

The Paris Independent

Issue #249

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2026

FREE

Yield to a Green Flashing Light



COUNTY OF Brant Simply Grand

brant.ca/Fire

weewatch

Quality Licensed Child Care, Close to Home.

- ✓ Reduced Parent fees - more affordable
- ✓ Educational Programming
- ✓ Experienced Providers

Secure September Spaces Now

519-758-2703 | www.weewatch.com



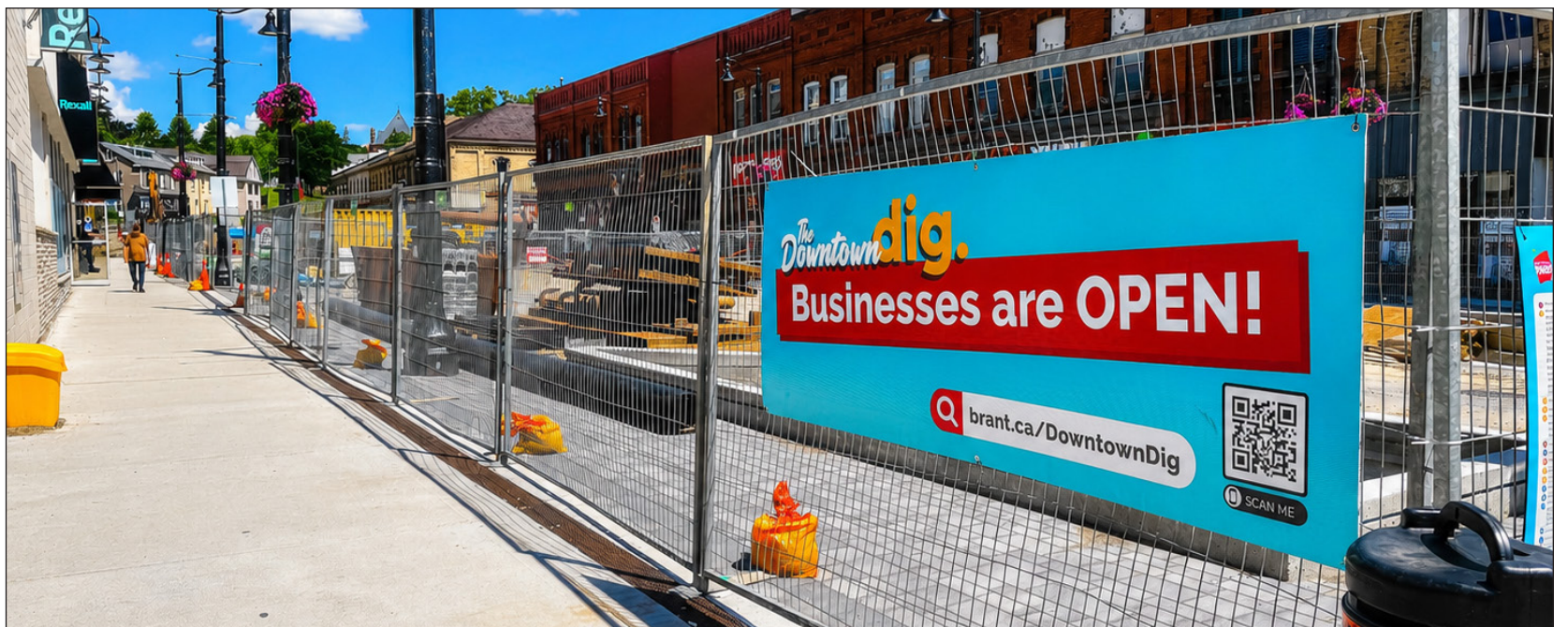
Questions about selling?
Get expert advice



Alex Faux
REAL ESTATE BROKER
(519) 802-6709 DIRECT
alexfaux.ca



exp
REALTY BROKERAGE
RESIDENTIAL - COMMERCIAL - INVESTMENT



(CASANDRA TURNBULL PHOTOS)

Downtown Paris remains open for business despite ongoing construction. County officials say extensive signage, marketing campaigns and a dedicated construction liaison have been key components of the municipality's strategy to help businesses navigate the impacts of the Downtown Dig while major infrastructure upgrades continue along Grand River Street North.

County defends Downtown Dig business support strategy amid calls for relief

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

As concerns continue to mount over the impacts of the Downtown Dig on local merchants, County of Brant staff are defending the strategy used to support businesses during the multi-year infrastructure project, emphasizing that provincial legislation prevents municipalities from directly compensating businesses for lost revenue.

The issue was the focus of a staff report presented to the county's Administration and Operations Committee on June 16. The detailed report outlined the planning, mitigation efforts and legislative constraints that shaped the county's approach to one of the largest infrastructure projects ever undertaken in downtown Paris.

The discussion comes as a community petition calling for relief measures for downtown businesses continues to gain traction.

Launched roughly two weeks ago, the petition had attracted nearly 1,500 signatures by mid-June. The petition urges 'Relief Measures for Downtown Paris Businesses During Extensive Construction Disruption,' and calls on the county to provide additional support to merchants facing prolonged construction-related challenges.

County staff, however, reiterated that direct fi-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Sandra Etherington
Real Estate Broker

Selling Paris, Brant, Oxford County & Brantford Real Estate
519-754-5217
sandra.etherington@century21.ca
You can count on my 35 years of experience in Real Estate sales.

CENTURY 21
Heritage House Ltd.



Ad paid by the Garneau for Mayor campaign

Christine Garneau Bisailon

for County of Brant Mayor

It is time to restore public confidence in municipal government, return us to a stable financial position, and focus on what counts closest to home first. With a background in small business, farming, governance, and experience as a Councillor, I am well positioned to lead the County's next chapter!

519-448-4688 • garneauformayor.ca • @garneauformayor on FB

County explains why municipalities cannot directly compensate businesses

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

nancial assistance is not an option available to municipalities under provincial law.

"We are prohibited from providing any compensation for business loss, so our strategy was to focus more on mitigation as opposed to compensation," said Adam Crozier, the county's general manager of strategic planning, during the Administration meeting.

Crozier pointed specifically to Section 106 of the Municipal Act in Ontario, which prohibits municipalities from providing bonuses or financial assistance to businesses. As a result, staff said their efforts have focused on reducing the impacts of construction rather than reimbursing businesses for lost sales.

That strategy included encouraging residents to shop locally, directing businesses to programs offered through Enterprise Brant and the Brantford-Brant Business Resource Centre, and implementing a range of mitigation measures before and during construction.

Crozier told committee members the report was intended to provide context about the county's planning process leading up to the Downtown Dig.

"The intention of the staff report brought forward to the committee was to step back a few years and explain the county's strategy going into the Downtown Dig project," he said.

According to the report, planning began years before construction started. County staff researched best practices used in other municipalities undertaking major downtown infrastructure projects and identified business communication and construction liaison services as two of the most effective tools available.

"Communication and construction liaison were identified by other municipalities as key initiatives the county could take to help businesses," Crozier told council. "We took those lessons and applied them."

One of the key recommendations identified through the county's research was the creation of a dedicated downtown construction liaison. According to information provided by Paris Ward 2 Councillor Lukas Oakley, the role was designed to serve as a direct resource for businesses navigating the impacts of construction, helping to relay concerns, coordinate communication and connect merchants with available supports.

Oakley noted that assigning the responsibility to a dedicated liaison, rather than existing county staff, ensured businesses had a consistent point of contact focused exclusively on construction-related issues. He said the role allows project staff to remain focused on delivering the infrastructure work while ensuring merchants have someone available to address day-to-day concerns, answer questions and help resolve issues as they arise. He added the liaison attends construction meetings, gathers information from contractors and county staff, communicates directly with business owners and helps coordinate efforts to re-



Handmade signs in downtown Paris reflect the determination of local merchants to keep customers coming through their doors during the Downtown Dig. County staff say a new pedestrian promenade, expected to open in July, will improve access through the construction zone and support ongoing efforts to attract shoppers back to the downtown core.

duce disruptions whenever possible. He noted the position has provided businesses with a single point of contact for updates and concerns throughout the project.

To help with mitigation efforts, the county secured \$225,000 provincial funding through the Rural Economic Development (RED) program. In February 2025, Council approved an additional \$142,500 in tax-supported funding, including matching funds for the RED grant and \$30,000 intended to double the Downtown Paris BIA budget.

Oakley said those investments funded initiatives such as free downtown events, marketing campaigns, beautification efforts, expanded wayfinding signage, construction liaison services and direct business support programming. The funding also supported paid advertising campaigns through billboards, television, print and online media, downtown signage, business directories, window displays and free Tasty Road Trips walking tours designed to encourage residents and visitors to continue supporting downtown merchants during construction. The funding will also help support the upcoming Paris Promenade and Downtown Block Party later this year.

During the Administration meeting, Councillor Ella Haley asked whether staff were aware of businesses that had closed during construction and whether merchants had been successful in accessing available grants.

Director of Economic Development Zach Gable said staff were aware of one retirement in the downtown core and two businesses in a market space that had closed.

"I am sure there could be some attribution of the dig to this," he said. "We are dealing with a difficult economic situation. Discretionary spending is declining, so there are a few factors at play."

He added that staff were aware of only one business that had accessed an available grant program.

While acknowledging the challenges faced by some merchants, the staff report pointed to indicators they believe demonstrate continued confidence in the downtown core. One of the key metrics tracked by staff is the downtown vacancy rate, which has declined during the Downtown Dig. According to the report, 12 new businesses have opened in downtown Paris since the beginning of 2025, including six new businesses in 2026 alone. Staff said those trends suggest many entrepreneurs continue to view downtown Paris as a desirable location despite the temporary disruptions associated with the infrastructure project.

However, Crozier did acknowledge the financial pressures facing many merchants.

"I didn't want this report to insinuate that we don't appreciate there are some business suffering," he said.

He noted that surveys conducted by the county have shown varying experiences among businesses, with some reporting relatively stable sales while others have experienced significant declines.

"We are heartened to see the vacancy rate is low and there are businesses that are doing pretty good and down a little bit, and we appreciate there are some businesses that are quite down," said Crozier.

Despite ongoing challenges, county officials pointed to what they describe as the project's next major milestone: the opening of the pedestrian promenade through the construction zone.

Councillor Steve Howes said he believes public morale surrounding the project could improve significantly once the promenade opens.

"The construction project is running a little bit behind but personally I believe if the promenade had started a week ago, instead of two weeks from now, the moral would be much higher," said Howes.

Crozier confirmed staff continue to meet weekly to coordinate the remaining work required to complete the first phase and open the pedestrian corridor. While no exact opening date has been announced, the county continues to target a July opening.

At the conclusion of the discussion, councillors emphasized the importance of ensuring residents understand both the work being done to support businesses and the legislative restrictions facing municipalities.

"We want to ensure the community knows their municipal government is working for them," said Crozier. "The intent and the focus and the desire to do whatever we could to allow this portion of the community to get through a significant construction project — this is what we've done."

He added that the report provides residents with the information needed to draw their own conclusions about the county's response to the challenges facing downtown businesses during construction.

County clarifies role in collecting Paris BIA levy amid downtown construction concerns

Committee backs additional \$30,000 for downtown marketing during ongoing construction impacts

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

Recent invoices sent to downtown Paris businesses for the annual Business Improvement Area (BIA) levy have sparked frustration among some merchants already grappling with the impacts of ongoing construction, but County of Brant officials say the municipality is acting only as the collection agent for a levy established and approved through the BIA itself.

