rural municipalities.

"Although at this time the details of the proposed consolidation have not yet been released, we appreciate the comments and concerns shared with Province of Ontario regarding the proposed consolidation of Conservation Authorities. We remain hopeful that our collective efforts have been heard and the importance of locally driven watershed-based programs and services will continue into the future."

"I would think that the Ontario Government has to make a decision fairly quickly because there is a local municipal election coming up in the fall," said Mike Columbus, Norfolk Councillor and LPRCA board member after the March 6th meeting. "I would think they will have something out shortly. It's been sitting on the burner – the front burner, not the back burner – for a considerable length of time.

"I think the key is not to rush into it," said Columbus, "and make the correct decision for the future of Conservation Authorities and all the watersheds in the province. It's absolutely important that they put the right pieces together.

"Every Conservation Authority has some uniqueness to it. For example, we here in Long Point have the Lee Brown Marsh, which is very unique. We have a number of private campgrounds – five of them, and we have a lot of woodlots – I think 9,000 acres of woodlots, which we harvest and get an income off them to maintain our other properties. So we have those resources



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

**LPRCA chair Doug Brunton presented 15-year appreciation certificates to Norfolk's Mike Columbus and Tillsonburg's Dave Beres at the LPRCA annual general meeting.**

here, but maybe other municipalities and watersheds do not have that. They may have something different that they are concerned about.

"We're all about protecting people and property," Columbus concluded. "That's what it's about."

"With the pending consolidation of Conservation Authorities, we hope and trust the Province will ask us for input," said Dave Beres, Tillsonburg Deputy Mayor and LPRCA past-president after the annual meeting, "because we are the 'the boots on the ground' for conservation, and we can continue to serve the lands and the people, in the best interests of the future.

"It's happening," said Beres. "We want to be involved, so let's not try to fight it, let's work with them. Allow us to give in-

put. I think all the Conservation Authorities in Ontario feel the same way. Let us have some input, don't just ram this down our throats. We are the ones that are here, we already understand what the needs are, and it's very obvious the Province just wants to build homes faster. That's their motto and they feel it will help. And I can't see that it will."

The planned nine Conservation Areas announced on March 10 effectively split the proposed Lake Erie agency, which stretched all the way from Niagara to Windsor/Essex County, in half. LPRCA will be grouped with Kettle Creek Conservation Authority, Catfish Creek Conservation Authority, and Grand River Conservation Authority. The changes are expected in 2027.

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# Delegated authority allows staff to approve tenders if the overall project remains under budget

LUKE EDWARDS

Grant Haven Media

Norfolk councillors have given staff more leeway for capital budget reallocations within bundled projects in an effort to reduce costly delays.

The changes will allow staff to move forward with tenders that are over their individual budgeted amount if they're in a bundled package and the total tender amount remains at or under budget. Previously they would have to get approval from council for a budget amendment, leading to delays.

"These delays have real impacts. They can affect construction scheduling, contractor availability and our ability to advance time sensitive capital projects efficiently," said

deputy treasurer Chris Everets.

The staff report offered a hypothetical situation where there was a project with two aspects requiring their own individual tenders. The total budget was for \$1 million, split between the two tenders: \$700,000 for the first, and \$300,000 for the second. In this hypothetical, the bids come back at \$450,000 for the first and \$400,000 for the second. So even though the total project comes in under budget at \$850,000, staff would require a budget amendment from council because the second part is over its individual budget.

The situation unfolded in reality earlier this year, the staff report said.

"A road reconstruction tender returned under the overall approved budget, but one project exceeded its individu-

al budget allocation, requiring a report to council before award," the report said.

This can be particularly problematic in the tender-heavy spring, when municipalities are working hard to get their summer construction projects underway.

"Time lost awaiting council approval may materially affect the County's ability to advance capital projects efficiently," the report said.

While supportive of the idea, Coun. Chris Van Paassen wanted to ensure there were some protections in place.

"Are there any guardrails on what gets bundled?" he said. "I think this is a great policy but I'd hate to see a bundle of three tenders where one is road paving, another one's road paving and the third one is a new car for the deputy treasurer."

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# Norfolk considers de-designating heritage post office

LUKE EDWARDS

Grant Haven Media

A building that was once a post office and later Simcoe town hall may lose its heritage designation protections.

Councillors went against a staff recommendation at the March 24 meeting regarding the Post Office/Ventin building located on the corner of Peel and Kent streets. The property's owner is requesting de-designation for what appear to be mostly financial reasons. A letter to staff from the owners suggested they were having challenges renting the building out, finding insurance or finding a buyer.

In their report, staff said the request came without any hard evidence and no solid justification for de-designating the property.

However, councillors had a more sympathetic ear. Both Chris Van Paassen and

Adam Veri said property owners should have control over their properties

"If someone owns a building they should be able to do what they like," Veri said.

However, acting director of planning and realty services Alisha Cull said the owners haven't suggested a desire to do work on the building, and even if they did it's only the exterior that is protected through the heritage designation.

"They haven't actually indicated that they want to do any work on the building, only the outside of the building's designated so they can do whatever they want inside, really" she said.

And while he typically agrees with giving property owners control over their land and buildings, Coun. Alan Duthie said there's also a level of responsibility for those buying properties.

"It's incumbent on purchasers of proper-

ty to do their due diligence," he said.

The building had already been designated when the current owners bought the property.

"It's a beautiful building on the outside and they can do whatever they want on the inside," Duthie continued.

"I'm not sure I really buy the reasons that are being suggested in the applicant's letter."

While they didn't give their full blessing to de-designated the property, councillors did vote to have staff look at the de-designation process.

At the meeting, council also voted to designate Christ Church, an Anglican church in Vittoria whose history dates back to the mid-19th century.

Church trustees supported the designation, as did county staff and the county's heritage committee.



Adam Veri, Norfolk Ward 6 Councillor

## Weekend Quiz

By Jake Grant

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. What is the birthstone for April?  | Shutter Island(2010)?   |
| 2. Who is the newly elected leader of the NDP?                                      | 7. Canada's federal minimum wage grew April 1st, 2026. What is minimum wage?        |
| 3. The Cooper's Hill Cheese-Rolling and Wake takes place annually in which country? | 8. Angkor Wat is the largest religious monument in the world found in what country? |
| 4. Children born from 2025 to 2039 will belong to which generation?                 | 9. How far is 1-light year in kilometers?   |
| 5. What are the three main macronutrients?  | 10. How many sides does a heptagon have?  |
| 6. Who stars as the lead role in  |   |

This week's answers are found on pg. 27



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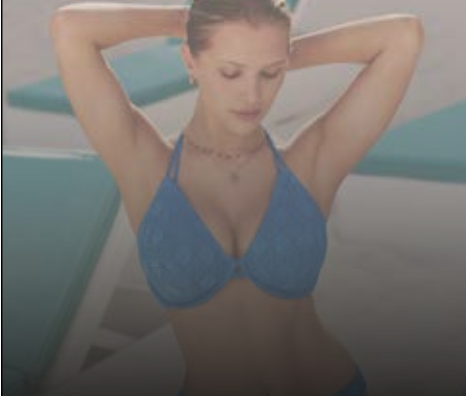
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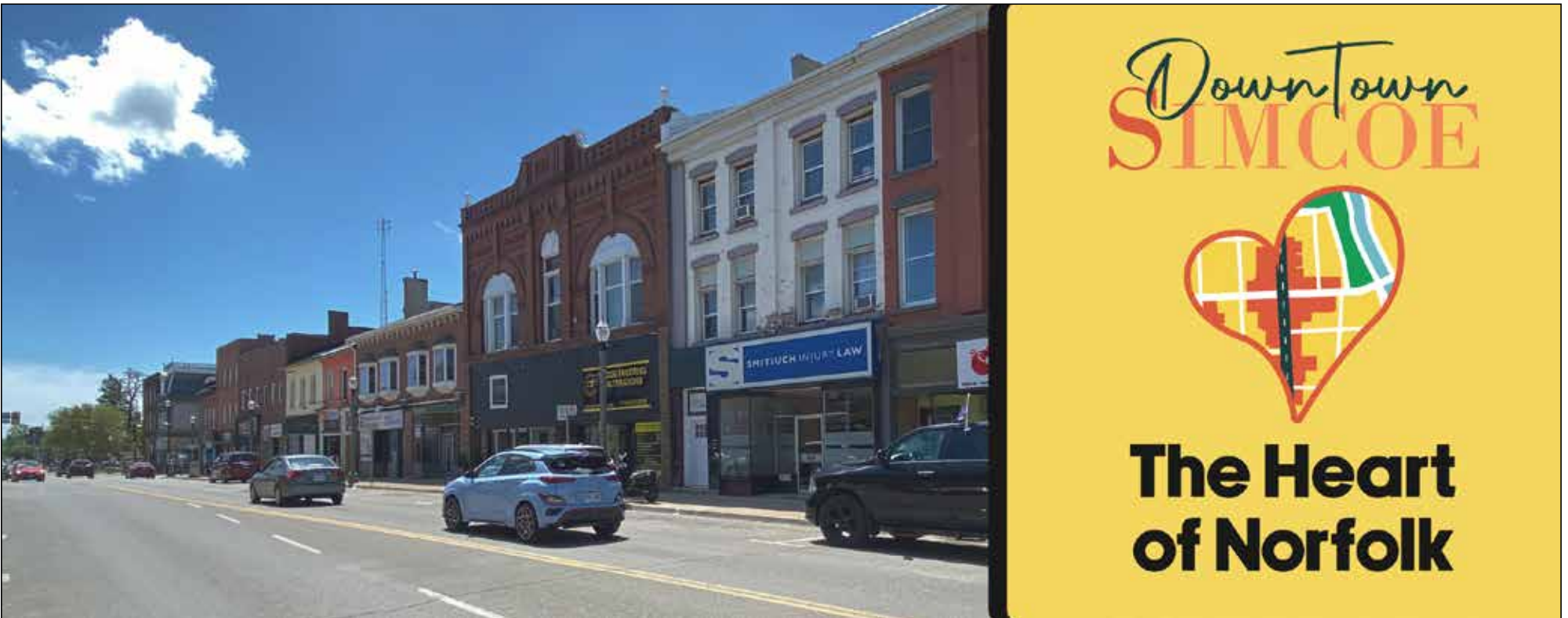
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# The Easter Egg Hunt was on in Waterford

BRENDA MOSER

Advocate Contributor

At this time of year in Canada, one can never predict the weather so we have become accustomed to 'going with the flow' and making the best of it.

