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National pride

The Town of New Tecumseth held its annual Canada Day festivities at the Tottenham Conservation Area on Tuesday, July 1. It was a fun afternoon of entertainment, games, and meeting friends and neighbours. There was a general feeling this year that this Canada Day was even more important than in the past because of a renewed sense of national pride over the past several months.

BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

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Serving Your Community Since 1986

Supporting long-term care residents with complex needs

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Long-term care homes in the region will benefit from a total of \$154,723 in funding to support people with complex needs.

The Ontario government's Local Priorities Fund (LPF) is designed to support programs that connect people with the right care for them, reducing emergency department visits and hospital stays.

The funding announcement was made by Brian Saunderson, MPP for Simcoe-Grey, on July 7.

Across the province, a total of \$35 million

will be invested in long-term care to ensure facility residents get the quality of care and the quality of life they need and deserve.

"Thanks to the LPF, long-term care homes in our area are equipped to care for our loved ones," said MPP Saunderson. "Specialized equipment and services mean that long-term care home residents can get the care they need without the stress of a trip to a hospital."

Originally launched in 2022, the LPF provides specialized equipment, services and staff training to enable long-term care homes to admit new residents with specialized needs and support current residents with complex needs.

Ontario's funding helps long-term care homes purchase items such as IV equipment, bariatrics equipment bed support, bladder scanners and ECGs, as well as everyday items like slip-proof floor mats, wraparound bed rails and grab bars.

"Our government is protecting our long-term care system by investing in the tools and training to ensure residents can get the right care in the right place," said Natalia Kusendova-Bashta, Minister of Long-Term Care. "This funding will expand the specialized equipment and innovative services available at long-term care homes across our province, so those with complex needs get the support they

deserve."

Long-term care homes in the region will receive the following funding:

- Good Samaritan Nursing Home – \$38,261.00
- Simcoe Manor – \$43,158.00
- Sunset Manor – \$29,595.00
- Creedan Valley Community – \$32,909.00
- Stayner Care Centre – \$10,800.00

The government's plan to improve long-term care for residents is built on four pillars: staffing and care; quality and enforcement; building modern, safe, and comfortable homes; and connecting seniors with faster, more convenient access to the services they need.

Simcoe County Council seeks input on aging strategy, acquires modular facility for homeless

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

County of Simcoe Council has reported highlights from proceedings in June 10 and 24 meetings.

Age-Friendly Community & Positive Aging updates

The County has launched the 2025-30 Simcoe County Positive Aging Strategy that was shaped by the latest community needs assessment which gathered insights from over 2,500 residents and ten focus groups.

Key priorities identified include accessibility, transportation, information and communication access.

As part of this initiative, the County launched the Age-Friendly Activity Calendar in June 2025.

This centralized hub connects residents

with local events and programs that promote social inclusion and community engagement.

County response to proposed provincial blue box regulation amendments

The County is responding to proposed changes to Ontario's Blue Box Regulation and the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act that could impact recycling services.

Key amendments include allowing municipalities to fund recycling for small businesses, removing planned program expansions, and adjusting recovery targets.

Staff recommend entering a one-year agreement with Circular Materials Ontario in 2026 to maintain small business recycling during the transition, pending legislative approval.

Acquisition of a modular facility for unsheltered homelessness response

The County is acquiring a 40-bedroom modular facility in Barrie for up to \$1.2 million to support unsheltered individuals, funded through federal, provincial, and reserve sources.

The facility will aid in encampment response and housing programs aligned with national homelessness reduction goals.

HART of Simcoe County officially launches

The Hart of Simcoe County, launched on June 26, 2025, is a new regional program supporting individuals facing homelessness and addiction.

Through a network of care teams and mobile outreach, it offers person-centred, low-barrier access to health, housing, and social services

across Barrie and surrounding communities, including Indigenous-specific support.

Simcoe County Museum Digital Strategy

The Simcoe County Museum's Digital Strategy, developed in response to the Ministry's 2025-2026 Community Museum Operating Grant requirements, outlines a five-year roadmap to enhance the museum's digital capabilities and public access.

IT sets out five strategic goals: expanding online learning, modernizing visitor services, increasing digital visibility, digitizing collections, and measuring impact.

Most initiatives are low-cost and will be phased into future budgets, with a digital sign proposed for 2027.

Leaf and yard waste collection resumes in July

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The County of Simcoe's bi-weekly curbside leaf and yard waste collection program returns on Monday, July 7.

Place material out by 7 a.m. on the Monday of your garbage collection week. Each residence will receive two bi-weekly collections during this time period, ending in the last week of July.

Collection may occur any day during the week. Leave your leaf and yard waste curbside as it may not be collected on your garbage day.