The confusion stems in part from the fact that the invoices were mailed by the County of Brant's finance department and listed the county as the return address. For some business owners, the timing of the levy, arriving while many continue to report reduced customer traffic and declining revenues during the Downtown Dig project, raised questions about why the county was charging businesses additional fees.

According to information released by county staff, the levy is not a county fee and the municipality does not determine the amount charged.

Under Ontario's Municipal Act, municipalities are required to collect BIA levies on behalf of local Business Improvement Areas. The levy serves as the primary source of funding for BIA operations and programming.

The municipality shall annually raise the amount required for the purposes of a board of management, the legislation states. Municipalities then collect and remit those funds back to the BIA.

The Downtown Paris BIA approved its 2026 operating budget during its annual general meeting in February, before the budget was subsequently approved by County of Brant council as required by legislation. The approved levy for 2026 was set at \$325 per business.

County staff note that the Paris BIA operates somewhat differently than many BIAs across Ontario. While most BIA levies are calculated based on commercial property assessment and added to property tax bills, Paris uses a flat-rate, per-business levy structure. That means individual businesses receive invoices directly rather than seeing the charge incorporated into property taxes.

The levy funds a range of downtown initiatives overseen by the Paris BIA, including marketing and promotional campaigns, website and social media operations, seasonal events and administrative support. County staff identified programs such as Jingle Bell Night, advertising initiatives, staffing support and downtown promotions as examples of activities funded through the levy. The 2026 budget also includes expenditures for advertising, general promotions, Christmas promotions, website operations, contracted services and facility rentals.

During discussion at the June 16 Administration and Operations Committee meeting, Mayor David Bailey encouraged downtown businesses to continue supporting the organization through the levy.

"I hope the message is out there and they

(business members) are paying their dues to the BIA as they should be because they (BIA) didn't do anything wrong," said Bailey. Committee members were advised that the Paris BIA is preparing communication to its membership explaining the levy and its purpose. The levy currently generates approximately \$30,000 annually, funding marketing initiatives, special events and promotional activities designed to attract customers to the downtown core.

Within the report presented to the Administration & Operations Committee, staff acknowledged concerns surrounding the levy and noted that if the Paris BIA board and membership decide they wish to suspend the levy for 2026, staff will investigate whether such a move is permitted under the Municipal Act.

Staff also pointed out that the county has provided support to the BIA throughout construction, including assistance from Downtown Construction Liaison Erica Grimes, who has helped facilitate marketing, communications and business support initiatives during the project.

The committee also considered additional financial support for downtown businesses through the BIA. Councillor Steve Howes introduced a motion recommending the county provide an additional \$30,000 to the organization specifically for advertising and media purchases aimed at increasing traffic to downtown Paris.

Howes said while a petition supporting local businesses has gathered approximately 1,500 signatures, what downtown

merchants need most is customers through their doors.

"If we were to approve a \$30,000 injection to the BIA we would essentially be matching the funds raised by their membership levy. I'm confident the BIA with extra funds, specifically for media buying, could do some good in driving more people to shop in downtown Paris during this challenging time," said Howes. He added the timing would coincide with upcoming summer events, including the Paris Promenade. Councillor John Bell supported the proposal, noting council had originally anticipated construction would last one year when previous support funding was approved.

"When we started this process we did give a clear signal that we thought it would last a year. Now for all kinds of reasons it's extended and we are in year two and the one-time grant of \$30,000 that we did give really was addressing the year we thought we would be constructing and now we are into the second year so I think there is a logic to saying we would give another \$30,000 to cover this year of construction," said Bell.

The proposed funding would come from a county contingency reserve.

Committee members voted unanimously in favour of the recommendation, which now advances to county council for formal ratification later this month.

Additional background information on the funding request is expected to accompany the report when it returns to council.

The Paris Independent

Guiding Principles

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

**Missed an issue? View all past issues
online anytime: GRANTHAVEN.COM**

**GRANT
HAVEN
MEDIA**

*Restoring small-town
journalism, one community
at a time!*

The Paris Independent

Publisher

Stewart Grant • stew@granthaven.com

Editor

Chris Whelan • editor@theparis-independent.com

Managing Editor

Cassandra Turnbull • managingeditor@theparis-independent.com

Graphic Design

Michelle Foster • paris-independent-news@gmail.com

Business Development

Heather Dunbar • heather@granthaven.com

Billing Administrator

Jen Gaetan • jen@granthaven.com

Contributors

Michelle Malvaso, George Le Gresley, Ruby Jones, Heidi Pfleger, Paul Knowles, Karon Sinning, Jeff Johnston, Wayne Wilkinson, Emma Bowman, Gary Chalk

36 Water St. St. Marys, ON, PO Box 2310 N4X 1A2

info@theparis-independent.com | 519.655.2341 | granthaven.com



Funded by the Government of Canada
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada



Proposed Powerline Road employment lands development raises traffic, agricultural concerns

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

A proposal to develop more than 108 hectares of employment lands along Powerline Road in Paris generated questions from County of Brant councillors about traffic impacts, agricultural compatibility and the future of a neighbouring dairy operation during a public planning meeting on June 9.

The application, submitted by Orlando Corporation through MHBC Planning, seeks draft plan of subdivision approval and a zoning bylaw amendment for lands at 986 and 1034 Powerline Road. The property is located north of Highway 403 and west of Rest Acres Road and has been designated as Prestige Employment Lands under the County's 2023 Official Plan.

The proposal would create four industrial development blocks, along with a stormwater management facility, open space lands, a servicing corridor and lands to be conveyed to the Ministry of Transportation.

According to planning documents, the site encompasses approximately 108.3 hectares (267.6 acres) with nearly 1.2 kilometres of frontage along Powerline Road. The lands are bordered by agricultural uses to the north and west, existing industrial development to the east, residential development to the northeast and Highway 403 to the south.

No members of the public spoke either in support of or opposition to the application during the meeting.

However, councillors raised several concerns stemming from written submissions, including a letter from the Clement family of Waymar Jerseys, whose dairy operation and adjoining crop lands border the proposed development to the west. In their June 3 submission to the County, the family formally opposed the applications, citing concerns about agricultural compatibility, stormwater management, drainage impacts and the proposed increase in permitted building heights from 12 metres to 20 metres.

The family argued that taller industrial buildings could cast larger shadows onto neighbouring farmland, potentially affecting soil temperatures, crop emergence, growing conditions and yields. They noted that the affected lands are an integral part of their dairy operation and that any reduction in crop productivity could impact the viability of the farm business.

Councillor Jennifer Kyle questioned why an agricultural impact assessment was not

among the studies submitted with the application.

"There's a letter from family that farms directly beside the property in question. I noticed agricultural impact assessment was not on your list of studies. Is this something that will be undertaken?" Kyle asked, noting the Clement family concerns regarding their ongoing livestock operation.

Responding on behalf of the applicant, MHBC Planning representative Stephanie Murdoch said an agricultural impact study was not required as part of the application process.

"Yes we did receive that public letter and shared with applicant. The resident's lands are immediately to west of subject lands," said Murdoch.

She added that agricultural compatibility would have been considered when the lands were brought into the settlement area and designated for employment uses through the Official Plan review process.

"That being said what I can offer is there is significant distance proposed between any industrial buildings and the agricultural operation. We will be ensure to provide responses to those comments and any information that can answer their concerns," she said.

Councillor Ella Haley also voiced concerns about potential impacts on the neighbouring dairy farm.

"I just feel this farm is worried about contaminants, and we need to have a bigger discussion about possible contaminants," Haley said.

The Clements' letter asks the County to carefully assess whether contaminants from the industrial development could be transported onto neighbouring agricultural lands and requests detailed hydrogeological and drainage studies demonstrating there will be no adverse impacts on farming operations.

Murdoch told council the applicant would review concerns raised in the dairy farmer's letter, including questions surrounding potential contaminants and shadowing impacts.

Traffic was another recurring theme during council's discussion.

Councillor John Peirce expressed concern about the location of a proposed internal road connection, identified as Road B, which would align with an existing residence on the north side of Powerline Road.

"Road B is coming out directly in front of a residential house on the north side of powerline road — can we potential move that way from the front of that house," Peirce asked.



This aerial image shows the approximately 108-hectare property at 986 and 1034 Powerline Rd. in Paris that is the subject of a draft plan of subdivision and zoning amendment application before the County of Brant. The proposal would create four industrial development blocks, stormwater management facilities and supporting infrastructure on lands north of Highway 403 and west of Rest Acres Road.

Murdoch responded that the issue had been reviewed through the traffic impact study and that adequate separation exists between the proposed intersection and the residential driveway. Peirce nevertheless requested that planners revisit the matter and ensure it is adequately addressed.

Councillor John Bell questioned how increased traffic generated by the development would affect Powerline Road and whether upgrades would be required.

"Powerline Road is going to get really really busy if there are exits from this development. What are plans to update powerline road for this development?" Bell asked.

County planner Ryan Cummins said those matters remain under review.

"We will be back with that information a future date," said Cummins, noting the lands fall within the Ministry of Transportation's corridor control area and are subject to MTO approval.

Additional traffic information is expected to be submitted as part of the review process, including consideration of traffic impacts associated with the Ministry

of Transportation's planned roundabout improvements at the Highway 403 interchange.

Councillor Brian Coleman suggested the application be reviewed by the county's Agriculture Advisory Committee before staff formulate recommendations.

"Agriculture Advisory committee meets June 22, is there a possibility that this application come before that committee. Now is the time to make comments, not after staff makes recommendations," said Coleman.

The proposed zoning amendment would create two site-specific light industrial zones permitting buildings up to 20 metres in height.

One portion of the development would also allow uses such as chemical and pharmaceutical industries, food processing plants and processed goods industries, subject to site-specific regulations.

The June 9 meeting served as the statutory public meeting for the application. No decision was made by council, and the proposal will return at a future date following additional technical review and staff recommendations.

FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES IN THE INDEPENDENT

CALL 519-757-5662 OR EMAIL INFO@THEPARISINDEPENDENT.COM

EDITORIAL

Brant Safe Streets only works if we use it

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

Traffic safety is one of those issues that seems to unite everyone.

Whether it's speeding on a residential street, poor sightlines at an intersection, dangerous pedestrian crossings or motorists ignoring stop signs, residents care deeply about the safety of the roads they use every day.

But if County of Brant residents want those concerns addressed, Facebook is not the place to start.

The Brant Safe Streets program was created specifically for that purpose.

A recent update presented to the County's Administration and Operations Committee highlighted just how much has been accomplished through the initiative since its launch in 2019. More than 1,100 requests have been submitted by residents, prompting 489 field studies and leading to dozens of safety improvements across the county.

The results are impressive.

Since 2022 alone, the county has completed hundreds of field investigations and installed 34 pedestrian crossings, 107 flexible bollards, 37 temporary speed humps, 20 permanent speed humps, 102 temporary speed board locations and 25 permanent speed board locations. The county has also implemented 40 km/h neighbourhood zones, expanded traffic studies and worked closely with the OPP to target enforcement in areas identified through community complaints.

Yet when the county recently shared some of those accomplishments on social media, many of the comments weren't about the progress. Instead, residents used the post to highlight speeding concerns in their own neighbourhoods.

The question is simple: Have those concerns been reported through Brant Safe Streets? If not, they should be.