On Saturday, April 4th, the Waterford Heritage & Agricultural Museum held its annual Easter Eggstravaganza at the Waterford Baseball Diamonds and the turnout was nothing short of amazing.

WHAM staff James Christison and Angela Ferreira, along with their dedicated volunteers, were happy to report this year's event was the largest crowd yet. Even with a chance of rain, and the cold wind, there were 323 'hunters' through the gates in

search of those yummy chocolate eggs.

"We advertised for 8,000 eggs but we went through about 9,000 eggs... our largest offering yet for eggs," said Ferreira.

The Easter Egg Hunt was open to children 12 years old and under and the cost per child was just \$5. Money raised supports ongoing operations of the museum, including youth programming and special exhibitions.

The Eggstravaganza event is made possible through the kind sponsorship of the Waterford Chamber of Commerce. Their support is definitely appreciated! It is also important to recognize the help and support of the many volunteers who came out to help. Thank You Volunteers!



(BRENDA MOSER PHOTOS)

"I jumped at the chance to volunteer for this!" said Waterford Eggstravaganza volunteer Pam Steel on Saturday, April 4. "The joy it brings to the kids... no matter the prizes."



Waterford Eggstravaganza grand prize draw winners, Etta and Dylan Stawychny. Now that's a lot of chocolate!



Lined up and ready to go Saturday at the Waterford baseball diamonds.



More than 300 'hunters' participated in Saturday's Eggstravaganza in Waterford.



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# Veterans banners coming to Waterford

BRENDA MOSER

*Advocate Contributor*

It was a windy, bitter cold day when a small crowd of about 40-50 people gathered March 17 at the Old Train Station, Alice Street, Waterford.

They were there to honour the fallen and to learn more of a special Remembrance banner program - the Waterford & District Veterans Banner Program. The very fact that we were honoring fallen soldiers seemed to take the 'chill' away when all in attendance realized the Veterans we were there to honour suffered and endured worse conditions.

"It is great to see that so many people braved the elements to come out when it's so cold to support this cause," said Rick Huffman, head of the Veterans Banner committee.

The purpose of the grass roots, community driven program is to honour Veterans who are now deceased and either grew up in the community, lived here or had a 'significant connection' to the geographical areas of Waterford or the former Township of Townsend.

"The County has been very supportive of the program. It's so great to have so many groups supporting this program with a common goal of honouring our veterans," said Huffman.

The sponsorship of a banner is \$325, which will cover not only the cost of the banner itself but also the expense of poles for erecting them. If they wish, sponsors can purchase a copy of their flag for an extra \$150.

The project has been two months in the making and will officially launch at the end of April.

"We've had a great response from people already requesting a banner."

While Huffman is very happy with the response, he added, "I would be very happy if we did need more poles (for banners)."

There are 10 street poles this year with an opportunity for 20 veterans to be honoured.

Each banner will include a photo of the Veteran, the year of their birth, year of their death, and their rank. The poles will be located on the Waterford Main Street bridge, the Alice and Main Parkette and two poles east of the train station.

"We're away from the street (with flags hanging over the sidewalk) and we are not infringing on any street traffic."

The first flag of this year is of Private Lenore Brown Winfield Kubik (1922-1991), WWII, CWAC Postal Corps. Similar banner programs have already started in Tillson-



(BRENDA MOSER PHOTO)

Waterford & District Veterans Banner Association Committee members and guests, from left, include James Christison, Rick Huffman, Kerry Bockenholt, Norfolk County Ward 7 Councillor Kim Huffman and MPP Bobbi Ann Brady.

burg, Hagersville and Port Rowan, with Port Rowan having 66 banners this year. In only its third year, the response from the small community has been overwhelming.

To take part in this project you can submit an application form along with a photo of the Veteran in uniform and a cheque in the amount of \$325 to the Waterford Museum, P.O. Box 457, Waterford, ON, N0E 1Y0. Applications are available at the Post Office, Waterford Heritage Agricultural Museum on Nichol St. and the RCL Branch 123, also on Nichol Street. The deadline to submit for this year is June 30th.

The banners are double-sided and made of weather resistant vinyl ensuring they will be used for multiple years. Installation will begin in the fall with the Waterford & Dis-

trict Veteran's Banner Association coordinating the placement. Banners will remain on display for Remembrance Day.

We Will Remember Them.

If you have any questions or would like more info you can email Huffman at [waterfordmemorialbanners@gmail.com](mailto:waterfordmemorialbanners@gmail.com). Huffman added, "This is a grass-roots, community driven project with one goal in mind and that is to honour our Veterans".

Thanks go to the Waterford Chamber of Commerce, Royal Canadian Legion Branch 123 in Waterford, Norfolk Remembers Committee, and the Waterford Heritage and Agricultural Museum for their sponsorship and involvement.

## Donations needed for the Simcoe Splash Pad

The Simcoe Splash Pad is in danger of closing. A donation of \$25, \$50, \$100 or more will help save it.

There is nothing like the sound of children's laughter as water sprays them under the hot summer sun. The Simcoe Splash Pad has benefited many families over the years and the Simcoe Kin Club, supported by the Norfolk Community Foundation, needs your help! The Splash Pad, built in 2005, needs major revamping and is at risk of being closed.

The Splash Pad is an inclusive, fully accessible, and FREE space where many children and families come to play and thrive in an enriching environment.

To replace the concrete pad plus make piping repairs, the Simcoe Kin Club needs to raise \$80,000.

Your donation to this amazing cause transforms the lives of children, aids their well-being, and benefits the community they are growing up in and can help guarantee the continued use of the Splash Pad. Please visit: [www.norfolkcommunityfoundation.com](http://www.norfolkcommunityfoundation.com) (no hyphens) and click on the "donation" button. When you have completed the amount of the donation, you will then be taken to the page where you select the fund to which you want to donate. OR you can send your donations directly to the Simcoe Kin Club at 141 Windham Street, Simcoe, ON, N3Y 2L2.

Tax receipts will be issued. "Together, we can continue to provide a Splash Pad for all to enjoy for the next 20-plus years," said Mike Ryder, president the Simcoe Kin Club.



(FILE PHOTO)

The Simcoe Kin Club, supported by the Norfolk Community Foundation, needs your help to save the Simcoe Splash Pad. You can donate online through the Norfolk Community Foundation website, or mail a donation to the Simcoe Kin Club.

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# Langton Easter egg hunt



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTOS)

Alex, Omar and Ary Zuniga Lazaro participated in the Langton Easter Egg Hunt, organized by the Langton Firefighters Ladies Auxiliary on April 3.



Hundreds of children attended the Langton Easter Egg Hunt hosted by the Langton Firefighters Ladies Auxiliary on April 3, supported by Langton firefighters. Maverick DeDecker was collecting eggs in the youngest age area.



Stella Ruel dressed up for Friday's Easter Egg Hunt in Langton.



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# Langton Easter egg hunt

(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTOS)

The Good Friday turnout was one of the best year's ever for the annual Langton Easter Egg Hunt.



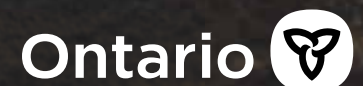
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# SIMCOE ADVOCATE SPORTS

## Sledge hockey in Waterford

OPP, South Coast Special Needs meet in annual sledge hockey exhibition

BRENDA MOSER

Advocate Contributor

Canada is all about their sports and some would say that there are two main seasons – baseball and hockey.

I have spent a great deal of time over the years in arenas with my own children and grandchildren involved in hockey, so I was quite interested when I got word of a very special sledge hockey game being hosted right here in Waterford.

On March 8, it was a packed house and parking lot at Waterford's Tricenturena as the South Coast Special Needs sledge hockey team took on the Norfolk OPP for what would prove to be a nailbiter from start to finish. The OPP were in for a wild ride!

Admission to the exhibition sledge hockey game was a donation of canned goods and it didn't take long for the arena lobby to become quite full! In lieu of a food donation, they were also accepting monetary donations. At the end of the afternoon, it was obvious the day was a huge success. They were able to fill a car with food, which this year was donated to the Waterford Food Bank. They also collected about \$700 in cash donations that will go to South Coast Special Needs for the purchase of equipment such as sticks, sledges and jerseys.

There are 19 players on the South Coast Special Needs sledge hockey team, males and females, all ages. Each player has a volunteer sledge 'pusher.'

OPP Constable Jeremy Renton, event organizer, has been involved with the program for several years now.

"I got started as a (sledge) pusher with a friend of mine who was an athlete with South Coast Special Needs. I enjoyed going to hockey every Sunday, so I eventually decided to stay on as a coach. I also coach floor hockey at the SCS gymnasium. It ends its season with an exhibition game versus the OPP, on April 14th.

Renton appreciates the support the sledge hockey program gets throughout the year.

"We play all season for about 16 to 18 ice times and they love it! Each player has a 'pusher' and that's not an easy job. The sledges are not easy to steer or stop. It gets very intense at times," Renton added.