Leaf and yard waste collection includes leaves, grass, garden waste, and branches that are sized and bundled appropriately.

Residents are reminded to use kraft paper yard waste bags, cardboard boxes, or open-ended rigid containers for collection and to bundle brush with natural twine, maximum two metres long and 30 centimetres in diam-



BACK IN ACTION – Bi-weekly leaf and yard waste collection resumes July 7 in the County of Simcoe.

STOCK PHOTO

eter.

For more information on accepted materials and how to prepare for collection, visit the County website.

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NVCA releases highlights from recent June board meeting

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) has released the following highlights from its June 2025 board meeting.

Stewardship

The NVCA's stewardship services include the Nottawasaga River Restoration Program, the Healthy Waters Grant Program, and other projects to protect and enhance the watershed.

Through working with funders, land-owners, volunteers and local partners, over 16,000 trees and 7.6 kilometres of rivers and streams were restored by the stewardship services team.

Chloride concentrations and road salt issues in the Nottawasaga watershed

Despite years of guidance and consultation efforts from conservation authorities, private road salt usage continues to rise, driven primarily by liability concerns faced by contractors and property owners.

Data published by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks in 2022 implicates road salting activities for

winter safety as a primary contributor to elevated chloride concentrations.

NVCA's Board of Directors passed a resolution urging the province to adopt legislation to limit liability for certified snow and ice contractors following provincially endorsed best practices.

Weddings

In 2024, the Tiffin Centre for Conservation hosted 25 wedding celebrations. Eleven of those couples responded to a wedding feedback survey.

Of those responding, 100 per cent rated NVCA's customer service as excellent and 100 per cent said they would recommend the Tiffin Centre as a wedding venue to others.

Events/public programming/facility rentals

The NVCA hosts the Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival and the Festival at Fort Willow in 2024.

Approximately 2,500 visitors went to the Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival to learn past and present methods of maple syrup production.

Re-enactor groups at the Festival at Fort Willow shared the history of the local area.

Organizations that rented facilities with the



MAPLE SYRUP – The Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival was another success for the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority in 2024, with more than 2,500 visitors flocking to the event. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**

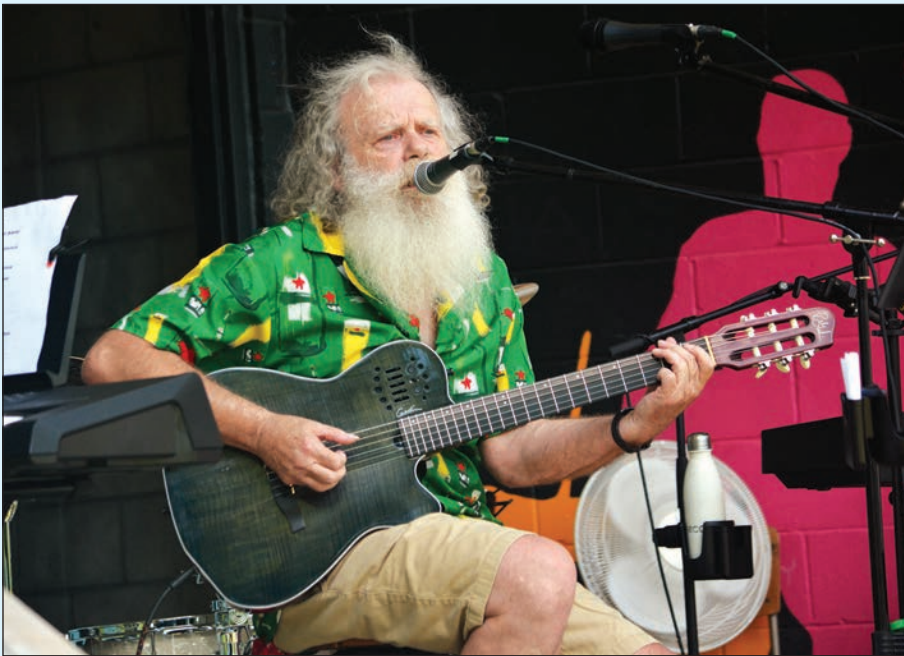
NVCA commented that NVCA staff provided excellent customer service and that the properties were well maintained.

Permits approvals under the CA Act

Between Jan. 1, and May 31, 2025, the NVCA issued 211 permits.

On average, the NVCA issued minor and major permits within 18 days of a complete application.

Applicants were notified about the status of their applications within 21 days, 91 per cent of the time.



MUSIC MELODY – Solo performer Jeff Dunlop takes the stage as the opening act during the Tottenham Sunday Music in the Park Series on July 6. The series takes place at Keogh Park in Tottenham every Sunday afternoon throughout the summer.

BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

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Editorial, Letters & Opinion

“The window to the world can be covered by a newspaper.”