During committee discussions, Director of Roads Greg Demers explained that every complaint submitted through the program triggers a review process. Depending on the issue, staff may conduct field studies that examine factors such as road width, traffic volumes, topography, pedestrian activity, sightlines and existing speed limits. The resulting data helps determine whether changes are warranted and what solutions would be most effective.

In other words, concerns are not simply filed away. They are investigated.

Social media may generate discussion,

but it does not generate traffic studies. It does not collect data. It does not place a concern into a system that can be tracked, analyzed and prioritized. The Brant Safe Streets program does.

Another criticism raised online was that the county should focus on reporting "net results" rather than "bragging" about the number of measures implemented.

There is merit in wanting to understand outcomes. Residents should absolutely want to know whether investments are making roads safer.

The report does provide some of that context. Total collisions declined slightly from 931 in 2023 to 903 in 2025, while speeding-related charges issued by the OPP dropped by approximately 34 per cent over the same period. Although no single statistic can be directly attributed to Brant Safe Streets, the data points to generally positive trends.

But communicating what has been implemented is important too.

Public awareness is a critical part of any successful program. Residents need to know that Brant Safe Streets exists, that concerns are being investigated and that tangible improvements are being made. Seeing examples of completed projects helps people understand that their input can lead to real action. Perhaps most importantly, the report demonstrates that community feedback directly influences where resources are deployed. Many of the field studies, traffic calming measures and focused OPP patrols originated from resident submissions. The OPP uses an application that integrates Brant Safe Streets data, allowing officers to identify reported traffic safety hotspots and conduct targeted enforcement patrols. The program is designed to be responsive to public concerns. Traffic safety will never be a problem that is completely solved. There will always be new concerns, new developments and changing traffic patterns. But the County of Brant has built a process that allows residents to identify issues and have them investigated using data rather than assumptions. The next time someone notices a speeding problem on their street or a dangerous intersection in their neighbourhood, they should absolutely speak up.

Just make sure the complaint goes somewhere that can actually do something about it. To learn more about the program, visit <https://www.brant.ca/roads-parking-and-public-transit/brantsafestreets-safestreets-trafficssafety/brant-safe-streets/>

Letters to the Editor

Reader discovers unusual twist in Paris Independent sudoku

Dear Editor:

I happened to pick up a copy of the Paris Independent while shopping at Elberta Farms near Highways 24 & 99 on a day trip to Van Laekens Market Store in the Paris Winncy Mills Market.

Before my mention of my strange anomaly, I would like to say that I'm impressed with your community paper and feel that it has a good unifying feel to it.

Now for the anomaly in the Sudoku challenge.

And challenging it was. So much so that when finished and as grateful as to my accomplishment was - I was happy to see you include the results on a sub-

sequent page for referral. But to my surprise, your puzzle results were not the same as mine.

I had to ask AI to double check both and to which both were found to be accurate.

With further questioning as to how this could occur it simply stated that is very rare but possible.

I'm sure you don't make the puzzles yourself but for anyone that does attempt these I thought I'd pass along that sometimes the answer isn't always as it seems.

Once again, I loved reading your paper and how it engaged me.

Ian Matthews | Ancaster Ont

When citizens share their views, communities grow stronger

Dear Editor:

Congratulations for devoting a prominent space to the 'Letters to the Editor' feature.

There are many serious issues facing Brant County before the next provincial election so, well timed.

It is important that people who often feel left out or ill informed on local political matters have the chance to read perspectives of those who would be most deeply affected by the decisions made 'on

their 'behalf'.

Increasingly we find ourselves in a disturbing era run by self-interested and not always truthful, politicians who serve their own self-interests rather than those who vote them into power - if they vote at all!

Rather than feeling disempowered and frightened, let's hope your timely initiative stimulates more citizens to put their own thoughts out there.

Carol Ritchie | Paris, Ont

All letters must be signed by the writer and are subject to editing for length and clarity. The opinions expressed in the letter are those of the writer, and not necessarily those of the Paris Independent. We make no representation or warranty of any kind, express or implied, regarding the accuracy, adequacy, validity, reliability, or completeness of this information. If you have opinions to share, email your letter to stories@theparisindpendent.com

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

SUBMIT YOUR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BY EMAILING THEM TO

STORIES@THEPARISINDEPENDENT.COM



Broadway Street West reconstruction contract awarded as County prepares another Paris infrastructure project

CASANDRA TURNBULL
Managing Editor

The County of Brant has awarded an \$8.81-million contract for the reconstruction of Broadway Street West, setting the stage for another significant infrastructure project in Paris once the current downtown construction and Grand River Street North improvements are substantially complete.

At its June 16 Administration and Operations Committee meeting, council approved awarding the Broadway Street West Reconstruction contract to Regional Sewer and Watermain Ltd. for a bid of \$8,811,034.65, excluding HST. The company submitted the lowest of four bids received by the County.

The project will include the completion of remaining watermain and road work on West River Street (from approximately the former Penman buildings, now residential apartments, to the stop sign at Boardway St W), upgrades to sanitary and storm sewer infrastructure, installation of a new watermain and pressure-reducing valve, roadway reconstruction and the addition of a multi-use path for pedestrians and cyclists. Currently, there are no dedicated pedestrian facilities along the corridor.

According to the staff report, construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2026, with substantial completion targeted by the end of 2027. Final asphalt paving and landscaping work would be completed in the spring of 2028.

During committee discussions, Councillor John Bell asked how the project timeline would be coordinated with ongoing infrastructure work elsewhere in Paris.

“Could you say more about the timeline and phasing in of this relative to the completion of work elsewhere in Paris?” Bell asked.

Joe Murphy, the County's Capital Project Manager, said construction sequencing is being planned to minimize disruption and avoid conflicts with other major projects.

Murphy explained the work will proceed in three phases. The first phase involves

repairs to the stormwater outlet leading to the Nith River. The second phase will complete remaining work on West River Street, which must be finished before reconstruction begins on Broadway Street West. The third phase involves the reconstruction of Broadway Street West itself.

Murphy told committee that work on Broadway Street West will not begin until downtown construction is complete and Grand River Street North has reopened to traffic.

The staff report notes that West River Street and Broadway Street West are currently serving as secondary detour routes during the closure of Grand River Street North. To maintain those detours, any work undertaken before Grand River Street North reopens must allow two unobstructed traffic lanes to remain available at all times.

One of the most complex components of the project will involve installing sewer infrastructure beneath the railway corridor. Murphy said the County is exploring completing the railway crossing work during the winter months to help accelerate the overall project schedule. Those activities will require a full road closure immediately north of the tracks.

Bell asked how long the railway crossing would take.

Murphy estimated the railway-related work would require approximately four months to complete.

Bell also sought clarification on the extent of the road closure on Broadway Street West.

Murphy confirmed the closure would affect the section between West River Street and Railway Street.

Once work shifts to Broadway Street West, the road will be closed to all traffic during construction while West River Street reopens. The County expects access to Railway Street, the Paris Transfer Station and the Penman's Pass parking lot to remain available throughout the project, although temporary restrictions could occur depending on construction staging.



**SAVING UP TO \$200,000
ON A NEW HOME TODAY
MEANS MORE FAMILIES IN
MORE HOMES TOMORROW**



Learn how you can save up to
\$200,000 on a new home
ontario.ca/MoreHomesFaster

Ontario 

Paid for by the Government of Ontario



NEWS

**READ US
ONLINE**

WWW.GRANTHAVEN.COM/PARIS-INDEPENDENT



GRANT HAVEN MEDIA

ABOUT | NEWSPAPER | HEADLINES | ADVERTISE | CONTACT

RESTORING SMALL-TOWN JOURNALISM, ONE COMMUNITY AT A TIME.

Your Reliable Outlet for Local News, Events, and Perspectives

[SUBSCRIBE TODAY](#) [READ ONLINE](#)

HISTORIC PARIS

PARIS PAST: Diamond dreams and the enduring legacy of Pete Lavoie



By Chris Whelan

Every spring, a familiar, deeply comforting symphony echoes across the “Lower Town”. It is the rhythmic crack of a wooden bat, the sharp thud of a ball hitting leather, the collective roar of local bleachers, and the smell of hotdogs wafting from the concession stand. For generations of residents, these sounds are synonymous with youth baseball at Lions Park.

Thanks to a few historic photographs recently shared with me by my friend and longtime Paris resident Andy Attlebery, we can now take a nostalgic journey back to the roots of our town's minor baseball programs. These stunning images offer more than just a glimpse into the past; they celebrate the golden era of local sports and shine a deserving spotlight on Andy's maternal grandfather—a man whose heart, hustle, and devotion to youth sports earned him a permanent place in our town's landscape: the legendary Pete Lavoie.

While organized baseball has deep roots in Paris stretching all the way back to the late 19th century, youth minor ball as a structured community movement truly exploded in the post-war era. By the early 1960s, the Paris Lions Club recognized

that the town's surging population of baby boomers needed healthy, organized summer recreation.

In 1962, the Lions Club took a monumental step, officially establishing Little League Baseball in Paris. The response from the community was immediate and overwhelming. For that inaugural season, 108 eager young players signed up to play. Seizing the momentum, Lions members rolled up their sleeves, cleared land, and spent several hundred dollars constructing a dedicated minor ball playing field at Lions Park, complete with a regulation pitching mound, player benches, and steel backstops.

But a league is only as good as the volunteers who breathe life into it. As the league expanded from a few dozen kids into a multi-division powerhouse encompassing house leagues and travel teams, it required a special breed of dedication to keep the diamonds running. It required people who were willing to show up early, stay late, line the baselines, and coach with a mixture of patience and passion.

It required Pete Lavoie.

To those who grew up playing ball in Paris during the mid-to-late 20th century, Pete Lavoie was a foundational fixture of the park. He was the kind of community champion who didn't just volunteer for a season or two while his own kids played; he dedicated decades of his life to making sure every child in Paris had a safe, encouraging place to play the great game of baseball.

As a coach, organizer, and mentor, Pete understood that sports were about far more than the final score on a hand-operated scoreboard. He used the diamond as a classroom to teach generations of local kids the values of teamwork, resilience, sportsmanship, and civic pride. Whether he was adjusting a young batter's stance, encouraging a pitcher after a tough inning, or spending hours raking the infield dirt after a heavy summer downpour, Pete poured his soul into the park.

The historic photographs preserved by the Lavoie and Attlebery families capture the true essence of this era: wool uniforms that grew stifling in the July heat, high-top cleats, mismatched gloves, and rows of grinning local kids proudly sporting local business sponsorships on their chests. At the center of many of those frames is Pete—smiling, encouraging, and anchored to the dirt tracks of Lions Park.

As the decades rolled on, the minor ball programs Pete helped nurture evolved into the modern Paris Youth Softball Association (PYSA) and the Paris Predators. By the turn of the millennium, the heavily used diamonds at Lions Park were showing their age, requiring a massive overhaul to keep pace with a new generation of athletes.

The community did not forget the man who started it all. The town officially named the premier ball diamonds at 60 Laurel Street the Pete Lavoie Ball Diamonds.



In the summer of 2019, the community celebrated the grand opening of the Pete Lavoie Little League Ball Diamonds.

Beginning in 2017, a massive community effort took shape to completely revitalize Pete's old stomping grounds. Through the "Field of Continuing Dreams" fundraising campaign, community partners, donors, and the Paris Lions Club raised over \$255,000 (supplemented by a major municipal capital investment) to completely reconstruct the facility.