Speedy Auto Glass has sponsored the trophies for the last 17 years. Each player gets their own trophy with a large one going to the winner and it was no surprise the Special Needs team won it yet again. That's 17 years now



(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

South Coast Special Needs sledge hockey team's annual exhibition game against the West Region/Norfolk OPP took place in Waterford this year.

that they've won it! In spite of the score being tied for a short time at 4-4, the OPP would eventually be edged 9-5. Way to go South Coast Special Needs!

While the nailbiting game was going on, fellow officers mingled with the crowd to chat. They even had their new OPP truck to check out and the athletes loved it... as did the rest of the crowd.

"I want to say thank you to all of the spectators for coming out every year to support us.

This is the only game we play with spectators and this year there were about 200 people out. I can't thank the community enough for all of their support of this event! For the kids... this is their Stanley Cup of the year."

With sledge hockey now done, Renton will turn his time to the upcoming baseball season.

A huge thanks goes to all of the OPP and community volunteers who give their time to put smiles on the faces of these athletes.



(BRENDA MOSER PHOTO)

South Coast Special Needs sledge hockey team kept their winning streak alive against the West Region & Norfolk OPP.



(FILE PHOTO)

Langton Skating Club's annual carnival (Ultimate Family Game Night) is Saturday, April 18 with two shows at 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Practices continue until April 16, leading up to a dress rehearsal on April 17.



(FILE PHOTO)

Norfolk Little People's Daycare is hosting its 4th annual Touch A Truck (and Tractor) fundraiser on Saturday, April 11, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Langton Lions Sports Complex parking lot. Admission \$5 per person. Raffles, bouncy castles, face painting, food trucks, kids bike rodeo, live animal exhibit and more!

# Norfolk roller derby celebrates 10th anniversary

LISA TIMPF

Advocate Contributor

Tin or aluminum is listed at the traditional 10th anniversary gift.

But Norfolk County Roller Derby, founded in 2016, celebrated their 10th year of operation in a different way - by hosting a scrimmage roller derby tournament March 28 at the CIBC Auditorium in Simcoe.

In a scrimmage tournament, participants sign up as individuals, then are placed on teams, with an effort made to balance skills. Though scrimmage tournaments have been held elsewhere, hosting a scrimmage event in Simcoe is a first for the local roller derby organization.

‘Scrimmapalooza’ drew participants throughout the province, with athletes coming from North Bay, Sudbury, Niagara, Durham, Sault Ste. Marie, Hamilton, and other locales. In all, 120 skaters registered, and were assigned to one of eight teams.

Identified by their number and their “derby name,” which included monikers like ‘Trackula,’ ‘Big Green Fax Machine,’ and ‘Meemaw,’ skaters took to the track wearing helmets, elbow pads, and knee pads. As action heated up, the reason for the protection was evident. Roller derby involves a lot of pushing, shoving and jockeying for position, and spills are inevitable.

Scrimmapalooza offered a colourful environment, with the CIBC Auditorium decorated with a balloon archway. Merchandise and information tables offered a variety of items, and face-painting services were also available.

One of the vendors, ‘Thud,’ who also skates with the Norfolk Knockouts, was on hand with hand-made crocheted items including catnip toys, while ABEL Enterprises, a local PRIDE organization, and an equipment supplier also had a presence.

Tony Zwicewicz of Rollerskatin.ca made the trip from Woodstock to set up his booth, where tape, roller skates, helmets, and other gear were available for purchase. Zwicewicz said he’s been roller skating recreationally all his life. He started selling roller skating equipment in 2006.

Zwicewicz noted that roller derby has become “super popular,” with teams “in almost every pocket of Ontario.” Though COVID provided a bit of a setback, the sport has been picking up again in the years since.

Though roller derby teams often play matches with other teams, the scrimmage format has its upside for skaters.



(GINETTE PIEPER PHOTOS)

Players jostle for position during the Green vs. White matchup at Scrimmapalooza, hosted March 28 by Norfolk County Roller Derby.

‘Witchy Woman,’ a skater from North Bay who made the long drive to Simcoe, said part of the appeal is “meeting new people.”

Who you end up playing with, she noted, is the “luck of the draw,” and you can end up playing with skaters you have competed against. It’s fun on and off the track, she said. When asked what she finds appealing about roller derby itself, Witchy Woman said, “it’s fun, it’s physical, it’s fast, and it’s a community.”

‘Nightmare,’ a member of the Norfolk County Roller Derby organization, noted that Scrimmapalooza had spinoff benefits for the community. With skaters coming from all

over Ontario, some opted to stay overnight in local accommodations.

Though some team-vs-team roller derby events have taken place on the multi-purpose floor of the Simcoe Recreation Centre, Nightmare noted skaters enjoyed skating on the rubberized flooring of the CIBC Auditorium, the venue for Scrimmapalooza.

“You can stop on a dime here,” she said. “Skaters prefer it.”

More information about Norfolk County Roller Derby’s coming events can be found on their Facebook and Instagram pages.



Strength, strategy, and agility were on display at the Norfolk County Roller Derby’s Scrimmapalooza, held at the CIBC Auditorium on March 28. Skaters from around the province participated in the tournament.



It takes multiple referees to monitor the action in roller derby contests. Here, a referee gestures during the March 28 Scrimmapalooza hosted by Norfolk County Roller Derby.

# Sunshine List: CAO was Haldimand's top earner

J.P. ANTONACCI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Haldimand County residents and municipal councillors were still in the dark last week about the financial fallout of Mayor Shelley Ann Bentley's decision to use strong-mayor powers to fire former chief administrator Cathy Case.

But this year's Sunshine List sheds some light on what happened after Case was fired last June.

The veteran civil servant was paid \$280,702 last year according to the province's 2025 public sector salary disclosure, which was released on Wednesday, April 1.

Case worked at the municipality for more than 30 years, becoming CAO in 2023.

Several months before she was fired without a vote of council, Case and her counterpart in Norfolk County, CAO Al Meneses, launched an investigation into a leak of confidential documents that was eventually traced to Bentley's office.

The Haldimand mayor did not publicly explain why she fired Case, but she denied it was payback for the investigation.

Haldimand's integrity commissioner, David Boghosian, later determined Bentley leaked the documents in an attempt to meddle in last February's provincial election. The mayor was docked four months' pay.

During the March 3 council meeting, Coun. Rob Shirton asked Bentley when councillors would receive a confidential update on "settlement news or where things are at with our previous CAO," referring to Case.

"I don't know why things are dragging on and why we can't get a meeting in closed (session) to discuss this more," Shirton said, adding he was "dumbfounded" that Bentley has the authority to fire the CAO and then authorize a settlement "without any consulting of council."

Bentley said she would check in with staff and prepare an update.

As of Tuesday (March 31), councillors had not received that update, Shirton confirmed to The Spectator. He hoped to see a closed-session item pertaining to Case's dismissal on the agenda for the April 7 meeting.

"The frustrating thing for us is the mayor has the ability to negotiate everything herself without keeping us in the loop," Shirton said in an interview.

"So we might not even get anything (at the in-camera meeting), but at least we want to ask her some questions and find out where things are at."

## Simcoe native near top of Sunshine List

Haldimand had 125 employees on the Sunshine List in 2025, up from 27 in 2019.

Following Case were five general managers - Daniel McKinnon from public works at \$252,614, Mark Mer-

ritt from financial services at \$227,857, Mike Evers from development services at \$224,218, Tyson Haedrich from engineering and capital works at \$224,218, and Megan Jamieson from corporate services at \$209,648.

Case's successor, Michael Di Lullo, started at Haldimand in November after departing as CAO of Middlesex County. The public salary disclosure shows he earned \$210,972 last year.

Meneses was the highest-paid of the 154 Norfolk employees on the Sunshine List, followed by a trio of general managers - Heidy Van Dyk of corporate services at \$200,769, Bill Cridland of operations at \$204,634, and Andrew Grice of public works at \$199,142.

There is a Norfolk connection near the top of Sunshine List. Simcoe native Nicolle Butcher, president and CEO of Ontario Power Generation, was compensated to the tune of \$1,598,309 in 2025, good for second place on the list.

Butcher will be one of the speakers at the Norfolk Frontier Innovation Forum in Delhi on April 9.

The daylong gathering organized by the Simcoe and District Chamber of Commerce and Norfolk County will also feature talks by Ontario tourism minister Stan Cho and Olympian Cassie Campbell-Pascal.

- J.P. Antonacci is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter based at the Hamilton Spectator. The initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.

# Grand Erie health unit's top earners in 2025

J.P. ANTONACCI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The two highest-paid employees at Grand Erie Public Health in 2025 spent little actual time with the health unit last year.

Former CEO Brent Richardson and former medical officer of health Dr. Rebecca Comley were the top earners among the 31 health unit employees included in the province's 2025 public sector salary disclosure, commonly known as the Sunshine List.

The disclosure lists all those who earned more than \$100,000 in salaries and taxable benefits while working for provincially funded entities such as governments, school boards and non-profit agencies.

Richardson was CEO of the Brant County Health Unit before that entity and the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit merged to create Grand Erie Public Health in January 2025.

He was at the helm of the merged health unit before abruptly leaving the organization without explanation in April. Richardson did not respond to requests for comment and the health unit did not clarify whether he resigned or was fired.

But the Sunshine List, released on March 27, reveals Richardson received \$338,723 in compensation from the health unit last year.

Comley took home \$292,575 despite going on leave in January. She had previously been medical officer with the Brant County Health Unit.

Comley returned to the role briefly in June but was eventually replaced by Dr. Jason Malenfant, who started in July and earned \$160,157 over the balance of the year.