~ Stanislaw Jerzy Lec

Who’s paying for this?

If you have ever had nieces and nephews, you probably had a lot of fun giving them gifts when they were growing up.

I really enjoyed watching their faces light up when they received something they really liked.

When they were really young, a toy of some sort usually made them happy.

As they get older, gift-giving becomes a bit of a challenge. It’s hard to figure out what to give a 12-year-old girl or a 14-year-old boy. Their version of what is cool just won’t be the same as yours, and a brand-spanking new package of tube socks just won’t cut it.

This is when you usually start giving cash in a greeting card. The kid gets to buy something they really want, and you avoid the agony of figuring out what a teenager would like.

My own suggestion to them was to put it in the bank, and over the course of saving from an early age, someday they could be the proud owner of a Chevy Corvette.

However, there comes a time when giving a niece or nephew an envelope with cash just sort of goes away. It would be awkward to give a grown man or woman

an envelope with cash and tell them to buy something nice, especially when they now make more money than you do.

They are self-sufficient and have hopefully learned the value of a dollar and use their income appropriately.

I think the same way of thinking should be applied to foreign aid – the billions of dollars we give to other countries who have been ‘developing’ for close to 100 years.

Canada and other nations have been pumping billions of dollars into African countries and other countries around the world for decades, and they still want more.

Many, if not all, African countries have abundant resources available, and that could create a lot of wealth and jobs. However, they have leaders who are either unwilling or unable to capitalize on what is available in their own backyard.

That, along with the corruption that exists and the skimming of funds, means the financial aid never really does what it is supposed to do.

It is also frustrating to constantly receive solicitations from big charity agencies

that claim \$2 a day, less than you spend on a coffee every morning, will apparently feed some kid and his family for a week.

I would have no problem helping feed poor children in a foreign country if I really thought it would help. But then I see the salaries of the executives who run these international charities, and I know my \$2 is really going to help pay for marina fees for someone’s new yacht.

Canada spent around \$8 billion on foreign aid in 2023. A large part of that, around \$1.5 billion, was spent domestically to support refugees, asylum claimants, and Ukrainians who fled the Russian invasion.

At the same time, the local hospital where I live is trying to raise \$80 million to build a new hospital. Government funding does not pay for new hospitals in Canada.

That money must be raised by local citizens and businesses.

At the same time, Canadian citizens are working hard to raise money to build a hospital, foreign aid drops millions into other countries to support healthcare for free.

The old theory of ‘teach a man to fish

and he eats for a lifetime,’ just isn’t working.

Helping a neighbour in times of need is something we should all do.

If you had a new neighbour who asked you for help because he just got a new lawnmower, but he can’t afford the gas, has no idea how to operate it, and has no concept of small engines, you would likely show him how to start the mower and cut the grass. You might cut it for him just so you don’t have a neighbour with an unsightly, overgrown yard next to your property. You might also take the gas can to the local gas station and put in \$2 worth of gas to help him out.

However, if ten years in a row he shows up at your door in the spring, telling you he has no money for gas, and has no idea how to start the lawnmower, your likely response would be ‘Get a job and figure it out.’

It’s time for many of these countries to step up, grow up, and find their own way rather than always standing with a hand out and expecting the West to pay.

BRIAN LOCKHART
FROM THE SECOND ROW



Considering Ajuinnata

Canada Day is a holiday that invariably fills me with pride.

We Canadians aren’t necessarily boastful about what we have, but it’s the one day where it doesn’t feel weird, excessive, or too rah-rah-rah to wear our collective hearts on our red-and-white sleeves and celebrate what binds us together as a country.

This year, however, the holiday didn’t follow the pattern it has for the last number of years.

As some of our papers went to press on Tuesday, on which Canada Day just happened to fall this year, it was an early day at the office rather than taking in all the festivities the morning had to offer.

But there were still ways for us office-bound Canadians to steep ourselves in Canadiana.

Working out of our Aurora base on Yonge Street, I had the great good fortune to be in the midst of it all – well, the midst of it some, anyway – as the Town’s annual Canada Day parade passed right by our door.

Now, there are always plenty of reasons to get out from behind the desk, but this one was special, particularly seeing our community groups put their best feet for-

ward on floats, wagons, and other types of displays, all bound by the one common purpose of celebrating our nationhood – and, for a guy who has always been a sucker for pomp and circumstance, the marching bands and equestrian processions were the icing on the cake.

I went back to my desk not only with a spring in my step, but my patriotic internal battery charged up for whatever the fates – well, certain individuals and bodies – have in store for us at this decidedly unpredictable time.