The sweeping renovations completely transformed the space, expanding the ball fields, installing state-of-the-art LED sports lighting for night games, constructing modern dugouts with player-safety enclosures, adding accessible washrooms, and building a brand-new concession building and clubhouse. More recently, the park added the Brenda Bishop and Family Batting Cage, giving today's youth players the ultimate training ground right next to the fields.

When the Pete Lavoie Ball Diamonds

celebrated their grand opening, it stood as a powerful testament to what Paris does best: working together to build a legacy for future generations.

Through the historic photos shared by Andy Attlebery, we are reminded that every modern luxury our local athletes enjoy today—from the bright LED lights to the pristine modern turf—was paid for by the sweat equity of pioneers like Pete Lavoie. He looked at a simple patch of grass near the Nith River and saw a field of endless possibilities for the youth of Paris.

The next time you walk down Laurel Street and hear the cheers echoing from the diamonds, take a look at the sign bearing Pete's name. His legacy isn't just etched in the park sign or preserved in vintage family photographs; it lives on in every local child who steps up to the plate, digests a word of encouragement, and falls in love with the game.



Large crowd for Little League Game in Paris Lions Park in 1960s

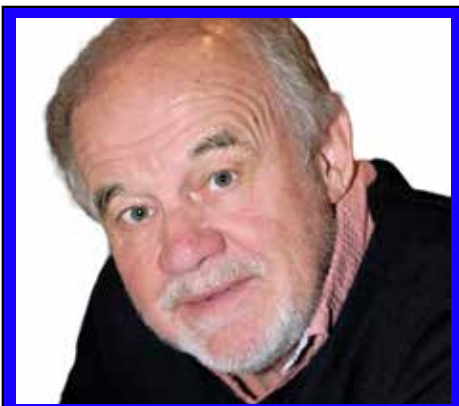


Pete Lavoie front right marches with the first Paris little league team in a parade in Paris in 1962



Large crowd for Little League Game against Galt in Paris Lions Park in the 1960s

LIVING RETIRED: 'Hybrid Gone Too Far'



By Gary Chalk
Non-Pulitzer Prize
Winning Columnist

Living Retired

what guy in his right mind reads the labels in his pants? — but according to the label my shorts are 'Hybrid.' That's right: 'Hybrid!'

When I think of hybrid, I think of hybrid cars with an internal combustion engine and an electric battery, that produces less gas emissions. But hybrid summer shorts?

I asked Jan about my hybrid shorts and the best she could come up with was, "Gary, similar to hybrid cars, maybe it means when you wear your hybrid shorts you have less gas emissions. As soon as we finish our lunch let's jump in the car and go buy a few more of them for you."

Jan's comments, well, blew me away. I called a friend for his thoughts.

"Dan, I know you like to wear shorts in the summer. Are any of your shorts hybrid?"

"You know I ride a hybrid bike; but hybrid shorts? Gary, are your shorts a little tight these day? Just saying."

"Seriously Dan. Check the label inside your shorts. You may be surprised."

"Gary, I am already surprised that you called me about your shorts."

I rummaged through my dresser drawer of shorts and guess what? I don't have a shortage of shorts. I have natural fit shorts, slightly fitted shorts, traditional fit shorts, slim fit shorts, and a pair of stretch shorts; even slightly stretch shorts. But no hybrid shorts.

I have walking shorts, cargo shorts, gym shorts, running shorts, chino shorts, hiking shorts, and biking shorts. But no hybrid shorts. So, I Googled 'hybrid shorts, men.' This is what I found...

First up was O'Neill Canada. 'Discover hybrid shorts for men. Featuring clean washes and sophisticated prints to fit any style.' According to Bikini Village, 'Whether you're on the beach or in the city you'll be on trend!'

"Jan, Bikini Village says when I wear my hybrid shorts on the beach, or in the city I am on trend."

"Come on Gary, at one time Nehru jackets were on trend. Yours was powder blue colour in polyester. You invited me to our high school semi-formal and half-way through the dance your neck was covered with a bright red rash, and we had to leave."

"But Jan you liked my shoes with the huge heels, they were on trend."

"Again Gary. Being on trend is one thing, but tripping over those damn shoes while we danced was embarrassing."

While doing my online research, I came across of all things: hybrid decorator pillows, and — holy crap! — **HYBRID TOILETS!**

If Jan discovers hybrid toilets, she may conclude that, similar to hybrid cars with their lower gas emissions, a hybrid toilet will do the same!

Living Retired by humour columnist Gary Chalk is published weekly throughout Canada and USA.

Living Retired On The Radio is heard Thursday mornings. To inquire about keynote presentations, contact Gchalk@me.com

Kiwanis Teddy Bear Picnic brings smiles to Burford



(AAKASH NAVI PHOTOS)



Aliyah Hasan and Zayn Hasan pose with their mother, Chelsea Spence, after collecting prizes and balloon creations during the Kiwanis Club of Paris-Brant's fifth annual Teddy Bear Picnic. Families enjoyed a variety of free activities throughout the event, including face painting, games, live shows and opportunities to win prizes.



Ellie de Munnik gets a chance to try on firefighter gear with help from her mother, Alyssa de Munnik, while exploring the Burford Fire Station's main line pumper during the Kiwanis Club of Paris-Brant's fifth annual Teddy Bear Picnic. The popular attraction gave children an up-close look at emergency vehicles and the equipment used by local firefighters.



Logan MacDonald carefully removes a block during a giant game of Jenga at the Kiwanis Club of Paris-Brant's fifth annual Teddy Bear Picnic held June 7 at the Burford Fairgrounds. The annual event featured a mix of classic games and interactive activities, encouraging children to test their skills while enjoying a summer afternoon with family and friends.

Yanira, Landon and Lucy test their fishing skills at one of the many activity stations during the Kiwanis Club of Paris-Brant's fifth annual Teddy Bear Picnic at the Burford Fairgrounds on June 7. The free community event featured games, balloon art, face painting, live entertainment and hands-on activities designed to keep youngsters moving from station to station throughout the afternoon.

From surviving to supporting: Finding strength after a stroke

Contributed by the BCHS Communications and Public Affairs Department

FOR THE PARIS INDEPENDENT

Contributed by the BCHS Communications and Public Affairs Department

Imagine returning to the very hospital unit where your life changed – this time, not as a patient, but as someone offering support and hope.

At Brant Community Healthcare System (BCHS), that's exactly what's happening in Brantford General Hospital's Integrated Stroke Unit (ISU). Through a new partnership with March of Dimes Canada, stroke survivors are stepping back into the unit where they once received care, now supporting patients and families just beginning their road to recovery.

Back in March, BCHS launched the Peer Connector Volunteer Program on the ISU, connecting stroke survivors with patients and caregivers early in their hospital experience. These volunteers offer more than just comforting words. Through shared lived experiences, Peer Connectors provide emotional support, encouragement, and practical insight, helping individuals feel understood during a challenging time.

This initiative was developed in response to patient and caregiver feedback, highlighting the need for stronger support and better awareness of community resources beyond the hospital. By bridging hospital care with programs such as After Stroke, the Peer Connector program supports smoother transitions, promotes confidence in recovery, and enhances access to ongoing community-based supports. Making recovery a little less overwhelming.

For BCHS Peer Connector David Young, this work is deeply personal.

Just a year ago, David was a patient on the ISU after experiencing a mini stroke. Today, he's back on the unit as a source of strength for others.

"Being a part of this opportunity means I didn't let what happened to me define what I can accomplish," he shares. That perspective shapes every conversation he has across the unit. "I realized I could help others feel understood in a way that only someone who's been through it can," says David.

David meets patients and families in some of their most uncertain moments, when fear, confusion, and questions are at their highest. In those moments, his presence offers something powerful: proof that recovery is possible.

"I reassure patients and families that they are not alone," shares David. "No matter what they're going through, there is someone who understands."

David also shares the meaningful impact of the program through his role as Peer Connector. "I had a patient tell me they looked forward to seeing me, and that I made a difference for them. That meant a lot."

For fellow Peer Connector Shamendree (Shams) Naidoo, the journey back to the unit was filled with uncertainty but led to something powerful.

"When I thought about joining the Peer Connector team, at first, I was nervous," she shares. "I was worried it would be very emotional. Instead, I felt a sense of belonging. Being able to validate what someone is going through, because you've lived it, means so much."

Shams experienced her stroke during the pandemic, a time marked by isolation and limited connection. "It was a very lonely and overwhelming experience," she recalls. "I was only able to connect with others after I returned home, and I was struggling to adjust."

That connection became a turning point. "Chatting with other stroke survivors really helped me heal as I was able to see that the challenges I faced were being faced by others, and there was a light at the end of tunnel," says Shams. Through those conversations, she was able to process her healing journey, realizing that recovery is possible with the right mindset and support.

Now, Shams brings that perspective back to the bedside supporting patients who are in the same place she once was, navigating not just recovery, but the emotional weight that comes with it. "Being able to support others has given me a real sense of purpose," she shares. "Knowing I can help someone stay motivated on their hardest



(BRANT COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE SYSTEM PHOTO)

Shamendree (Shams) Naidoo and David Young are both stroke survivors who have returned to the bedside as sources of support for others on their recovery journey. Pictured from left to right, Shamendree (Shams) Naidoo, Peer Connector, David Young, Peer Connector, Tammy Bird, Registered Practical Nurse, Integrated Stroke Unit.

days makes a huge difference in my own healing."

Both David and Shams emphasize how challenging the transition home can be after a stroke.

"You go from a place where everything is supported, with doctors, nurses, and therapists to figuring out how to implement support from home the rest of your recovery," Shams explains. "My advice is to use every resource available—outpatient rehab, therapists, support programs. Even if you think you're okay, those supports can make a huge difference."

Programs like this also highlight a broad-

er message: stroke awareness matters. Recognizing the signs early and acting quickly can save lives – but ongoing support is just as essential to recovery. Learning about the different supports available can make a life-changing difference in a stroke survivors' journey. At BCHS, that support continues beyond our hospital walls. Through community, connection, and especially the voices who have lived it, recovery doesn't end at discharge, and no one should have to go through it alone.

To learn more about the Peer Connector program at BCHS and how to get involved, contact mfooster@marchofdimes.ca.

Weekend Quiz

By Jake Grant

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Who won the 2025-2026 Stanley Cup? | 6. How did Oliver Tree die? |
| 2. Who recently became the world's first trillionaire? | 7. What is Duolingo's mascot? |
| 3. What is the first stage of the rain/water cycle? | 8. Which dog breed was the first to have its evidence legally admitted in court? |
| 4. In "Goodfellas", what character did Robert De Niro portray? | 9. In health, what does HDL stand for? |
| 5. The thistle is the national flower of what country? | 10. In what year did the first FIFA World Cup take place? |

This week's answers are found on pg. 22

Apple season is just around the corner!

Thank you for supporting us this spring. Our nursery is closed for the season. Please follow us on Facebook for updates from the orchard!

400 Johnson Road, Brantford (County) • 519-448-4688 • creekviewacresbrant.ca

**Creek View Acres
Nursery & Orchard**

Engines roar and smoke flies at Paris Super Pull event

KIMBERLY DE JONG

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Several hundred people attended the Ontario Truck and Tractor Pulling Association's (OTTPA) annual Paris Super Pull event at the Paris Fairgrounds on Saturday, June 13, 2026.

Founded in the 1970s, the OTTPA organizes a series of competitive truck and tractor pulling events across the province.