Richardson's successor, Sarah Page, only became CEO in August but still appears on the Sunshine List because she earned \$144,594 as general manager of health and social services with Norfolk County.

Rounding out the five highest-paid health unit employees are director of data, surveillance and evaluation Alexey Babayan at \$215,043, finance director Brad Stark at \$196,123 and communications director Gary Williams at \$199,222.

Hospital lab director made nearly \$500,000

There are 147 employees of Norfolk General Hospital in Simcoe on the Sunshine List for 2025, though the hospital shares executives and some medical staff with West Haldimand General Hospital in Hagersville, which had an additional 31 employees on the list.

President and CEO Todd Stepanuik took home \$267,951, while technologist Patricia Mels made \$229,108 and vice-presidents Daniel Hill and Kim Mullins were paid \$185,272 and \$180,356, respectively.

But the highest-paid hospital employee was medical laboratory director Mashalah Eshghabadi at \$471,685.

Sharon Moore, president and CEO of

Dunnville War Memorial Hospital, was paid \$254,547 last year.

Ranked second among the Haldimand hospital's 40 employees on the Sunshine List was registered nurse Barbara Travers, who at \$188,759 out-earned several vice-presidents.

The administrators of two municipal long-term care homes in Haldimand-Norfolk made the list. Norview Lodge administrator Bill Nolan was paid \$179,764 in 2025, while Amy Moore, who runs Grandview Lodge in Dunnville, made \$170,926.

## Top dollar for education directors

The Sunshine List showed 1,417 employees at the Grand Erie District School Board and 587 staff members with the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board cleared the \$100,000 threshold last year.

GEDSB director of education JoAnna Roberto received the highest compensation in the public board at \$257,102.

Roberto was followed by Cayuga Secondary School principal Griffin Cobb, who made \$190,525, and associate director of education Lisa Munro at \$189,447.

Three GEDSB superintendents and two principals made more than \$180,000 last year, while 14 principals and one superintendent were just shy of that marker.

Catholic director of education Michael McDonald made \$236,769 last year, and Fanshawe College associate dean Donna Gates, who runs the college's Simcoe campus, earned \$155,317.

- J.P. Antonacci is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter based at the Hamilton Spectator. The initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.

## Norfolk County Agricultural Hall of Fame

### Nominations accepted until June 6 for 2026 inductees

Launched in 2014 by the Waterford Heritage & Agricultural Museum, the Norfolk County Agricultural Hall of Fame aims to honour "achievements, results, benefits, and innovations accrued to agriculture and rural development on a local and/or broader basis as a result of the nominee's volunteer and paid activities."

The nomination committee makes yearly selections from applications for

individuals, organizations and businesses submitted by the public. To nominate a deserving member of our community, fill out and return the form (found on the WHAM website: [norfolkheritage.ca/wham-agricultural-hall-of-fame-list-of-inductees](http://norfolkheritage.ca/wham-agricultural-hall-of-fame-list-of-inductees)) to the Waterford Heritage & Agricultural Museum.

2026 nomination applications are due Saturday, June 6 at 4 p.m.

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# Researcher discusses the mysteries of bat migration

LISA TIMPF

Advocate Contributor

When we think of migration, birds and monarch butterflies are the species that might come to mind. Though less is known about their migration patterns, bats also migrate.

Amanda Armstrong, a candidate for Master of Science in Biology and Physiology at the University of Waterloo, has conducted research at Lont Point Bird Observatory. Her studies revolved around a long-distance migrating species called the silver-haired bat.

Armstrong, who was a Harry B. Barrett Bursary recipient for 2025-26, shared some of her findings with Norfolk Nature members at the group's speaker night on March 10.

Bats "are very under-studied," Armstrong notes.

Unlike bird banding, which has a whole procedure that is shared among researchers, bat research is less formalized, and there's less sharing of information. Despite these challenges, Armstrong and other researchers from University of Waterloo are trying to learn more.

Ontario has eight bat species, seven of which are classified as endangered, with the big brown bat the only one not on the endangered list. Ontario's bats show two different migration patterns.

Five species, the big brown bat, little brown bat, eastern small-footed bat, tricolored bat, and the northern long-eared bat are regional migrants, migrating relatively short distances to hibernation sites like caves, abandoned mines, or sometimes buildings. Lowering their metabolism during hibernation enables bats to survive during the winter, when food is scarce.

The remaining three species, the hoary bat, the eastern red bat, the silver-haired bat, travel long distances to migration sites. Some of these long-distance migrants fly as far as Mexico. The long-distance travelers, Armstrong said, "tend to be fluffier" than the other bat species.

Researchers believe that's because they fly at high altitudes, encountering colder temperatures, so the fur helps fend off the cold.

Bat species in Ontario encounter two main threats: White-Nose Syndrome and mortality from wind energy facilities. White-Nose Syndrome came to North America from Europe. This ailment, caused by a fungus, causes bats to wake up in the middle of their hibernation, depleting their energy and essentially causing them to starve. This ailment has caused bat populations to plummet.

The positive news, says Armstrong, is that bats that manage to survive a bout of White-Nose Syndrome make adaptations to help them get through any future bouts of the illness. One of these is the ability to sustain more mass.

Wind energy facilities also take a toll on migrating bats. The Canadian Wildlife Federation website notes, "it is estimated that tens of thousands of bats are killed each year in Canada by collisions, with occurrences spiking during the migration period between late summer and early fall."

The migrating bats "are especially at risk of collisions and turbine-related barotrauma, which is tissue damage caused by sudden drops in pressure around the blades," the website notes. The Canadian Wildlife Federation lists a number of actions that can be taken to reduce the risk of bat deaths at wind turbine sites.

Armstrong notes that while researchers can get counts of short-distance migrating bats by tallying the number in a cave or other hibernation site, long-distance migrating bats are more difficult to study.

Bats are nocturnal, and difficult to see. In addition, due to their size and physical make-up, it's been hard to put tracking devices on them, though there have been some advances in lighter-weight trackers. Bats are also cryptic, Armstrong says, hiding in small crevices or under bark. Adding to the difficulty is the fact that bats' migration routes vary from year to year.

Bats that migrate long distances make stopovers on their migration journey, as it's dangerous for them to be active during the day when predators are active. Long Point makes a good place to study migrating bats because it serves as a funnel point. Bats are seeking the shortest place to cross the lake, making Long Point a natural route.

Last fall, Armstrong and other research-



(CANADIAN WILDLIFE FEDERATION PHOTO)

**Of the eight bat species that call Ontario home, the big brown bat is the only one not on the endangered list. This big brown bat has been banded for identification, using a metal tag that clamps around the forearm without piercing the wing.**

ers were able to capture, measure, and log 140 silver-haired bats, 14 eastern red bats, and two hoary bats at Long Point.

Most of the bats Armstrong caught were youngsters. Though it's hard to be certain why that was the case, she had a couple of possible explanations. One is that older bats may have learned that it's possible to migrate south without crossing the lake by follow a longer route that takes them over land. Or, older bats may better able to make the crossing without stopping at Long Point.

Armstrong wanted to discover whether migrating bats forage to refuel as part of the stopover, or whether they just stop and rest. Her research confirms that bats do eat while making a rest stop.

While migration was the focus of her talk, Armstrong shared interesting facts about bats and their prey. Certain moths that taste bad to bats make clicking sounds. When a bat hears these sounds, it veers away rather than eating that particular moth. But other moths that are more savory have evolved to mimic the clicking behaviour to persuade bats to leave them off the menu.

Bats use echolocation to locate prey. In the case of silver-haired bats, high-frequency, ultrasonic sound is emitted through the mouth and taken in by the ears. But it's not a constant, Armstrong says.

As they draw closer to prey, the sounds bats make increase in frequency, coming closer together. This increased frequency lets the bat gather information about the

object they are pursuing and pinpoint its location. Just before they reach the insect, there is a "feeding buzz" where the sounds come very close together.

Though bats are sometimes reviled or feared, Armstrong's talk portrayed bats as fascinating creatures. By helping to control insects, bats have an important role to play in ecosystems.

They are also helpful to humans, consuming insects like mosquitoes, or "pest" insects that harm crops. Though there is still much to learn about bats' migration behaviour, the work of Armstrong and other researchers is bringing important information to light.

One of Armstrong's fellow researchers discovered that migrating bats seek out clusters of trees, and gravitate to the tallest of these trees when it's time to sleep. Though silver-haired bats, as solitary creatures, don't migrate in groups, bats stopping in the same area all will be drawn to the tallest tree, meaning several bats might be found together.

Bats can see groupings of trees from the high altitudes where they are flying during migration. In the long term, knowledge about preferred stopover habitat may help researchers identify habitat that should be preserved.

Norfolk Nature offers a number of nature-related talks and field events free of charge. Details about upcoming events can be found at their web site, <https://norfolk-nature.org/>

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# Jeff Tribe: Accountant with Benefits is a cozy romance

## ADVOCATING FOR AUTHORS

By  
Dick Bourgeois-Doyle

"I was sitting there at 2:30 in the morning with rhinoceros poop – or maybe it was giraffe poop - raining down on my head," Jeff Tribe recalls, "and I thought- Is there something else? Is there not a better way to make a living?"

Nearly 40 years ago, Jeff was working night shifts at a composting company that sourced manure from the Toronto Zoo to sell under the brand name Zoo Poop. It was humbling work in the most literal sense. But amid the exotic dung and overnight shifts, Jeff remembered something a college professor had suggested. Maybe he should try a writing career.

That thought led him to a part-time photography and reporter job at the Norwich Gazette, which launched a long and respected journalism career. Over the decades, Jeff became known for his sports coverage, outdoor writing, and features grounded in careful observation and steady craft. Box scores, locker-room quotes, and rural life, these were his familiar territories.