One thing that is more predictable is how the nation’s birthday party unfolds in the nation’s capital. Sure, there might be some location changes here and there as renovation work on Parliament Hill continues apace, but we know that we’re guaranteed a good show and some pointed messages from Canada’s leaders that often inspire.

“158 years ago, a few provinces bet on the idea that they’d be stronger together than they ever could apart,” said Prime Minister Mark Carney in a statement issued on the morning of July 1, the first sentence setting the tone for the next few months ahead where Canadians might be reasonably united against trade

aggressions from the United States, but internally, unity is a more complex question.

“Our shared history has been marked by inflection points,” he continued. “Moments where Canada has had to step up – on the battlefield of Vimy, on the beaches of Normandy, in the homes of Gander after 9/11. Now, we face another such moment. The world is changing. Old friendships are fraying, our economy is being buffeted by a trade crisis, and our values are being tested by attacks on democracy and freedoms.

“In a more divided and dangerous world, Canadians are uniting. Together, we will build one Canadian economy – connected by major projects, powered by Canadian energy, transformed by Canadian technology, and crafted by Canadian workers. Together, we’re breaking down barriers across the country so you can buy Canadian everywhere and work anywhere. Together, we’ll rebuild, rearm, and reinvest in our Armed Forces – because Canadian leadership is defined not only by the strength of our values, but also by the value of our strength.”

An appropriate first Canada Day message from a reasonably fresh Prime Min-

ister, perhaps one that was a little bit more of a challenge to get across as we all ride the emotional rollercoaster of dealing with the trade threat from Washington, knowing that as soon as we take two steps forward, we have to be braced for being kicked a few steps back with new reasons, real or imagined, getting in the way of a deal.

In the face of such nonsense, we have to control what we can control and breaking down these interprovincial barriers – no matter how great or how marginal the benefits of doing so might be, depending on the study you subscribe to – can only be a step in the right direction.

As much as the Prime Minister focused on the political issues of the day – not unexpected for our Head of Government – the message delivered by Governor General Mary Simon, the representative of our Head of State in Canada, hit just the right note for me, although admittedly, the reasons why didn’t rise to the top immediately.

Continued on Page 15

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Long live the Dalai Lama

GWYNNE DYER
OUR WORLD TODAY



The whole business of succession would be a lot simpler if the Dalai Lama could just regenerate, like Doctor Who. When the time comes for The Doctor to stop looking like David Tennant and start looking like Matt Smith, there's flame coming out of his head and gushing out of his sleeves, and then he explodes. When the smoke clears, there's the new Doctor.

There's no delay and no doubt. Once you accept (temporarily) the show's basic premise that Doctor Who is a benevolent immortal alien who periodically 'regenerates' from one human form to another, not even being consistent in ethnicity or gender from one body to the next, you know instantly that it's the same Doctor in there despite appearances.

With the dear old Dalai Lama, it's different. Reincarnation still happens, but the souls of the dead migrate

into the bodies of the newborn and retain no memory of their previous lives. This becomes a problem when the soul of your religion's leader has to be tracked down in one of those thousands who were born around the same time the leader died.

That is exactly the problem facing the Gelug 'Yellow Hat' tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, whose leader, the Dalai Lama, turned 90 on Sunday. He will therefore soon be leaving his current incarnation, and it will be the task of his closest associates to track down the young child in whom his soul has taken up residence – who will then become the next Dalai Lama.

Then the troubles really start, because Tibet has been officially part of the People's Republic of China since the Chinese invasion of 1950 and Beijing does not like religious leaders who are beyond its control. In fact, it doesn't like religious leaders at all, especially if they also embody the national aspirations of a subject people – and least of all if they live abroad

The Dalai Lama ticks every box. He fled Tibet in the midst of a CIA-backed popular rebellion against foreign rule in 1959. He has lived in exile ever since in the northern Indian city of Dharamshala, surrounded by tens of thousands of other Tibetan exiles. And he heads what is in practice a Tibetan government-in-exile, although no other country recognizes it.

There is nevertheless a good deal of ambient sympathy for Tibet not only in Western countries but in countries of the global south that got their independence just as Tibet was losing its own. They never say anything about it out loud because China is far too big and rich to risk offending, but they do know a colonial relationship when they see one.

This makes the Communist authorities in Beijing nervous even though there is no real challenge to Chinese control. They therefore

see the Dalai Lama's passing, whenever it happens, as a golden opportunity to 'nationalise' Tibetan Buddhism by giving the state the power to choose his successor.

We already had a preview of this 35 years ago when the Panchen Lama, second only to the Dalai Lama, died. After a lengthy but low-profile search Tibetan monks found a six-year-old boy called Gedhun Choekyi Nyima who matched the requirements, and the Dalai Lama (in exile) proclaimed him as the new Panchen Lama in 1995.