"We're probably the longest stand pulling organization in Ontario," said Mike Stover, Track Official and OTTPA treasurer. "We started back in the 70s and we now have about 15 different classes and around 120 different members. We run about 35 events over the course of the summer, starting from the first of June to Thanksgiving so we're certainly one of the largest truck and tractor pulling organizations in Canada."

This year, dozens of contestants participated in one or more of the 13 classes throughout the evening, including:

- Modified Vintage 5,750 Lbs – Winner: Tim Anderson
- Modified Farm 7,000 Lbs – Winner: Justin Livingston
- Super Street Diesel – Winner: Will Collette
- Super Stock 4x4 – Winner: Trevor Cox
- Modified Farm 8,000 Lbs – Winner: Gary Sanderson
- Single Engine Modified – Winner: Mark Copithorn (grounds)

- Light Pro Stock 7,500 Lbs – Winner: Alex Johnson
- Mini Modified – Winner: Jason Combdon
- Modified Farm 10,500 Lbs – Winner: Mike Windrem
- Pro Street Diesel 3.0 – Winner: Not Listed
- Pro Modified Diesel 3.6 – Winner: Rob Bonus
- Heavy Pro Stock 9,000 Lbs – Winner: Henk Dirksen
- Multi-Engine – Winner: Tom LaRue

"We have quite a variety of vehicles here today, as well as most of our classes," said Stover. "The Paris Agricultural Society also has a beer garden, as well as different games, and food vendors set up behind the stands as well." Throughout the event, spectators cheered on their favourite vehicles and drivers as they tried to pull the roughly 32,000 pound "Executioner" sled the farthest distance possible.

"The sled weighs about 32,000 pounds totally empty, but blocks are added as we move up in classes and so each of those adds about 2,000 pounds," Stover explained. "Once we get to the highest class, Multi-Engine, there will be well over 40,000 pounds being pulled."

Attendees were especially loud when the various tractors or trucks produced plumes of black smoke or if the front end of the vehicle lifted in the air.

Stover said part of the reason people enjoy participating in and watching a pulling



(KIMBERLY DE JONG PHOTO)

Carl Fox smiles as the front tires of his tractor lift off the ground while pulling the Executioner during the Paris Super Pull on Saturday, June 13, 2026.

event is the competition aspect.

"For the most part, it's a friendly competition. I'm a part-time competitor in the Single Engine Modified class and all the guys are great.

They all get along and they help one another to make sure you get down the track versus hoping that something breaks and you don't," he said. "They're all very competitive but their great people and most of the classes are exactly like that. But beyond that, it's just a chance to have fun with people that have similar interests as you...it's not just about the money. And the spectators, they like coming to see who can win but they also like the noise and dirt

and smoke... the more the better."

The track official went on to say he and the rest of the OTTPA team were glad to be back at Paris Fairgrounds.

"It's always great to come back to a place that supports us year after year, so we're happy to be back," said Stover. "It's a beautiful day weather wise too. It's warm but there's a bit of a breeze so it's perfect."

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



WILL BOUMA

MPP, Brantford-Brant

Happy CANADA DAY

Celebrating our great nation and the communities that make it strong. On this Canada Day, we recognize the people, traditions, and local connections that make our country such a wonderful place to live, work, and grow. Wishing everyone a safe, happy, and memorable Canada Day.

COMMUNITY EVENTS



Brantford Canada Day Celebration - Brantford Lions Park

Morning Events

- 10:00 a.m - Citizenship Ceremony

All-Day Attractions

- 11:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.
- KidZone Carnival and Midway
- Marketplace presented by Mitsui High-tec (Canada)
- Food vendors

Young Canadians Area & Stage

- 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- 12:00 p.m - Performing Arts Academy
- 12:30 p.m - Team T & J and Foam Pop-Up Party
- 1:20 p.m - Simon Says Show
- 1:45 p.m - Paw Patrol Storytime with Rubble, Dexter and City of Brantford Director of Engineering Jennifer Elliott
- 2:15 p.m - Team T & J and Foam Pop-Up Party
- 3:05 p.m - Simon Says Show
- 3:40 p.m - The BarryO Kids Show
- 4:15 p.m - Team T & J and Foam Pop-Up Party
- 4:40 p.m - Paw Patrol Rubble Meet and Greet
- 5:05 p.m - Simon Says Show
- 5:30 p.m - The BarryO Kids Show

Main Stage Entertainment

- 12:10 p.m - Hell Bent Rockers
- 1:25 p.m - Fresh Water Funk
- 2:20 p.m - Otis Wonder & The Hustle
- 3:25 p.m - Back to the 80's
- 4:35 p.m - Steven Taetz (presented by Renway Energy Inc.)
- 6:30 p.m - Tom Wilson

- 8:30 p.m - Finger Eleven (presented by OLG)
- Additional Attractions**
- 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m - Guinness World Record stilt walker Doug "The Great" Hunt
 - 2:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m - Free Canada Day Photo Booth presented by Tim Hortons and Co-operators – McMillan Insurance
 - 3:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m - Marco the Clown

Fireworks

- 10:00 p.m.
- Canada Day Fireworks Display

Tip: Arrive early for both celebrations, as parking and popular attractions tend to fill up quickly throughout the day. Happy Canada Day!



Christine Garneau Bisailon for County of Brant Mayor



When values, words, and actions align, leadership is authentic and genuine.

Connect with my campaign to continue this conversation!

519-448-4688 • garneauformayor.ca

Ad paid by the Garneau for Mayor campaign

Celebrating 100 Years of Service, Remembrance, and Community

70 William Street, Paris, ON | 519-442-3788 | www.parislegion29.ca

Proudly Canadian. Passionately Supporting Your Health.

HEALTH COLLECTIVE & STUDIO
WWW.RIGHTASRAINPARIS.COM

Happy Canada Day

Have a
HAPPY
Canada Day
and please celebrate safely!

Flip it over!

**Your Canada Day Flag is on the back —
hang it proudly!**

Paris
Home
building centre

246 Grand River St N, Paris, ON | (519) 442-2297

Happy Canada Day!

Happy Can



Canada Day





Canada Day

Canada Day 2026 Celebrations in Paris and Brantford

CASANDRA TURNBULL

Managing Editor

Canada Day celebrations will once again bring residents together in both Paris and Brantford to mark the nation's birthday with a full day of family-friendly activities, live entertainment, food and community spirit. Whether you're planning to spend the day in Paris, Brantford, or both, here's a look at what's happening across the region on July 1.

Paris Canada Day Celebration
July 1 | 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Paris Lions Park

Main Stage Entertainment

- **10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. | Tim McDougald**
Singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist from Brantford blending folk, indie and country influences.
- **12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. | Sarah Smith**
Award-winning Canadian singer-songwriter known

for her powerful vocals and energetic stage performances.

- **2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | Frisky Business**
Classic rock and dance favourites from the 1970s and 1980s, featuring hits from Canadian bands such as April Wine, Trooper and The Guess Who.
- **All-Day Activities (10 a.m. – 5 p.m.)**
Glass Slipper Company
Face painting
Caricature artist
Balloon twister

Special Attractions

- **Doug Hunt (Stilt Walker):** 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- **Free swimming:** Noon – 3 p.m.
- **Free hot dogs and ice cream** while supplies last

PHARMASAVE®

Canada's Community Pharmacy



PARIS HARTLEY PHARMASAVE

1 Hartley Avenue, Paris
Phone: (519) 442-1119



Stacked

PANCAKE & BREAKFAST HOUSE

Cheers to the red and white!
Happy Canada Day!



1070 Rest Acres Road, Paris

stackedpancakehouse.ca

Open Everyday | 7 am - 3 pm



Dan MUYS
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
FLAMBOROUGH–GLANBROOK–BRANT NORTH

HAPPY CANADA DAY!

Let's celebrate the true north strong and free!

Dan Muys MP | St. George Office: 6 Main St S | 519-448-1483 | DanMuysMP.ca



St. George gearing up for annual classic car show

KIMBERLY DE JONG

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

St. George Business Association is set to host its fifth annual Car Show on Main Street from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 28, 2026.

In previous years, several hundred residents have taken the opportunity to check out the different vintage, antique, classic and newer-model vehicles, including everything from a 1956 Chevrolet Bel-Air convertible to a 2022 Corvette C8, a 1948 International K-3 truck, a 1959 Cadillac Fleetwood, a 2009 Ford Mustang Shelby GT500KR, a 1970 Plymouth Roadrunner, and more.

John MacAlpine, one of the organizers for the event, said he's looking forward to welcoming everyone back to the show.

"We've had really good turnouts the last few years, and we've had such a good variety too, which is always nice," he said. "Some shows will have all Corvettes or all BMWs, but our show is a bit unique in the sense that you really get a little bit of everything, and I think having it right downtown is always appealing."

Those looking to show their own car can do so by registering online or on the day of the event. While the show is free to attend for spectators, the entry fee to show a car is \$10 and can be paid either during online registration or in cash on June 28. Proceeds from the event will go towards keeping the show sustainable and will go back to the community.

When it comes to displaying their vehicles, participants have two options. Classics that plan to stay for a shorter period can set up just north of St. George Hardware, and those planning to stay for the full duration of the show can display their vehicles along Main Street.

Exhibitors are encouraged to arrive from the south end of town, and visitors can either park along the side streets or in the overflow parking area south of the 48 Main St. south plaza.

During the event, visitors will have the opportunity to not only view the different makes and models, paint jobs and special upholstery work, but there will also be two locations set up for live music and a DJ, People's Choice Award voting and a participant prize draw.

"This year, we're going to have live music, as well as some new singers down by the Old Mill," said MacAlpine. "We'll have prizes for best in show, the oldest car, best classic, and best modern vehicle, which people can vote on. We're also go-



(KIMBERLY DE JONG PHOTO)

Visitors take a look under the hood of a 1974 Dodge Challenger during the St. George Business Association's fourth annual Classic Car Show last year. This year's event is taking place on Sunday, June 28.

ing to have dash plaques for the first 175 people that arrive and door prizes that people can look forward to too."

Last year, Heidi Gorter, President of the St. George Business Association, said one of the big benefits of the car show was the boost to local businesses and the community.

"It really brings attention to our downtown businesses and helps support them," she said. "There's also really not many events happening in the village this time of year, so it's good for our community as a whole, because the residents get to come out and enjoy our downtown."

Restaurants like the Dragon, St. George Arms, Drongkowskis, St. George Pizza and Wings, Flora's Homestyle Pizza and La Tino'Z Pizza will all be open for business.

MacAlpine said he ultimately hopes people will take the opportunity to explore the show and check out the community.

"There's a lot to explore while you're there," he said. "It's always nice to get the chance to view the old vehicles, meet the owners and hear the stories behind them. The whole idea of the day is just to get out there, explore the area, celebrate these vin-

tage vehicles and build relationships."

Kimberly De Jong's reporting is funded by the Canadian government through its

Local Journalism Initiative. The funding allows her to report rural and agricultural stories from Blandford-Blenheim and Brant County.

Wishing our friends and neighbours a safe and happy Canada Day!



SCAN ME

Find a local celebration at brant.ca/events

Free Swim!