Now, Jeff Tribe is trying something different again.

This time, the challenge was intentional. He wanted something unfamiliar, even uncomfortable. Something a little humbling. After a career built on reporting facts and explaining the world, Jeff decided to write romance fiction.

His debut novel, *Accountant with Benefits*, marks a sharp turn from curling and hockey rinks into Hallmark territory. The book features sweeping rural vistas, a clash between corporate culture and small-town values, a meet-cute moment, and a love story you can see coming a mile away. And that, as Jeff readily admits, is entirely the point.

"All joking aside, I kind of like romance novels," he says. "Sure, they're predictable. But there's usually a happy ending, and it's kind of fun. Plus, there's a market."

The idea had been planted years earlier when a filmmaker asked Jeff to consider writing romance screenplays. He laughed it off at the time. But recently, while browsing in a thrift store near his in-laws' cottage, he noticed a shelf packed with romance novels. He flipped through a few, taking in the rhythms, tropes, and unapologetic earnestness of the genre.

"I thought, wouldn't it be fun - if slightly ludicrous - to try writing one of these?" he says. "And again, there's a market for them."

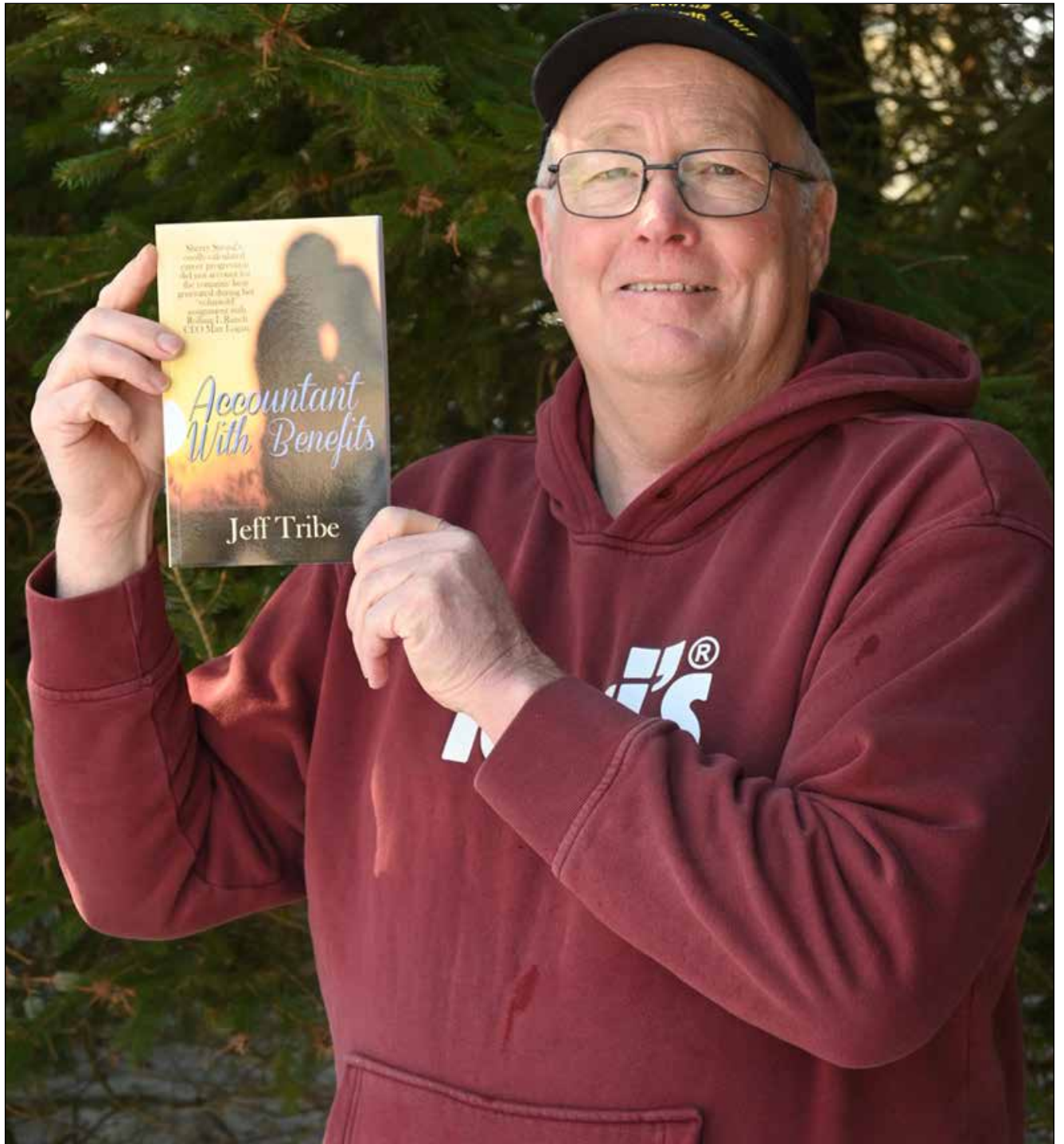
What followed was more than a lark. It was a genuine learning experience that led to a contract with BWL Publishing and the release of *Accountant with Benefits*. The novel follows a young woman sent from her Calgary accounting firm to Rocky Mountain House where she guides a family-owned ranch on strategic planning. The son, a cowboy with an MBA, is capable, grounded, and romantically inevitable.

The story unfolds exactly as romance fans would expect. Initial friction, lifestyle contrasts, growing respect, shared purpose, and love. Sports writer Jeff doesn't parody the formula or wink at the reader. He leans into it, honoring the structure millions return to because it delivers comfort and familiarity.

That choice says something important. This isn't a journalist dabbling in fiction with ironic distance nor someone assuming that decades of reporting would make the transition easy. It's a craftsman earnestly trying to develop a new skill.

"Show, don't tell" echoes in my head," Jeff noting the patience and support of his BWL editor. "She was patient and firm when she needed to be firm - dealing with an old newspaper guy used to writing a certain way."

For some journalists, the leap into fiction can be tough.



Jeff Tribe, author of *Accountant with Benefits*.

(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

News writing prizes clarity, authority, and explanation. Fiction, especially romance, demands trust, restraint, and emotional pacing. Characters must reveal themselves through action and dialogue, not attribution. These are muscles decades on deadline don't necessarily build.

So, Jeff is open about how much he has yet to learn. He is approaching it like a student: reading widely, trying sincerely, accepting shortcomings, and trying to grow as a writer. Most importantly, Jeff is enjoying the process. Enough that he plans to do it again with a novel based at a cannabis production facility and set in Norfolk County.

"It's going to be called *Queen of Green*," Jeff says. "I want to take the characters to the Arbor for a hot dog and down to the beach at Long Point."

Readers picking up *Accountant with Benefits* for a cozy, predictable romance will find exactly that. Readers familiar with Jeff Tribe's sports-and-news reporter career may find something else beneath the surface: a reminder that reinvention can come at any age and doesn't have to be dramatic to matter.

Sometimes it begins in a thrift store, flipping through dog-eared paperbacks, wondering what might happen if you tried something new. Just be willing to stay humble, and you don't need giraffe poop on your head to do that.

### CELEBRATING AUTHORS

For the podcast interview with Jeff Tribe and more on other local authors, check out <https://doverwrites.blogspot.com/>

com/

Jeff's fiction romance, *Accountant with Benefits*, can be purchased online through Amazon.ca, Ingram Spark, Barnes & Noble and BWL Print ([bwlpublishing.ca](http://bwlpublishing.ca)). A official book launch was held in Norwich, March 7, At The 100th Mile.

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# The silly side of travel writing



**OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO**

**By Paul Knowles**



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

The Beaver Tail kiosk in Ottawa, where our hero punched a pigeon.

I get a lot of comments from people who are a bit jealous of my gig as a travel writer. They're right – it's a great job. I will insist that it does involve work – being on a busy, dusk to dawn travel "familiarization tour" can be exhausting. But still fun.

And sometimes, unexpectedly hilarious.

Often, these silly moments involve food. Like in Hong Kong, where I was taken out to breakfast at a congee restaurant. Congee is rice porridge, usually served with tea, and you add meat to the congee. My host recommended that I add... wait for it... bull's penis. I did not, and opted for chicken. At least, I hope it was chicken.

In Locarno, Switzerland, in the Italian canton of this multi-lingual country, I asked my waiter if he spoke English. "Yes," he said, with a vigorous nod of the head. So, I ordered. My meal, when delivered, bore no resemblance to what I had asked for. I explained. He nodded, hopefully, but clearly without comprehending my comment. I asked again: "Do you

speak English?" "Yes!"

I pondered. And then, knowing that French is one of the four official languages of Switzerland, I asked, "Parlez-vous anglais?" He laughed and shook his head. "Non!" Well, that at least explained that.

And speaking of food, there was the time I punched a pigeon. I was in Ottawa, exploring the Byward Market, and decided to have a beaver tail. Yum. I sat down, and was immediately approached by a herd of rather aggressive pigeons. Foolishly, I thought that if I threw a couple of bits of beaver tail well distant from me, they would leave me alone. Wrong. They got more aggressive, and one flew straight at my face. I reached out to defend myself and... yep, I accidentally punched a pigeon.

In Ponce Inlet, Florida, at a diner, I ordered a salad. "We're all out of salads," said the waitperson. "Really?" "Yes." "Okay, I have a question," I said. "If I order a hamburger, can I get it with lettuce, tomato and onion?" "Sure."

"That's a salad!" I pointed out with some emphasis. Made no difference, of course. Salads were off.

Occasionally the unreal reality of being a travel writer does lead to amazing things – circumstances you still have to laugh about, because they really are so genuinely unreal.