The little boy and his family were immediately arrested and 'disappeared'; none of them has ever been seen again. The Dalai Lama will not make that mistake twice: he has already said that his next reincarnation will be found in "the free world", which presumably means outside China.

But the vast majority of Tibetans still live in Tibet, and it is already clear that they will get a different Dalai Lama, chosen for them by the Communist regime. It could end up like the Great Western Schism of 1378-1417, with two and then three popes at the same time – and that situation could easily last as long, depending on what happens to China in the long run.

All of this is ultimately about the survival of a separate Tibetan identity, which is still theoretically possible. Beijing has not yet adopted the final solution it is applying to the Uyghur minority: only Chinese may be used in the schools in both regions, but the Tibetans are not yet being drowned with Han Chinese immigrants.

The Chinese Communist regime is now a little bit older than the Soviet Union was when it collapsed, but the CCP is still going strong. If it lasts another fifty years, Tibet's identity will certainly be eradicated, for there are more than 200 Chinese for every Tibetan. But if it's gone in 20 years, Tibetan culture may well survive.



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<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Goes bad Yard structure They ___ Marine invertebrate European river Office supplies firm Physically abused Service stations in Australia Kills Liquid body substances Particular to a given individual Brave or noble act Sicilian city Conqueror Elected officials Type of "pig" Drop of viscous substance 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Monetary unit of Spain Guarantees Coloring materials Reddish browns Square measure Will not Canned fish Appeared Six (Spanish) Took off Negligible amount Posts in a Greek temple Witnesses Phil __, former CIA Places to park Guns Dance to pop music
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COMMUNITY VOICE

Monthly Message: CONTACT's Clothes Line Store – a place where everyone matters

In the heart of downtown Alliston, CONTACT Community Services' Clothes Line thrift store is more than just a second-hand store; it's often a beacon of hope for those in need.

Launched in 1979, The Clothes Line has become a staple in our community, providing not only affordable clothing and housewares, but also vital support services for families and individuals in need. CONTACT's second location, The Clothes Line Bradford, opened in 2021, offering the same inclusive and value-based opportunity to community and clients.

Working in partnership with local organizations, CONTACT offers free clothing to families who are struggling, individuals in need of support, people who are job hunting or need assistance finding the right outfit for an upcoming interview. Whatever the need, CONTACT is there to support from a place of dignity. No one knows who is paying for goods and who is being supported with free items. Last year close to \$13,000 in inventory was given to community members who needed this support.

All funds raised through sales at The Clothes Line stores go directly back into our community through CONTACT's Housing Supports, Employment Services, free seniors



programming and volunteer opportunities. Your clothing donation may help a family who is looking for safe and secure housing, or a newcomer secure a job opportunity to support their family. Your support can even provide a senior who is feeling isolated with the opportunity to join a free program that helps them make new friends and feel more connected to their community.

Who knew that your old clothing could create such magic, so close to home?

"We are not just here to sell clothing; we're here to make a difference," says Jackie Curd, who has been the Clothes Line Store manager in Alliston for over 30 years. "Every piece sold not only helps us support families in need in our community, but also promotes recycling and reusing, which is crucial for our environment. Last year alone, The Clothes Line stores recycled over 214,250 pounds of clothing, demonstrating a clear commitment to both community service and environmen-

tal sustainability.

Without a doubt, The HEARTBEAT of The Clothes Line stores are our volunteers. With over 70 active volunteers, The Clothes Line stores offer a community of support from within. Volunteers often become life-long friends and support each other through good times and bad. They are there for each other and for the community, with a passion for assisting anyone in need. Our generous volunteers shared their time and talent by contributing approximately 15,000 hours at our Clothes Line stores last year. That is an amazing gift to CONTACT and to our community.

Both Clothes Line store locations pride themselves on offering a diverse range of items, from vintage clothing to modern styles, ensuring there's something for everyone. Every day, we are grateful for new donations from our community, which keeps the inventory fresh and exciting.

"I love shopping here because I know my money is going to help people in my own community," said Tiffany Tyrell Shand, an avid thrift shopper. "Plus, I always find unique pieces that no one else will have!"

The Clothes Line reflects a growing trend in the thrifting industry: combining com-

munity charitable supports with sustainable shopping practices. Local shops like The Clothes Line are filling the gap by promoting the idea that buying second-hand is not only a budget-friendly option but also an environmentally responsible choice.

For those interested in supporting the Clothes Line stores, donations can be made during operating hours, and shoppers are always welcome. The Alliston store is located at 55 Victoria Street West in Alliston, and the Bradford location is at 95 Holland Street West in Bradford. Both stores are open from Monday to Saturday. Daily specials and upcoming events can be found on our Facebook and Instagram pages @contactcommunity-services, or check out our website to learn more about The Clothes Line and additional community supports available at contactcommunityservices.ca

In a world where consumerism often overshadows compassion, The Clothes Line stores stand apart - every second-hand item tells a story, and every purchase is a testament to the power of community.