July 1 at the Paris Community Pool (80 Laurel Street, Paris) from **12:30 - 3:30 pm**

Note: County offices and community centres will be **closed** on Wednesday, July 1

COUNTY OF **Brant** Simply Grand

brant.ca | info@brant.ca | 519.44BRANT (442.7268) | [f](#) [@](#)

Support us on
patreon

Paid subscriptions available at:

www.patreon.com/TheParisIndependent

Send emails to:

sales@theparis-independent.com or call: 519-757-5662

The Paris Independent SPORTS



Sponsored by Paris Canadian Tire

Paris Figure Skating Club honours skaters, volunteers at year-end awards banquet

PARIS INDEPENDENT STAFF

The Paris Figure Skating Club celebrated another successful season on June 15, recognizing skaters, volunteers and program assistants during its annual year-end awards banquet.

The event marked the conclusion of the 2025-26 skating season and provided an opportunity to celebrate achievements on and off the ice, from competitive accomplishments and personal development to volunteer contributions that help keep the club running.

A special recognition was given to the club's Program Assistants, experienced skaters who support coaches in delivering lessons, assist younger skaters during sessions and serve as role models on the ice. Those honoured for their contributions this season were Lily Zammit, Samantha Smith, Alessia Chedhomme, Julia Torowski, Alissa Carr, Olivia Jennings, Lahara Lockett, Sophie McLean, Alora Kelly, Deanna Funge, Ryann Wojtasik, Ella Robdrup, Charlotte Black, Grace Kissoonchand, Quinlynn Bodnar, Rochelle De Macedo, Ella Knill, Ella Dobrucki, Maya Darnbrough, Anna Maxwell, Breanne Pike, Raziel Valtchanov, Madelyn Tapp, Jenna Holly, Ella Ballard, Abby MacDonald, Clara Sangster and Chloe Todd.

Among the club's top honours, Samantha Hutchinson and Erin Plaquet were named Outstanding Skaters of the Year, while Breanne Pike received the John Sherman Golden Blade Award and Madelyn Tapp

earned the Robin Prine Award.

Nancy Smith was recognized with the Volunteer Award for her dedication to the club throughout the season.

Award recipients

Diamond Skaters

- Erin Plaquet
- Camryn Wilson

Marilyn Prine Bursary Award

- Madelyn Tapp
- Emily Percival

Achievement Awards

CanSkate

- Minahil Butt
- Ibrahim Butt
- Loryn Henderson and Sloan O'Farrell

Junior

- Sophie McLean
- Grace Black
- Julia Torowski

Intermediate

- Nora Glowala
- Alessia Chedhomme
- Lily Zammit, Clara Sangster, Anika Wilson and Grace Kissoonchand

Senior

- Ryann Wojtasik
- Sadie McRoberts
- Erin Plaquet

Spirit Awards

CanSkate

- Stella Pitlivka
- Emily Olszewski
- Arya Oza
- Zain Shibu



Skaters, coaches, volunteers and families gathered June 15 to celebrate another successful season at the Paris Figure Skating Club's annual awards banquet. The evening recognized achievements on and off the ice, highlighted the contributions of program assistants and volunteers, and honoured skaters from CanSkate through to the senior levels for their dedication, sportsmanship and accomplishments throughout the 2025-26 season.

- Avika Kalvapalle
- Matthew Moiseenko

Junior

- Lauralai Burton
- Alissa Carr

Intermediate

- Chloe Todd
- Clara Sangster

Senior

- Sadie McRoberts
- Ella Dobrucki

Teen/Adult

- Kim Meszaros

- Sherry Osinga

Special Awards

- Robin Prine Award: Madelyn Tapp
- John Sherman Golden Blade Award: Breanne Pike
- Outstanding Skater of the Year: Samantha Hutchinson and Erin Plaquet
- Volunteer Award: Nancy Smith

The awards banquet concluded another season for the Paris Figure Skating Club, highlighting the dedication, sportsmanship and achievements of skaters across all age groups and skill levels.



Clara Sangster and Chloe Todd were recognized with the Intermediate Spirit Award for demonstrating enthusiasm, sportsmanship and a positive attitude both on and off the ice throughout the season.



(PARIS FIGURE SKATING CLUB PHOTOS)

Senior Achievement Award recipients were (left to right) Erin Plaquet, Saide McRoberts and Ryann Wojtasik



Breanne Pike was presented with the prestigious John Sherman Golden Blade Award during the Paris Figure Skating Club's year-end awards banquet

Skill development paying off for Paris U11 Girls

PARIS INDEPENDENT SUBMISSION

The Paris U11 Girls softball team has opened the 2026 season with an impressive record of 3 wins, 2 losses, and 2 ties. With many players competing in this age division for the first time, the focus this season has been on skill development, confidence building, and having fun while learning the game.

One of the highlights of the season so far has been the opportunity for every player on the roster to step into the pitching circle. The girls have delivered some outstanding pitching performances, showing off the potential this group has as they move forward.

While the team's first tournament in Mitchell was unfortunately cancelled due to significant rainfall, the players and coaches are looking ahead to the ORSA Provincial Championships in early July, where they will have the opportunity to continue showcasing their skill development and teamwork.

The Paris U11 Girls would also like to extend a sincere thank you to their generous sponsors, Endries International, All Pro Systems, and H.S. Knill.

Their support has helped cover tournament fees and team swag, allowing the girls to focus on learning, competing, and creating lasting memories throughout the season.



The U11 Girls Softball Team looks forward to their first provincial ORSA Championship tournament in early July, eager to put their newfound skills and confidence to the test.

TD Summer Reading Club returns to County of Brant Library branches

PARIS INDEPENDENT STAFF

With summer vacation just around the corner, the County of Brant Library is inviting children and teens to spend their break exploring the world of books through the annual TD Summer Reading Club.

The popular program officially launches June 26 and encourages young readers to stay engaged with reading throughout the summer months while earning rewards and prizes along the way.

This year's program features a sea-inspired theme designed to encourage participants to "dive into" reading wherever and whenever they choose.

Registration opens during launch events taking place at library branches across the county. The Paris Branch will host a launch party on Friday, June 26 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., while all County of Brant Library branches will offer registration opportunities from June 26 to June 28 during regular operating hours.

Children up to age 12 can participate in the TD Summer Reading Club by tracking the minutes they spend reading

throughout the summer. Participants earn rewards as they reach reading milestones and are entered for the chance to win prizes.

The library will also continue its Teen Summer Reading Club for readers aged 13 and older, offering opportunities for youth to maintain and develop their reading habits during the school break.

Library staff hope to build on the success of last year's program, which saw participants in the TD Summer Reading Club and Teen Summer Reading Club collectively log 515,890 minutes of reading.

This summer, the library has set a community goal of surpassing 520,000 minutes. Registration and reading logs are available through Beanstack. More information about the program can be found at County of Brant Library's Summer Reading Club page.

"We're challenging our community to read together all summer long and see if we can reach 520,000 minutes or more," library staff said. "Whether it's a picture book, graphic novel, chapter book or audiobook, every minute counts."

Dusters keep things even in humorous 2-2 showdown

SID LUCKMAN

Paris Independent Contributor

Certainly, Dusters Hockey has hit stride. This week's contest was yet another intense 2-2 goal game...in theory.

Perhaps it was the rampant call ups that were needed to fill a roster depleted by Grade 8 graduations? That being said, the game went on and went on it did.

Certainly, Butters Raatenan played as smooth as his name. Who said he had no Finnish? Butters was Helsinki on skates as he made the personification of "There is no I in TEAM...but there is a ME."

Not to be out done was Braeden Gregorovich who skated like his laces had no end. The goal posts learned to move out of the way from his cannon shot. Braeden is the man!

Goalie Neufeld's quote from the crease of "Orange you glad I showed up?" for sure had the defence making a hearty laugh.

And though it may be said that any one of the Dusters may be traded for a bucket of pucks and a roll of tape...well that actually would be pretty good. Seeing as the Team has lost 17 of the original stock of 29 pucks in 2026, a trade (and add in that nice bucket) of one of the guys for those pucks is looking good to Management at this time.

So we wait another week and by that time anyone who cares will know if Team Canada won their World Cup group. Regardless of the Swiss result, the Dusters hit the ice at the BSC on Thursdays at 5:30pm. Our door is open to all, just email JY at offsideyoung@gmail.com! This week is the mid year social at the Freeman Pub. Come meet the Dusters!

Paris Duffers: Golf with a Side of Drama

GREIG GRAHAM AKA GG

Paris Independent Contributor

Hello, Brant sports fans, and welcome to another round-up of all the events from the greens of Burford!

Sometimes the game of golf can be a bit slow, with cries of "boring" ringing out as yet another tee shot goes straight and predictable down the fairway.

Well, that is definitely not a problem with this group. We bring the drama every single week. Let's get started.

This week, we welcomed back one of our own as Rat Fink joined his brother Double G to take on Billy B and Ferg.

Even though Fergy actually found his game for once (don't worry, he'll likely lose it again next week) and Billy B has fully mastered his signature trick shot—skipping his ball right across the bridge—it wasn't enough. The powerhouse team of GG and GG carved out a tight, one-stroke victory.

In the next group, Big Al and AA faced off against Sinc and Swanee in a match that briefly turned into a hazard zone. On the 15th hole, AA's second shot struck a rock and ricocheted backward, missing Sinc's head by mere inches before landing all the way back on the ladies' tee.

Just two shots later, he was at it again—this time firing a ball clean through the golf cart occupied by Big Al, missing him by inches. AA's casual defense? "At least I didn't kill anyone."

Down going into the final hole, Swanee and Sinc invoked the rare and dramatic "Double Dog Dare" press. Swanee came through under immense pressure, pulling off an amazing chip and putt to win the hole. I warned you guys last week to watch out for the rookie!

Enzo and Kopper ended up having to buy the post-round milk for Birdy, Chicken, and Hoogs.

On the bright side, at least they didn't have to dodge any incoming fire from AA.

Meanwhile, J and Cutter successfully claimed bragging rights and victory over Jacque and Brownie.

Quote of the Week: In response to the casual course question, "Who's the a-hole here?" the Birdman perfectly summarized the entire league: "Any one of us, at any given time."

Word on the street is that there is a big croquet tournament happening soon. We sincerely hope local EMS won't be required. Play safe, you mallet heads!

Until next week, keep 'em in the fairways.

Strides for Students raises more than \$11,600 in support of Success at School

MEDIA RELEASE

The inaugural Strides for Students event brought together families, staff, students, and community partners on Saturday, June 13, raising more than \$11,600 for programs and initiatives that will contribute directly to learner success across Grand Erie.

"We had beautiful weather to walk, run, roll or stroll, with every stride making a meaningful difference in ensuring learners have what they need to succeed at school," said Lisa Munro, Associate Director of Curriculum and Student Achievement at the Grand Erie District School Board. "Thank you to everyone who participated, cheered from the sidelines, or made a donation toward this important cause."

The event welcomed participants of all ages and abilities, with competitive runners kicking off the morning with a five-kilometre run, followed by a go-at-your-own-pace walk on the Kiwanis Field track at Pauline Johnson Collegiate and Vocational School. Top runners included Julia Benson and Brett Benson, parents from Walsh Public School attending Strides with their daughters, students Hannah and Leah; Laura Perrin, vice-principal at Paris District High School; and coming in with the best time of the day was Annie Sheppard, a Grade



The inaugural Strides for Students event brought together families, staff, students, and community partners on Saturday, June 13, raising more than \$11,700 for programs and initiatives that will contribute directly to learner success across Grand Erie.

6 student at Jarvis Public School. The top fundraising team was Stride Sisters with \$2,965 raised.