Like, the time in San Diego when I was supposed to go tandem hang-gliding off the cliffs. This seemed an ill-conceived idea, so I asked if there might be an alternative activity. "Do you want to play golf?" asked my host, "at Torrey Pines?" Did I want to play golf at one of the most famous golf courses in the world? We arrived. I was escorted to my golf cart, complete with a beautiful set of loner clubs, balls, tees, water, the works. I asked "Am I playing with anyone?"

"No sir," came the answer, "We closed the course for you."

I looked at my host. He quietly said, "I don't know who they think you are, but go with it." So, I did. I played well – about which,

I have no proof, and no one believes me.

I have been bit on the lip by a sea turtle in the waters off Barbados; I have kissed a stuffed beaver in New Brunswick; I have marched in two parades in Québec City, once in full, brilliant blue costume as a 16th century seigneur; I have felt my underwear fall off during a walking tour of Lugano; and I have been trussed up like a hippopotamus in bondage gear to go ziplining in the Jamaican rainforest.

But it was in Mexico that two incidents left me laughing and feeling rather humiliated, at the same time.

We went snorkelling; the transportation to the coral reef involved two-person speedboats. Upon arrival at the reefs, they tethered the boats together, and said "Jump in." Jumping in, I could do, but there was no way I was going to be able to haul myself back up and into the boat. I tried to ask, but our guide spoke as much English as my Locarno waiter. What the heck – I jumped in. The snorkelling was great; eventually, we were called back to the boats, and

I was first to return. I went to the back, and started to try to board the beast. No luck, of course.

The guide motioned that I should come to the front, which was even farther out of the water. I obeyed. Whereupon he grabbed me by the life jacket, and landed me unceremoniously on the prow. It's hard to laugh hysterically with the breath knocked out of you, but I managed it.

And also, during that visit to Mexico, I was offered a moment of self-awareness. A small group of media folk went to the amazing attraction called Xcaret, where you can swim in an underground river. You don a life jacket, but it takes some effort to complete the course. When we finished, a much younger member of the group told me, "If I ever live to be as old as you, I hope I am able to do as well as you just did."

Sigh.

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



A sea turtle, perhaps a relative of the beast that nipped the author on the lip.



The author in a poorly executed selfie at Torrey Pines golf course.



Swimming the underground river at Xcaret, Mexico.



Kissing a stuffed beaver at the Big Fiddle Still in Harvey, New Brunswick.

# New bus for municipal long-term-care residents

J.P. ANTONACCI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Residents of Norfolk County's municipal long-term-care home will soon have a new ride.

Councillors recently greenlit a request from Norview Lodge in Simcoe to spend \$375,000 to replace a wheelchair bus that takes residents on outings.

Norview's recreation therapists use the 13-seater bus - which includes space for three wheelchairs - to take residents on outings meant to improve their quality of life. That can mean going swimming, bowling or to an indoor walking track for exercise, or hitting the town to shop, dine out and visit the Norfolk Arts Centre.

Sometimes residents just need to get some fresh air, so therapists will arrange for two-hour drives to see the fall colours or catch the sunset.

Last year, staff planned 137 program trips for residents.

Coun. Linda Vandendriessche wanted to know why Norview gives residents a lift free of charge when other homes make residents pay for transportation.

"In the city, (based on) my experience, we pay for bloody well everything," Vandendriessche said. "This bus comes out of the ratepayer's (pocket)."

Norview Lodge administrator Bill Nolan

said some long-term-care homes in Norfolk charge for transportation to medical appointments, which Norview also does.

But 56 of Norview's 179 residents get "subsidized services" based on their means, Nolan explained.

Those residents receive \$149 per month to cover hair and dental care, cable television and medical supplies not covered by the province.

"That all comes out of the \$149," Nolan said. "They have a limited amount."

Offering free rides to off-site programs extends those dollars while being an "added bonus" for residents that makes Norview "one of the top choices for long-term care in this area," he said.

Using Norfolk's on-demand public transit system, Ride Norfolk, in lieu of Norview's own bus would "create several challenges," including limited capacity, safely getting the wheelchairs on and off the bus, and ensuring adequate infection control while on board, Nolan explained.

Residents could be left stuck in case of emergency if the bus has other stops to make. The public transit service ceases daily operations at 6 p.m. while Norview's programming can go as late as 8 p.m.

Nolan's argument that Norview residents need "access to safe, reliable, consistent transportation" won over councillors, who voted to approve the funding.



(J.P. ANTONACCI PHOTO)

Residents of Norview Lodge, a municipal long-term-care home in Simcoe, used the home's wheelchair bus to go on 137 outings last year.

The new bus is expected to be in service for eight years, with about \$5,000 in annual maintenance costs.

- J.P. Antonacci is a Local Journalism

Initiative Reporter based at the Hamilton Spectator. The initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.

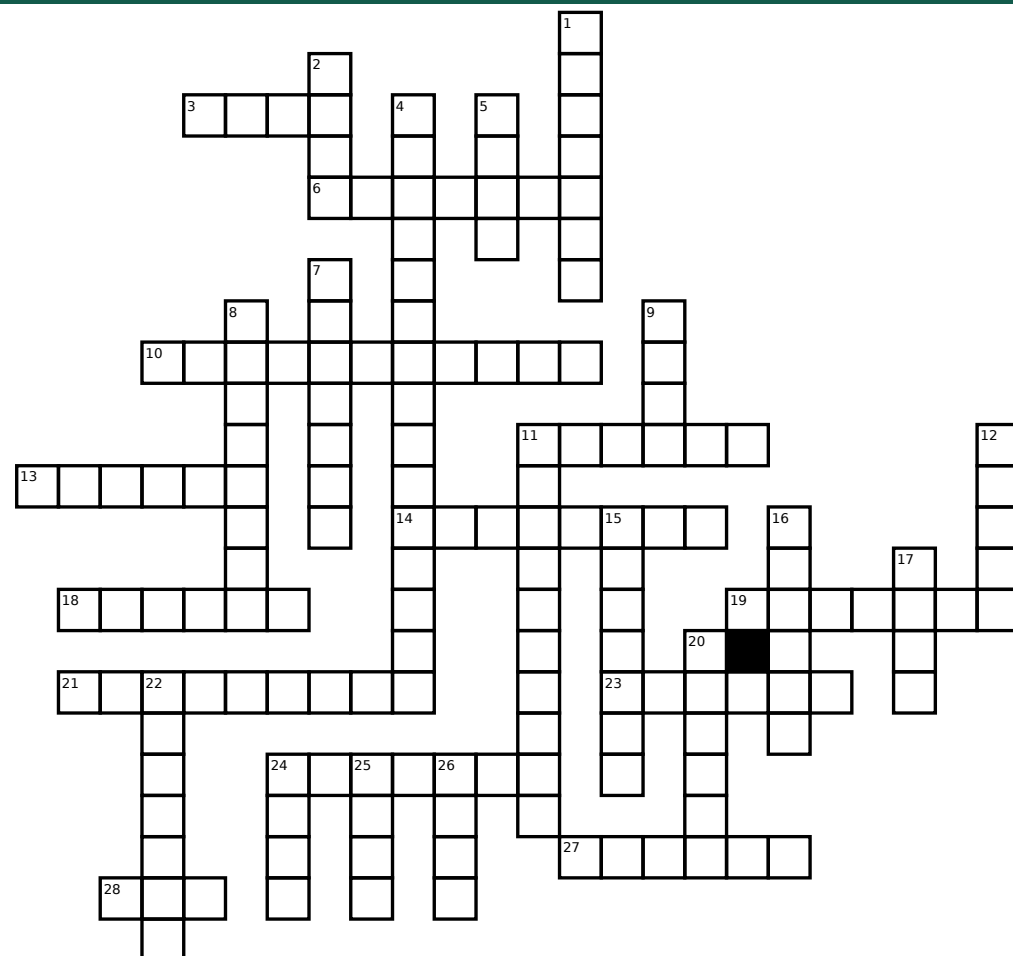
## Weekly Crossword

### THE PRODUCE PUZZLE - GARDEN GOODIES

BROUGHT  
TO YOU BY

Wilkinson's  
**Independent**  
Your Independent Grocer

227 MAIN STREET IN DELHI, ON



## Clues

### DOWN

1. Tart stalk often paired with strawberries
2. Pod vegetable known for thickening stews
4. Mini cabbages often roasted
5. Stone fruit with smooth skin
7. Leafy green famously boosting Popeye's strength
8. Green squash that can masquerade as noodles
9. Feathery herb key to pickles
11. Slender pods that snap when fresh
12. Herb whose name sounds like a ticking clock
15. Smaller cousin of the peach
16. Clustered fruit used to make wine
17. Herb associated with stuffing and wisdom
20. Spicy root used in teas and stir-fries

### ACROSS

3. Mild onion relative often used in soups
6. Peppery leaf with an Italian name
10. White vegetable that can mimic rice
11. Pungent bulb that keeps vampires away
13. Broad category including many gourds
14. Fragrant herb resembling pine needles
18. Pale root vegetable with a purple blush
19. Layered leafy head used in slaws
21. Spring stalk often grilled or roasted
23. Slender herb often sprinkled on potatoes
24. Large orange squash carved in autumn
27. Small red fruit often with a pit
28. Soft fruit with a seedy interior

Answers found on page 27

# Riddles

What appears the second you sit down to relax?

*Something to do*

What shows up in your laundry when you're missing a pair?

*A single sock*

What grows the more you feed it, but disappears if you give it water?

*Fire*

What can fill a room without taking up any space?

*Light*

What can be stolen, shared, or wasted, but never returned?