This Community Voice submission was written by Brenda Pufek, manager of community engagement and development at CONTACT Community Services.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

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Miss Indigenous Canada uses platform to highlight realities of wildfires

BY BROCK WEIR

With or without the crown?

That is one of the first questions Jessica McKenzie asks when she sat down with The Auroran earlier this week to talk about her time as Miss Indigenous Canada as she prepares to hand over the regalia to her successor later this summer.

It was a fair question as the beaded crown is laden with symbolism, but it's also acquired a bit of extra heft over McKenzie's reign as she's used her title, and all that goes along with it, to raise awareness of – and much needed funds for – Indigenous peoples who have been displaced by an ongoing rash of wildfires across the country this year.

McKenzie, an associate of Traditional Anishinaabe Grandmother Kim Wheatley, who has been instrumental in guiding municipalities on their individual paths towards reconciliation, is a proud member of the Opaskwayak Cree Nation, who currently lives in Toronto.

The forest fires impacted her Northern Manitoba community, and surrounding communities directly, and among these three impacted areas, 17,000 individuals were evacuated from Manitoba to southern Ontario for capacity – and with a goal of making sure these tightly-knit individuals were safe and maintained strong community bonds.

When the reality of the situation began to sink in, McKenzie and her cousin began brainstorming what they could do to help their people. They considered a simple fundraiser or a social media campaign to raise awareness, but the longer they thought, the more cousins joined the conversation, and they decided to try and have the biggest impact they could.

Together, they fanned out to raise much-needed funds and items for those displaced, with anyone who donated \$100, or items of a similar value, receiving a beaded necklace as an extra incentive.

“It was a way to really bring awareness to what’s happening as not a lot of people saw anything on the news, not a lot of people saw it on social media, and our main goal was just raising awareness and, if people had a means to support, here’s how they could do so,” she recalls. “We had more people from the community come out and actually support, and we ended up raising around \$34,000, which was really fantastic.”

“Once we heard that a majority of the evacuees were pretty close to Toronto, in which myself and a number of organizers actually reside, we said, ‘Let’s actually personally deliver it to them.’ We reached out to the community members directly and said, ‘Okay, we have these funds, how can we best support you?’ There were a number of brand-new mothers that needed items for their babies – they needed formula, they needed diapers, but there were also some elders who said they needed traditional medicines. It was really a

whole range of different essential items that people needed and it was really important to hear it directly from themselves and the rest of their families.”

They were also keen that it would not just be a one-time drop-off, and they were there to meet needs as they arose – and, for some, they continue to arise amid ongoing uncertainty over their futures.

“Many of the evacuees weren’t allowed to bring any of their pets, so I even see on Facebook people saying if anyone is still in the community, such as a few firefighters or people that are there to support, ‘Please feed my dog. My dog looks like this, this is their name, please just check them out and make sure that they’re safe.’ What people also don’t realize is that they were allowed only one small backpack to actually take with them to be evacuated. When they ask for things like essentials, they really do need them because they basically weren’t allowed to bring anything.”

“Our message is there are Indigenous peoples out there that really need your support and really need your attention, even if it is not a physical donation – just your awareness and your empathy and understanding is absolutely necessary during these times,” she says.

When McKenzie first stepped up to be considered Miss Indigenous Canada, she did so knowing it came with a certain cache and platform. In many ways, even if she didn’t fully appreciate it at the time of her win, it came with the ability change lives.

One of the ways she’s made this a reality is through her Help Your Sibling program, which started when she brought 17 Indigenous youth together from across the country, ranging in age from 18 to 30, making sure they had the guidance and mentorship they needed for “creating your own path to the future.”

“I’m sure a lot of us dealt with mental health challenges during COVID, where I actually gained really, really heavy anxiety around being in crowds and being out there, and I kind of forgot myself and that sense of direction that I have,” she shares. “The reason why I signed up [for Miss Indigenous Canada] is just a reminder to love myself and learn how to love myself. Once I won, I was like, ‘Oh, my goodness, now I have a big responsibility. How do I actually use this to create change?’ I think in the beginning I felt a little bit more of like my own self and my own needs pushing it; having the crown and really connecting with my community – it’s our values, it’s our traditions, it’s our teachings that really brought that crown to us.”

“It’s a big congratulations to the Opaskwayak Cree Nation because that’s theirs, right? It’s ours. It’s so interesting because it started with me and why I wanted it, but now this is important for the community. No, this is actually important for all Indigenous peoples.”