The event began with a performance of O Canada by Ava Ro, a recent McKin-

non Park Secondary School graduate and accomplished actor, singer, and voice artist. Mascots from Grand Erie secondary schools kept the event going with high-energy antics. Families enjoyed a variety of

games and activities, with community partners providing engaging opportunities for participants throughout the day.

"This is just the first event in what will become a strong tradition of giving back in Grand Erie," said JoAnna Roberto, Chief Executive Officer. "Fundraisers like Strides allow us to direct community support to where it can make the most impact for students across the region."

The funds raised through the event will support programs and opportunities that help students thrive, both inside and outside the classroom, contributing to emergency needs and supporting programs in schools in the key areas of mental and physical health, equity, and technology.

The event's turnout and enthusiastic support demonstrates a shared commitment to student achievement and well-being. The support of presenting sponsor, For the Needy Not the Greedy, went a long way to making the event possible. With this year's total raised, Strides for Students has established a solid foundation for the annual community event. Its success was made possible through the support of participants, volunteers, donors, sponsors, and community partners who came together to invest in the success of Grand Erie students.

Grand Erie seeks community input to name new elementary school in Paris

NEWS RELEASE

In January 2025, the Ontario Ministry of Education announced a \$26.5 million capital investment for the construction of a Kindergarten to Grade 8 elementary school in Paris. As part of the process, the Grand Erie District School Board is looking for the public's input into naming the new school.

"As we move forward and get ready to put shovels in the ground, we're asking students, families and residents to put their best ideas forward for a name that everyone can be proud of," said Brian Doyle, Chair of the Board.

The project's scope includes space for 536 students, a gymnasium and library, special education rooms, resource rooms, and four childcare rooms for 64 students. Construction is anticipated to be completed by the start of the school year in September 2028.

The Grand Erie District School Board has not yet publicly released the exact street address or site plan for the school. Grand Erie currently operates three elementary schools and one secondary school in Paris, serving a total of 2,231 students.

"We look forward to opening a new school

where every learner can thrive in Paris," says Dr. JoAnna Roberto, Chief Executive Officer with the Grand Erie District School Board. "Together, starting with the name, we can create a learning community grounded in achievement, that supports a strong sense of belonging and well-being."

Grand Erie's policy governing school naming offers considerations that may help inspire suggestions including local geography, nature, historical names or events, or an individual with an outstanding and enduring contribution to the public education community. Names should also reflect Grand Erie's mission to build a culture of learning, well-being and belonging.

Public input will be received until August 18. A committee will review the submissions with input from staff, students, community members and stakeholder groups.

The committee will bring the top recommendation to the Board of Trustees in late September followed by the Ministry of Education for approval.

To submit your name suggestion visit <https://granderie.ca/family-resources/school-naming>. To provide your idea in another format, email info@granderie.ca.

Paris Horticultural Society volunteers tackle roadside cleanup



(SERRYN STEPHENSON PHOTO)

Members of the Paris Horticultural Society collected litter along Keg Lane during the group's Adopt-a-Road cleanup on June 20. Ten volunteers took part in the morning effort, walking in pairs from the Paris Fairgrounds to Trussler Road and collecting nine bags of garbage and seven bags of recyclables. Pictured are Marlene Harrison, Nancy Chipman, Liz Geffros, Bernice Booth, Inga Gussman, Deb Vickers and Patti Gladding. Also participating, but not pictured, were Pat Hasler-Watts, Rick Gordon and Serryn Stephenson.

Local news. Community stories. Delivered right to your inbox.

Subscribe today at www.granthaven.com/paris-independent

Hope takes root at Paris Plains Church open house

CATE BREAGH

Paris Independent Contributor

The Paris Plains Church and Maus School hosted an open house on June 15, 2026. I went because I love the place and don't want to see it disappear.

For me it's a peaceful oasis. A place made beautiful by its simplicity. I go there fairly often to visit my ancestors in the adjoining cemetery (I am related to the Maus and LaPierre families) and to walk the property always peering through the mulioned windows of the church to see inside. I sit on the swings and revisit how I felt as a child pumping my legs to go higher while gazing into the clouds and thinking fanciful thoughts. I imagine the sounds of the children who attended the school and who played in this yard. Was there a swing hanging from a tree hereabouts? Maybe. Probably.

I love knowing that family members that have gone before me built this place with stones from the local fields and wood from the trees around about. I imagine the work crews gathering, the food laid out on trestle tables afterwards, the fellowship that comes from building something together as a community, as neighbours. The shouting, the laughter, the disputes and discus-

sions over how to go forward, the grunts of effort and the satisfaction of ending the day knowing the work got done. Or got closer to done. Because, the work is never done. Anybody who has ever built anything knows that.

The Paris Plains Church property was a place that I visited more often during Covid. Because there was time and it was outside and just being there made me feel that the world would not end.

One morning my dearest friend and I sat on the stone steps of the church during Covid, sharing cupcakes and take-out tea. I told her how much the place meant to me. She said that it must be like her going home to where her family comes from, near the ocean. I looked across the fields and said, "this is my ocean". And we laughed as I noted that my dear departed mother would tell me that sitting on cold stone might give me piles.

Last time I stopped by for a visit I found changes. There were barriers to prevent vehicles driving onto the property. And the windows of the school were boarded up leaving an unwelcome look to the place. I wondered if vandals had prompted the changes, silently cursing those who find satisfaction in destruction.

When I saw the post on Facebook and

the subsequent piece in the local paper inviting people to come to a meeting about the future of the Paris Plains property it seemed like an SOS call. The place needs help. The devoted folks who have been trying to keep body and soul together are tired.

So, I drove out last Monday night, parked up on the grass and filed into the church with about 50 to 60 other interested people to see what might be done.

The atmosphere in that pretty little place of worship was charged with curiosity and concern but restrained in a way that I understand and find so familiar.

Unlike some of the people who attended, I did not grow up here but close by in a place very much like it. I chose to live in this area with my family because it was close to home but not too close. And because I found it beautiful. I only learned of my familial connection to Paris Plains after we had lived here for some years.

Many of the people who crowded into the church, seem to know each other. There was laughter, a little teasing and some catching up to be done. Most were over 60 I would say. But there were younger people there as well. The speaker noted that it was good to see younger faces. I seem to remember a murmur of agreement

and some head nodding from the crowd. As someone who is interested in heritage and culture, I know that passing the torch to the younger generation is essential if we are to preserve our history for those who will come after us. Maybe it's my imagination, but it's getting harder and harder to do this work. Government budgets are strained and there's little commitment to heritage. There's little money. And what money there is must be fought for by filling out endless forms while jumping through tiny hoops. Operating under a scarcity paradigm is exhausting. And sometimes it's tempting to give up.

But we don't. And given the number of people at the meeting who raised their hands to signify that they would like to be on a committee to help keep the place going, I would say there was hope. Of course, given the discussion, it was obvious that there would be more than enough work to go around. And it will take years and endless patience to get it done. And it will never be done. But let's try and support those who would try, and who are inclined to keep trying. For me, that's the essence of community. To care enough to keep trying.

I intend to keep following the story of Paris Plains because I think there's lots more history still to be made there.

Answer the call.

Volunteer with Ontario Corps.

Sign up at ontario.ca/OntarioCorps

Paid for by the Government of Ontario



Ontario



OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: The plusses of a small-ship ocean cruise



By Paul Knowles

I will admit we approached the trip with a bit of trepidation. We were invited to sail on the “Viking Sea”, one of Viking’s fleet of 15 Ocean Ships.

The trepidation had nothing to do with Viking, per se. We have done several river cruises with Viking, and have nothing but the highest praise for those experiences. But river cruise ships host fewer than 190 guests, while the newer, ocean-going ships carry just over 900 passengers.

So... was this significant increase in travellers going have a negative impact on our experience?

What we found was, the experience is quite different, but honestly, no less enjoyable. I had a lengthy conversation with the Viking Sea’s Hotel General Manager, Bogdan Stefanescu. He knew that my previous Viking trips had all been on European river cruises, so he was curious: Did I prefer river cruises or this Mediterranean ocean cruise?

My answer was, “Yes.”

I know that many of my readers will have experienced river cruising, on Viking or one of the other highly-reputed river cruise companies. But most may not have tried the Ocean-going option – it’s relatively new. So here’s my



The Viking Sea, one of Viking’s fleet of 15 ocean-going ships.

(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

take.

There are advantages to both options. River cruises usually find you moored right next to the town or city you are visiting, and you can easily walk into the town. On both river and ocean cruises, Viking offers an included excursion every day, as well as options for upgraded excursions. My feeling was, we spent more time on coaches, simply getting to the excursion destination, on the ocean cruise. But the tours are almost always excellent.

The ocean ship is of a size that means it must dock in larger ports, and the view from your balcony is likely to be industrial docks or container yards.

River cruises are very personal. You’re up close and interacting with your destinations, with your fellow passengers, and with the Viking staff.

When it comes to the staff, that doesn’t change on the ocean ship. Incredibly, within a day of being on board, several staff members were able to call us by name when we encountered them.

And the proportion of staff to passengers is amazing – the Viking Sea had 464 crew members serving 907 passengers, according to Bogdan Stefanescu. His title, “Hotel General Manager”, may be slightly confusing, but he is actually responsible for everything except actually running the ship (that’s done by the captain), which means more than 400 of the staff members are in the Hotel General Manager’s reporting chain.

When we first saw the ship, our initial reaction was, “That’s a big boat!” And yes, it is a lot larger than the longships on the river. But Bogdan told me that if the Viking Sea and its sister ships were part of another cruise line, they would be designed to hold

a lot more passengers. Viking deliberately designed the craft with an enormous amount of common space – the ship never felt crowded, and there was plenty of space for quiet relaxation. Bogdan told me, “The ship always feels comfortable.” I agreed.

The river cruise ships have one main lounge/bar, where you will often find a pianist or other solo performer.

In contrast, on the Viking Sea, from late afternoon on, there were many wonderful options. One day, we enjoyed five different musical acts: a folk guitarist/singer entertaining al fresco diners on the rear deck; a string duet in the soaring atrium; a classical pianist; a brilliant ABBA tribute quartet plus band, in the spacious Star Theatre; and the Viking Band, a six-person, kick-ass combo in the pub called Torshavn.

Dining options were similarly varied and always excellent. There were two “reservation

only” restaurants – one an Italian eatery, the other a “Chef’s Table,” as well as a brilliant buffet restaurant, a more formal restaurant, and some casual eating spots. And almost every day brought special options in the buffet – a mussel and lobster night, a paella night, a pasta night, and so on.

Bogdan Stefanescu knows his ship like the back of his hand. He’s been part of Viking’s ocean-going program from the beginning: “I was part of the launch of the first ever ocean ship, the Viking Star, in 2015.” In total, he’s been “30 years at sea.” He adds that he has been on the Viking Sea for the past 10 years. “She’s amazing,” is his perhaps biased assessment. “Amazing,” yes, but he won’t use the word “luxury” – although I might argue that would be justified. “The word is ‘comfort,’” he explained. “We never use the word ‘luxury’.”

And that “comfort” is built into the design of the ship, the attention paid to every detail, and the unique elements like the thermal. But what stands out most is the astonishingly good service.

Not only do the 464 crew members consistently go out of their way for the good of their guests; they also consistently collaborate and support each other. No mean feat, considering the crew during our cruise came from 47 different countries.

Bogdan noted that Viking does not make political statements or take political stands – but he did agree that such international co-operation may offer some reasons for hope in a fractured world.