*Time*

# PET OF THE WEEK

Nominate your Pet of the Week by emailing [info@simcoeadvocate.com](mailto:info@simcoeadvocate.com)



## PRINCE BUTTERBALL

Meet our Pet of the Week:

He came to us a year ago as a "foster cat". But his kind and cuddly personality quickly melted our hearts and he is now a permanent member of our family!

*Jennifer Jolink*



# Word Search

## MARCH NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

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

- War in Iran
- Drone attacks
- Paralympic Games
- Mojtaba Khamenei
- Strait of Hormuz
- Kharg Island
- Venezuela wins WBC
- Energy prices up
- Stock prices down
- Air Canada tragedy
- Tiger Woods DUI
- Blue Jays return
- NDP Avi Lewis

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# Sudoku

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

Solutions on page 27

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Email to inquire: [info@simcoeadvocate.com](mailto:info@simcoeadvocate.com)

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We are celebrating **30** years this year!

Monthly giveaway draws, lots exciting sale items, don't drive by stop by!

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625 West St., Simcoe

(at the corner of Hillcrest Rd.)

[simcoelighting.ca](http://simcoelighting.ca)

519-428-9927



## FRIDAY, APRIL 10

### JOIN US FOR A FEW FRIENDLY GAMES OF PROGRESSIVE EUCHRE

Registration at 6:30 p.m | Starting at 7:00 p.m  
Everyone is welcome. For More Information call the Legion at 519-443-5588 or [www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca](http://www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca)

*The Wagner Memorial, Teeterville Legion Branch 526. 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, Ontario*

### WINGS & MORE

5:00 p.m - 8:00 p.m

Full menu and prices at [simcoelegion.ca](http://simcoelegion.ca)

*Simcoe Legion, 200 West Street, Simcoe, ON*

### IT'S GAMES NIGHT IN THE CAFÉ!

Anytime from 6:30 p.m to 9:00 p.m

Get your team together! Bring your game or play from our collection!

*Riversyde 83 - 83 Sydenham Street in downtown Simcoe*

## SATURDAY, APRIL 11

### PANCAKE BREAKFAST

8:00 a.m - 12:00 p.m

Meal includes pancakes, 3 breakfast sausages, fruit cocktail. Gluten free option. available. Adults \$15 & Kids \$10. Partnered with PepperMac Maple. They will provide their maple syrup for your pancakes and have their local maple syrup for sale.

*Marburg Hall | 1345 Lynn Valley Rd, Port Dover*

## APRIL 10 & APRIL 11

### FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY BOOK SALE

Friday, April 10 & Saturday April 11 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Good quality Fiction, Non-Fiction and Children's books. Vinyl records and Puzzles.

Do you have good condition, used books you would like to donate? Please bring them to the Simcoe Branch on any of the following dates:

- Thursday March 19 4:00 pm - 6:30 pm
- Friday March 20 10 am -12:00 pm
- Saturday March 28 10 am - 12:00 pm
- Thursday April 2 4:00 pm - 6:30 pm

*NCPL Simcoe Branch, Main floor*

### BRANT MEN OF SONG

### "A DAY OF CHORAL SINGING"

1:00 p.m - 4:30 p.m

The Brant Men of Song are inviting all individuals and groups interested in singing to an afternoon workshop on April 11th from 1 pm to 4 pm at Hope Christian Reformed Church, 64 Buchanan Crescent, Brantford. There is no charge for this workshop. Participants may also sing with the Brant Men of Song in an evening performance starting at 7 pm. Financial contributions will be collected for the Brantford Food Bank. Come sing with us and enjoy the sound of many voices.

*Hope Christian Reformed Church - 64 Buchanan Crescent, Brantford*

## SATURDAY, APRIL 11

### JOIN US FOR BURGER NIGHT

Serving from 4:00 p.m - 6:00 p.m (Or Until Sold Out)

Burger and Fries For More Information call the Legion at 519-443-5588 or [www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca](http://www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca)

*The Wagner Memorial, Teeterville Legion Branch 526. 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, Ontario*

## SUNDAY, APRIL 12

### SIMCOE SING INTO SPRING CONCERT

2:00 p.m

Sing Intro Spring - Heart N Soul! Fundraising Concert for St. James United Church Outreach Program. Admission is free but monetary donations will be gratefully accepted. Light refreshments served after concert.

*St. James United Church, 150 Colborne St.S.*

### 2ND SUNDAY LIVE MUSIC EVENT

Doors open at 1:30 p.m

Music from 2:00 p.m - 5:00 p.m

Nolan Gibson & Amber Banks - part of the monthly 2nd Sunday Live Music Event at the Simcoe Legion. \$5/cover. Full details at [simcoelegion.ca](http://simcoelegion.ca)

*Simcoe Legion, 200 West Street, Simcoe, ON*

## MONDAY, APRIL 13

### DELHI & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY MEETING

7:30 p.m

Guest Speaker - Alissa Firth-Eagland. Her specialty - Yoga for Gardening. Will be very

interesting & wear loose fitting clothes to do special moves. All welcome.

*Delhi Senior Centre | 418 Queen St., Delhi, Ontario. (Enter at rear parking lot off William Street.)*

## TUESDAY, APRIL 14

### PORT DOVER "ABBA/CARPENTERS" SING-ALONG

7:00 p.m

We'll sing through these seventies groups' top hits - including Dancing Queen, Mamma Mia, Waterloo, We've Only Just Begun and Close to You, and many others. No experience required - just sing for fun! \$2 donation at door. Call 416-505-1658 for more information.

*Grace United Church 18 Chapman St. W., Port Dover*

## FRIDAY, APRIL 17

### JOIN US FOR A FRIENDLY GAME OF DARTS

Registration at 6:45 p.m | Starting at 7:00 p.m  
Everyone is welcome. Draw for partners. For More Information call the Legion at 519-443-5588 or [www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca](http://www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca)

*The Wagner Memorial, Teeterville Legion Branch 526. 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, Ontario*

### CLOTHING GIVEAWAY

Friday, April 17 from 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Saturday, April 18 from 8:30 AM - 11:00 AM

*St. James United Church, 150 Colborne St.S.*

### FRIDAY NIGHTS AT THE CAFÉ

7:00 p.m

Learn how the brain's lymphatic system affects inflammation, stress, and mental clarity—and what you can do to support cognitive health with Sophia White, Local Lymphatic Therapist, Free event - everyone welcome!

*Riversyde 83 - 83 Sydenham Street in downtown Simcoe*

### PAINT WITH MICHELLE

6:30 p.m - 8:30 p.m

Join local artist Michelle Snively-Jefferies for a guided painting of Spring Blossoms by the Riverside. \$45.20 (incl. HST) - all materials provided Limited seating - register at [churchoutserving@gmail.com](mailto:churchoutserving@gmail.com)

*Riversyde 83 - 83 Sydenham Street in downtown Simcoe*

**SUNDAY, APRIL 19**

**THE LYNN VALLEY VOICES PRESENT  
"THE MUSICAL ERAS TOUR: FROM  
CHAPEL TO CONCERT HALL"**

3:00 p.m

Featuring more than 25 talented choristers, this mixed-voice ensemble's concert program traces the evolution of choral music, from the sacred sounds of the Renaissance and Baroque periods through to the refined compositions of the Classical and Romantic eras. Hear works by the world's greatest composers – Vivaldi, Bach, Handel, Mozart, Haydn, Brahms, Faure, Mendelssohn and more. Admission by donation. Call 416-505-1658 for more information.

Waterford United Church 135 Main St. S., Waterford

**MONDAY, APRIL 20**

**FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY, SIMCOE  
BRANCH CHAPTER LUNCH & LEARN**

12:00 p.m - 1:00 p.m | Doors open at 11:30 a.m

Our last Lunch & Learn of the year. Our guest speaker will be Josh Parsons from Simcoe Strong speaking about how walkable communities are vibrant, connected and economically strong. Be sure to stop by the "Blind Date with a Book" table to find your next great read. This is a free event, donations gratefully accepted. Bring your lunch, sweets provided.

Norfolk County Public Library Simcoe Branch  
(Lower Level)

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22**

**ROASTED CHICKEN DINNER**

4:30 p.m - 7:00 p.m

Roasted Chicken Dinner with sides and dessert at the Simcoe Legion from 4:30-7pm in the Memorial Hall. \$16/plate. Full details at simcoelegion.ca.

Simcoe Legion, 200 West Street, Simcoe, ON

**FRIDAY, APRIL 24**

**RIVERSYDE'S GOT TALENT**

7:00 p.m

Friday Fun Nights in the Café - FREE - There's a lot more to our TEAM than you know! So come on down and see our SHOW! Good food, good friends, good times.

Riversyde 83 - 83 Sydenham Street in downtown Simcoe

**SUNDAY, APRIL 26**

**SUNDAY BRUNCH**

Serving from 9:00 a.m - 12:00 p.m (while quantities last)

Advanced Tickets available at the bar. For More Information call the Legion at 519-443-5588 or www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca

The Wagner Memorial, Teeterville Legion Branch

526. 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, Ontario

**SLADE/REWUTZSKY MEMORIAL CRIB-  
BAGE TOURNAMENT**

Registration - 11:45 a.m - 12:30 p.m

Play starts at 12:30 p.m

\$20/2 Person Team - Prizes for Top 3 Teams - Food & Drink Available.

Simcoe Legion, 200 West Street, Simcoe, ON

**FRIDAY, MAY 1**

**WINGS & MORE**

5:00 p.m - 8:00 p.m

Full menu and prices at simcoelegion.ca

Simcoe Legion, 200 West Street, Simcoe, ON

**SATURDAY, MAY 2**

**BOOK, BAKE AND WHAT-NOT SALE**

8:30 a.m - 12:00 p.m

St. James United Church, 150 Colborne St.S.