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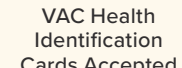
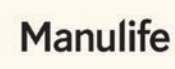
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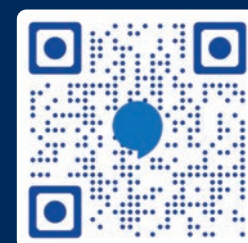
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Arts & Local Events

Sunday Music in the Park returns to Tottenham this summer

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The weekly Concerts in the Park series that taThe sound of music will again be heard at the bandshell in Keogh Park in Tottenham as the Music in the Park series returns for the summer. It has become a summer tradition for many residents to always keep their Sunday afternoons open so they can visit the park and see who is performing on the park stage. There are many familiar faces every weekend.

A vendors and artisans market takes place at the same time so many people enjoy visiting the market during breaks in the music. Other people come to visit the vendors and end up staying for the music. The series features bands performing music from different eras and styles.

Every Sunday, there is an opening acoustic act with original music that features solo performers who start the show. They always receive a very enthusiastic response from the audience.

Solo performers come from a variety of backgrounds and different music styles and it is always a treat for the audience to hear new music and see performers who come from different places around the province.

The solo performance is followed by a different band each week. Some bands are local, others are from different cities and towns and come to entertain in Tottenham.

Bands play everything from classic rock to contemporary music and often perform original tunes as well.

This season's concert series kicked off with opening act Jeff Dunlop taking the stage on July 6, followed by Whiskey Rocks.

Upcoming performances include Kyle Wouchope followed by Dazegoneby on July 13.

On July 20, Taylor Price will take the stage, followed by Tons of Clay.

The Release will perform on July 27, with Sean Bourke featured as the opening act.

The concerts take place at 2 p.m. every Sunday through the summer.

Concerts in the Park continues to run as weekly event thanks to sponsors

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The weekly Concerts in the Park series that takes place every Sunday at Keogh Park in Tottenham is possible thanks to two organizers and a group of local sponsors who support the event.

Every Sunday, an acoustic performer takes the stage and is followed by a band.

There are many familiar faces that turn out for the concerts every week.

"I'm still going with trying to promote some original opening acoustic acts – local acts," explained organizer Dayne Polny, who owns We Love Sound (WLS), a recording studio with live sound engineering near Tottenham. Polny provides sound and concert production services for live venues through WLS.

"We're trying to get some female artists. There's going to be the same format. A lot of music in the parks events don't support local talent, and I would like to keep that as part

of our format. We're running nine weeks this year – four in July and five in August. We try to promote a lot of different genres. We have folk, rock, country, we try to mix it up to make everyone happy."

Dayne, along with Robyn Zillmer-Caruana, are the people who make the event happen.

It's a lot of work to make sure the concerts go smoothly and to line up the acts. Having sponsors is a big deal to make sure everything happens.

"It's been tough finding funding," Polny said. "With Tottenham Community Week not happening this year, it was really important that we have something locally to do. As far as I know, this is the only music in the park event that is not run by the township. It's just me and Robyn who have decided to take it on. We find local businesses to help sponsor us and pay for the bands. The Town gives us some grant money but it only covers half of our costs so we have to find the money from somewhere else."

Sponsors that stepped up to help the Con-



THE SONG GOES ON – The Concerts in the Park series has returned to Keogh Park in Tottenham. Whiskey Rocks performs in the park bandshell on Sunday, July 6. The series continues every Sunday through the summer. **BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO**

certs in the Park series include Trevor's Roof Ford, Tottenham Paint and Paper, Tottenham Repairs, McGoey Bros. Insurance, Tottenham Legion, Roman Empire Events, and We Love Sound Inc.

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CELEBRATING CANADA – Canada Day Celebrations took over the Tottenham Conservation Area on July 1. Residents gathered to mark Canada's 158th birthday with family-friendly activities, entertainment and food. **BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTOS**



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SPORTS

NEW TECUMSETH TIMES

A new pump track rolls into Riverdale Park for skateboards and more

Riverdale Park is a hub of summer excitement with the arrival of a brand-new pump track, officially opened to the public on July 4. Designed for bikes, scooters, skateboards, and rollerblades, the pump track offers a dynamic and inclusive space for residents of all ages and skill levels to get active and connect with their community.

Strategically located for high visibility and safety, Riverdale Park provides an ideal setting with convenient parking, nearby schools, washroom facilities, and shaded areas—making it a perfect destination for families and outdoor enthusiasts.