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



The Viking Band, Hexxagon, in full flight.



Pasta night in the World Café.



Beverage manager Vladan Krstic, doing what he does best!

Riddles

I have a tail but I'm not a dog, I build homes but I'm not a carpenter.

What am I?

A Beaver

--

I have cities, forests, lakes, and mountains, but I fit on a classroom wall. What am I?

A Map of Canada

--

I am a bird and also a one-dollar coin. What am I?

A Loon

--

I have a tower that stands high above a big city. What am I?

The CN Tower

--

I can carry canoes and fish, but I'm not an ocean. What am I?

A Lake



Sudoku

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

Solutions on page 22

Sponsored by:



PET OF THE WEEK

BRADY

Meet our Pet of the Week:

You may remember Brady from his bathtub puppy days. Here he is, all grown up, lounging in the pool waiting for hot summer days like the rest of us. Looks like a tough life Brady!

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



Word Search



CANADIAN ICONS

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

HOCKEY
TOQUE
MOUNTIE
CANOE
BEAVER
MAPLE
LOONIE
TOONIE
TIMBIT
CURLING
SKATES
PUCK
CABIN
COTTAGE
LUMBERJACK
MOOSE
LOON
HOCKEYSTICK
MAPLESYRUP
BEAVERTAILS
PARKA
SNOWSHOES
ROCKIES
FLAG
CAMPFIRE
KAYAK
TIMHORTONS
ICEFISHING
HOCKEYNIGHT

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

HEATING



Wise Heating and A/C Ltd.
Serving Paris and area for over 70 years

519-442-3431
info@wiseheating.ca

MECHANIC



50 Curtis Ave N, Paris
519-442-4422

Proudly Serving Paris & Area
for the past 40 years

RESTAURANT



Homemade Burger & Fries
ONLY \$12 - Tuesdays
Dine-in with beverage purchase

CALL 519.442.2704
27 DUMFRIES ST, PARIS

SAND & GRAVEL



Locally owned and operated by a proud Canadian family since 1947
Hours of operation: Monday-Friday 7am-5pm
519-621-0771

LOCATED AT 1368 BEKE ROAD
CAMBRIDGE, ON N1R 5S5

ROOFING



PARIS ROOFING

519-442-0492

PLUMBING & HEATING



Plumbing, Heating & Excavating Inc.
Princeton, ON
Water Treatment • Wells & Pumps • Septic Services • Bin Rentals • Directional Drilling

Now Offering Full Electrical Services
ECRA/ESA #7018760

519-458-4488 | info@hunterplumbing.ca | www.hunterplumbing.ca

FUNERAL HOME



Jason J. Vernoooy

PARIS CHAPEL 519-442-3061 AYR CHAPEL 519-632-8228

wkfh@rogers.com | wmkipppfuneralhome.com

HEATING & COOLING



COMFORT PLUS HEATING AND COOLING

Air Conditioning • Heating • Gas
Fireplaces • Indoor Air Quality • Air
Cleaners • Ventilation • Custom Ductwork
• Tankless Water Heaters • Maintenance
Plans • Installation and Services

24 Hour Service

Brantford - (519) 752-2250
166 Grant St., Brantford, ON N3R 4B9
info@comfortplusheatandcool.com

DECOR



SALES DECORATING CENTRE
"MORE THAN JUST A PAINT STORE"

MORE THAN JUST A PAINT STORE

MONDAY - SATURDAY 8 a.m - 3 p.m.
42 Grand River St, North
519-442-3152

ACCESS & PARKING AT BACK OF STORE

THIS COULD BE YOUR AD HERE!

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFO!

CUSTOM STONE FABRICATION



BGGQ BRANTFORD GRANITE & QUARTZ

519-442-1400 | 535-B PARIS RD, PARIS
WWW.BGQ.CA

PHARMACY



COMMUNITY HUB PHARMACY

25 Curtis Ave N., Paris
(Located in the Cowan Community Health Hub)
Tel: 519-750-1264

Independently Owned and Operated

DELIVERY AVAILABLE • PARIS' ONLY COMPOUNDING PHARMACY

CLASSIFIEDS

EMAIL TO INQUIRE INFO@THEPARISINDEPENDENT.COM

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.

QUIZ ANSWERS

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Carolina Hurricanes | 6. Helicopter crash |
| 2. Elon Musk | 7. Duo the Green Owl |
| 3. Evaporation | 8. The bloodhound |
| 4. Jimmy Conway | 9. High-density lipoprotein |
| 5. Scotland | 10. 1930 |

PHARMACY



NORTHVILLE PHARMACY

Independently Owned Pharmacy
Serving Paris & Area Since 1998

300 Grand River Street N., Paris
Tel: 519-442-4283

Built around having what you need & delivering the service you deserve.

SUDOKU ANSWERS

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



HOMES OF HEROES:

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





WEEKLY
Horoscope
June 24 - June 30 2026

COMMUNITY
CALENDAR

EMAIL TO INQUIRE INFO@THEPARISINDEPENDENT.COM

ARIES

Mar 21 - Apr 20



Fresh energy arrives, Aries. A promising development encourages optimism and steady action. Stay confident—it helps you embrace opportunities and create progress ahead.

TAURUS

Apr 21 - May 21



Patience serves you, Taurus. Small accomplishments bring reassurance and renewed stability. Remain dependable—it encourages growth and supports positive outcomes ahead.

GEMINI

May 22 - Jun 21



Curiosity leads, Gemini. An interesting discovery sparks excitement and creative thinking. Stay adaptable—it encourages learning and opens rewarding possibilities ahead.

CANCER

Jun 22 - Jul 22



Warm connections matter, Cancer. A meaningful exchange brings comfort and understanding. Trust your heart—it strengthens bonds and encourages harmony ahead.

LEO

Jul 23 - Aug 23



Confidence shines, Leo. A welcome opportunity highlights your talents and determination. Stay positive—it attracts encouragement and supports meaningful success ahead.

VIRGO

Aug 24 - Sept 22



Organization helps, Virgo. A productive effort brings satisfaction and renewed focus. Trust the process—it encourages progress and strengthens important relationships ahead.

LIBRA

Sept 23 - Oct 23



Peaceful moments return, Libra. A thoughtful discussion encourages balance and cooperation. Stay receptive—it strengthens connections and supports mutual understanding ahead.

SCORPIO

Oct 24 - Nov 22



Determination grows, Scorpio. Careful planning reveals opportunities and useful insight. Trust your judgment—it encourages confidence and steady advancement ahead.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23 - Dec 21



Excitement builds, Sagittarius. A new possibility inspires enthusiasm and fresh perspective. Follow your instincts—it encourages rewarding experiences and growth ahead.

CAPRICORN

Dec 22 - Jan 20



Dedication shows, Capricorn. Steady effort produces encouraging results and greater confidence. Stay focused—it supports achievement and meaningful progress ahead.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21 - Feb 18



Creativity flourishes, Aquarius. An innovative idea gains attention and support. Trust yourself—it inspires momentum and supports exciting developments ahead.

PISCES

Feb 19 - Mar 20



A reassuring conversation brings comfort. Trust your intuition—it encourages balance and supportive connections ahead.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

JUNE 24

Lionel Messi, Athlete (39)

JUNE 25

Benson Boone, Musician (24)

JUNE 26

Ariana Grande, Musician (33)

JUNE 27

Tobey Maguire, Actor (51)

JUNE 28

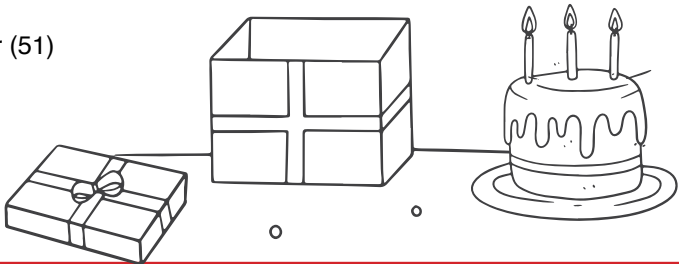
Kathy Bates, Actress (78)

JUNE 29

Colin Jost, Comedian (44)

JUNE 30

Mike Tyson, Boxer (60)



WEDNESDAY, JULY 1

Paris Lions Club is Celebrating its 95th Anniversary - with a party at Lion's Park on Canada Day. Visit Lion's Park from 10 am to 5 pm for free hot dogs, face painting, live entertainment, character artists, princesses and Doug the Great!

FRIDAY, JULY 10

County of Brant's Movies in the Park series - offers a delightful way to enjoy summer evenings under the stars. Visit Mount Pleasant Park on July 10 for a viewing of 'Hoppers.' Bring your lawn chair, blankets and snacks, along with a non-perishable food donation for the local food bank.

SATURDAY, JULY 11

Downtown Paris Street Market - from 10 am to 5 pm. Free entry. Support local, shop local. Hosted by the Rustic Palm

THURSDAY, JULY 16

Telephone City Musical Society Music in the Park Series - Enjoy an evening of free live music at Paris Lions Park with the Telephone City Musical Society Music in the Park series beginning at 6:45 pm. This week features Avery Raquel. Bring a lawn chair or blanket, relax outdoors, and enjoy great community music all month long.

MONDAY, JULY 20 - FRIDAY, JULY 24

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

Two of Canada's largest outdoor pools opening for season

MEDIA RELEASE

Two of Canada's largest outdoor swimming pools will open for the season on Saturday, June 20, 2026.

The pools are operated by the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) and are located in the Brant Conservation Area (Brantford), and the Byng Island Conservation Area (Dunnville).

"These pools are an important part of the summer experience at our conservation areas, offering a fun, inclusive way for people to cool off and spend time together outdoors," says Pam Walther-Mabee, Director of Conservation Area Operations for the GRCA. "The low-slope entry makes the pools easy to access for visitors of all ages, and the size of both pools and surrounding conservation areas allows us to host many guests comfortably throughout the season."

The 2-acre pool at Byng Island Conservation Area can accommodate up to 1,000 people and has a deeper zone with a platform for jumping. The pool at Brant Conservation Area is 1.25-acres. Both pools have slowly slopping bottoms and splashpads that are inviting to younger guests.

There is a fee of \$3.00 at each pool for anyone four-years and older and visitors

are required to pay a day-use fee to enter the conservation area if they are older than three-years. Brant Conservation Area pool hours are 11 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., seven days a week.

Byng Island Conservation Area pool hours are 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Initially, the Byng Island pool will be closed on Monday, June 22 to Wednesday, June 24. Beginning June 25, 2026, the pool will be open seven days a week. Both pools will close for the season on September 7, 2026.

Along with swimming, both conservation areas offer a variety of activities for anyone wanting to experience nature. These activities include camping, hiking, cycling, picnicking and wildlife viewing. Byng Island Conservation Area offers kayak, canoe and paddle boat rentals and can accommodate sail boats and power boats. Brant Conservation Area has several Grand River access points for people who bring their own canoe or kayak.

For more information on both the pools and all activities available at conservation areas operated by the GRCA, please visit <http://www.grandriver.ca/conservationareas>.

Visitors are encouraged to check the online conservation area status tool before visiting.

**A SAFER
ONTARIO
MEANS**

**PLAYGROUNDS
WITH NO DRUG
INJECTION
SITES NEARBY**

Learn how we're
protecting the province
at ontario.ca/SaferOntario

Paid for by the Government of Ontario



**PROTECT
ONTARIO**

Ontario