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 6**

**ELECTIONS & MEMBERS GENERAL  
MEETING**

Starting at 7:00 p.m

Members only. Please bring your card to vote. Not a member, contact us to join

The Wagner Memorial, Teeterville Legion Branch  
526. 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, Ontario

**SUNDAY, MAY 10**

**MOTHERS DAY DANCE PARTY**

Doors open at 1:30 p.m

Music from 2:00 p.m - 5:00 p.m

Part of the monthly 2nd Sunday Live Music Event at the Simcoe Legion. Featuring Ontario super group cover band: Jesse Murphy, Mike Vukovich, Kimberly Manning & Costa Chatzis. \$5/cover. Upstairs Memorial Hall. Full details at simcoelegion.ca

Simcoe Legion, 200 West Street, Simcoe, ON

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 13**

**FISH & CHIPS**

4:30 p.m - 7:00 p.m

One Piece with chips, coleslaw and bun \$11.00 (more menu options available). Visit simcoelegion.ca for details.

Simcoe Legion, 200 West Street, Simcoe, ON

**SATURDAY, MAY 23**

**FISH FRY**

Serving from 5:00 p.m - 7:00 p.m

Advanced tickets only/Tickets must be purchased by Saturday, May 16th. Please visit the legion during open hours for ticket purchases. Wed.-Fri. 3 pm-10 pm, Sat.1 pm-10 pm, Sun.1 pm-6 pm. For More Information call the Legion at 519-443-5588 or www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca

The Wagner Memorial, Teeterville Legion Branch  
526. 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, Ontario

**EVERY OTHER FRIDAY**

**INGERSOLL COUNTRY MUSIC JAMBOREE  
1:00 p.m - 4:00 p.m**

Spring into the Ingersoll Country Music Jamboree meeting every other Friday 1-4 p.m. at Masonic Hall, 190 Thames St. S. Ingersoll. Join us, walk ins welcome. Qualifications - love 50-70's country music. Perform, listen, dance & enjoy! April 10 & 17, May 1, 15 & 29, June 5 & 19.

**EVERY FRIDAY EVENING**

**CATCH THE ACE**

4:30 a.m- 7:30 p.m (Draw at 7:45 pm)

Win over \$21,000.00 (LIC #RAF 14505443)! Tickets are available for \$5 each, 3 for \$10, or 6 for \$20. Proceeds support the Norfolk Haldimand Hospice, Norfolk General Hospital Foundation, and Rotary Norfolk Youth Scholarships.

Simcoe Legion, West Street, Simcoe

**THIRD WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH**

**LYNN RIVER PROBUS CLUB**

10:00 a.m - 12:00 p.m

Our retired and semi-retired members enjoy diverse interest groups, friendship and fellowship. We have interesting speakers at our monthly meetings as well as time to socialise. Current and prospective members are welcome to join us at the Army, Navy & Air Force Club, Simcoe, which is on the corner of Water St. and Culver St. Simcoe. Enter via Culver St. For more information, please visit our website at: lynnriverprobus239.com or email lynnriverprobus239@gmail.com.

**SECOND SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH**

**COURTLAND COUNTRY OPEN MIC JAM**

Music starts at 1:00 p.m | Dinner at 5:00 p.m  
All welcome!

Courtland Community Centre | 272 Main St., Courtland, ON

**LAST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH**

**OPEN JAM**

Starting at 5:00 p.m (Until Sold Out)

Everyone is welcome to bring an instrument or just come out and listen to the music. Free event For More Information call the Legion at 519-443-5588 or www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca

The Wagner Memorial, Teeterville Legion Branch  
526. 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, Ontario

**EVERY MONDAY & THURSDAY**

**SIT AND FIT**

12:00 pm - 12:45 pm

Free for everyone

Royal Canadian Legion - Waterford 223 Nichol St. Waterford

# Harbour dredging underway in Port Dover

Norfolk County is currently completing dredging operations at the Port Dover harbour mouth to maintain safe navigation for boaters and support local waterfront activity.

Work is planned to be completed by April

10. With Lake Erie water levels remaining lower than seasonal averages, dredging is necessary to maintain safe channel depth. Completing the project by April 10 helps minimize impacts on fisheries, water quality, and sensitive aquatic habitat.

A qualified marine contractor, under the supervision of professional marine engineers and County staff, ensured compliance with all regulatory and environmental requirements.

All required approvals were secured

from Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), Transport Canada, the Ministry of the Environment (MOE), the Long Point Region Conservation Authority (LPRCA), and other applicable agencies.

# 'Horrific potholes' prompt urgent road repairs

J.P. ANTONACCI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

After a punishing winter, Norfolk County's roads are in a sorry state.

"There is a ginormous pothole on West Temperance Street," said Waterford-area Coun. Kim Huffman at the Tuesday, March 24 council meeting.

"That whole road is bad, but there is a horrific pothole there."

Public works boss Andrew Grice promised to get "on it," and by Wednesday morning, that pothole - about the width of a standard sedan - was no more.

But plenty remain, prompting councillors to free up \$1 million to spend on urgent road repairs, from filling potholes and pruning storm-damaged trees to resurfacing longer stretches of roads that show extensive wear and tear.

"Winter was not kind to Norfolk County's roads and infrastructure," Coun. Chris Van Paassen said during the March 10 council-in-committee meeting, when he suggested staff direct some of this year's expected operating budget surplus into "an aggressive road-patching plan."

Frequent freeze-thaw cycles created more potholes, council heard, while a provincewide shortage of road salt forced Norfolk's roads crew to adjust their road maintenance strategy on the fly.

Grice came to council on Tuesday with a list of repairs to high-traffic roads "that would benefit the largest number of users."



Road maintenance workers with Norfolk County fill in a pothole on Temperance Street in Waterford on Wednesday.

Council signed off on the plan to smooth over sections of Ireland Road, part of Argyle Street in Simcoe and Main Street in Waterford from Green to Church streets with hot-mix paving.

Workers will apply surface treatment on a four-kilometre stretch of Charlotteville Road 5 starting at Turkey Point Road, part of Teeter Road in Teeterville, and Front Road between Turkey Point Road and

Spooky Hollow Road.

Grice and chief administrator Al Mene- ses cautioned council that diverting funds to fix roads flies in the face of Norfolk's policy of using budgets surpluses to replenish reserve accounts and pay down debt.

But Van Paassen said the "rough" state of the roads justified making an exception and spending some of the surplus today.

Coun. Linda Vandendriessche said last year's roadwork was subpar in some areas, with "excessive gravel" poured on the shoulder of Highway 59 ending up on people's front yards after snowplows cleared the road.

Darnell Lambert, Norfolk's director of engineering, agreed the 2025 road resurfacing program "did not fare out so well" and several fixes "did not work as expected."

The contractor "is committed to rectify the issues on a number of roads that were identified," Lambert said.

Residents will get help from the county to clean their cars of "splashed-up tar" and clear their ditches of gravel due to botched treatment of the road shoulders, he added.

"We will work with the residents to make that right," Grice said.

"That was not their fault that happened. We just ask that people remain patient with us, as it will take us some time to get to it."

- J.P. Antonacci is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter based at the Hamilton Spectator. The initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.

(J.P. ANTONACCI PHOTO)

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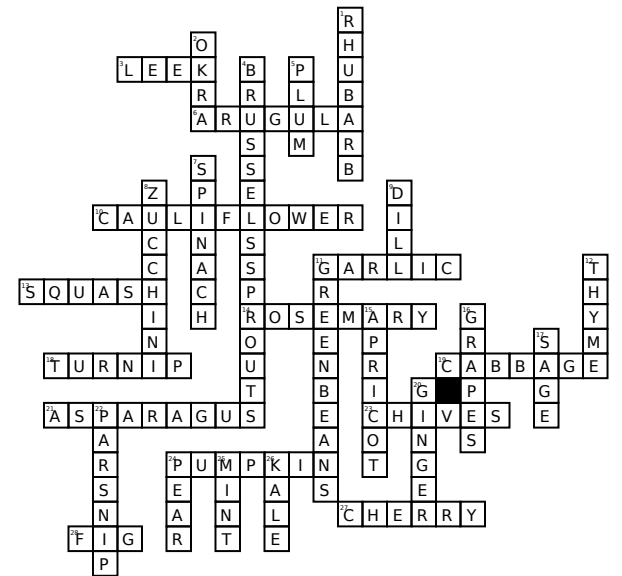
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If you are interested, contact Heather Dunbar at: [heather@granthaven.com](mailto:heather@granthaven.com)

## QUIZ ANSWERS

- |                                    |                      |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Diamond                         | 6. Leonardo DiCaprio |
| 2. Avi Lewis                       | 7. \$18.15           |
| 3. England                         | 8. Cambodia          |
| 4. Gen beta                        | 9. 9.46 trillion km  |
| 5. Carbohydrates, proteins, & fats | 10. Seven            |

## CROSSWORD ANSWERS



## SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### BI-WEEKLY PUBLICATION DATES

**APRIL 23**

**MAY 7 & MAY 21**

**DEADLINE IS THE MONDAY PRIOR AT 3 P.M.**

**READ US ONLINE**  
[WWW.GRANTHAVEN.COM/SIMCOE-ADVOCATE](http://WWW.GRANTHAVEN.COM/SIMCOE-ADVOCATE)

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## WANTED

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

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Email us at [info@simcoeadvocate.com](mailto:info@simcoeadvocate.com)

## BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Email to inquire: [info@simcoeadvocate.com](mailto:info@simcoeadvocate.com)

### INDOOR PLAY

**rain or shine PLAYTIME PLAY CENTRE**  
55 Broadway St. Unit B  
Contact Lori  
[rainorshineplaycentre@gmail.com](mailto:rainorshineplaycentre@gmail.com)

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