“This new Pump Track is a fantastic addition to Riverdale Park and a great example of how we’re investing in active spaces for our residents,” said Mayor Richard Norcross. “It’s a place where families, youth, and riders

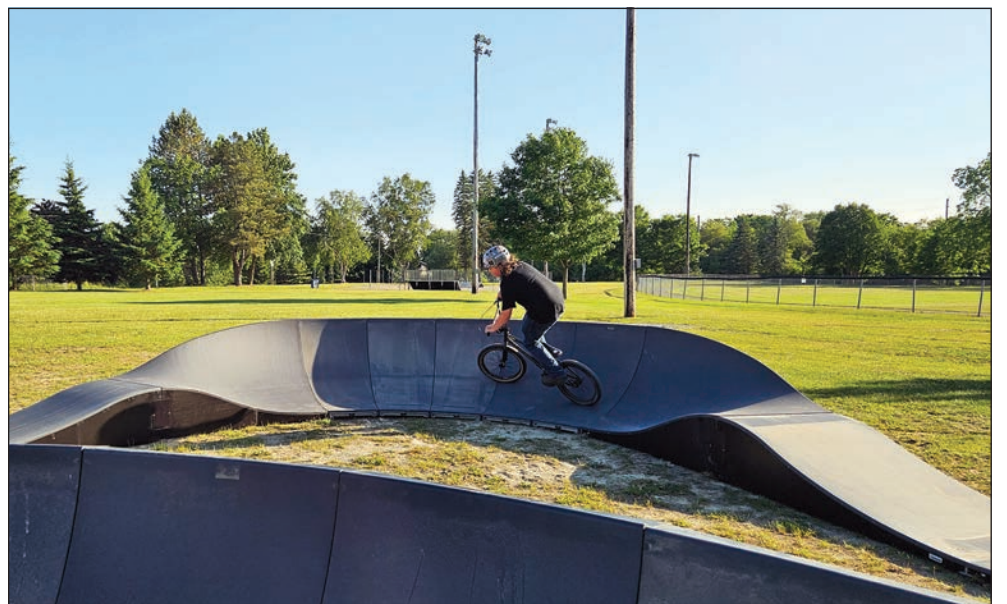
of all kinds can come together, stay active, and enjoy the outdoors. We’re proud to bring this exciting new amenity to the community just in time for summer.”

To celebrate the launch, the Town of New Tecumseth invites the community to a grand opening event on July 10 at 11 a.m. Attendees are encouraged to bring their wheels and join in the fun.

For more information about skate parks in New Tecumseth, visit: newtecumseth.ca/skateparks

RIDING HIGH – A new pump track at Riverdale Park is designed for bikes, scooters, skateboards, and rollerblades. The new facility will be formally launched with a grand opening event this Thursday, July 10, at 11 a.m.

SUBMITTED PHOTO



ROLLING INTO SUMMER – The Beeton Lawn Bowling Club hosted its 2nd annual Lawn Summer Night to raise funds for Cystic Fibrosis Canada on Friday, July 3. Over 80 bowlers were on the greens for the games. The Club had already raised over \$17,000 to start the tournament and is hoping to surpass last year’s total of \$22,000.

BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTOS

New Lowell Knights win their own Canada Day tournament in NDBL weekend action

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The North Dufferin Baseball League’s New Lowell Knights took home first place in the Canada Day weekend tournament they

hosted.

It was a big day for the Knights when they delivered a 13-2 win over the Dufferin-Simcoe Braves in the championship final game.

In the final game, the Knights scored four runs in the first inning followed by six runs in the second inning. They plated two more runs in the third inning and picked up another in the fifth.

Dufferin-Simcoe scored one run in the second and a home run from Chad Purchase put another one up on the scoreboard.

In the consolation game, the Barrie Angels won 9-0 in a shut-out over the Mansfield Cubs.

The eight-team tournament started on Friday (June 28), and was delayed on Saturday morning when overnight rain soaked the diamond.

Thanks to the hard work of the Knights’ crew, all Saturday games were played and Sunday’s schedule proceeded without a hitch.

Tournament awards included Eric Lanoue of the Barrie Angels, who was named Best Pitcher after throwing a no-hitter over six innings with nine strikeouts in Sunday’s game.

Best Batter honours went to Chad Purchase of the Dufferin-Simcoe Braves, who went

5-for-9 with five runs scored including two home runs.

Josh Hanley of the Knights was named Tournament MVP after going 4-for-9 with three runs scored including two home runs.

In the regular season of the North Dufferin Baseball League, the Owen Sound Baysox continue to lead in the standings with an 11-2 record so far for the season.

They are two points ahead of the Ivy Rangers who have a 9-5-1 record.

In third place, the Lisle Astros have a 9-6 record and 19 points.

The Bolton Brewers are in the number four spot in the standings with an 8-6-1 record and 17 points.

The rest of the teams in order in the standings are the New Lowell Knights, Midland Mariners, Barrie Angels, Creemore Padres, Orillia Majors, Clarksburg Blues, Mansfield Cubs, and the Caledon Cardinals.



SECOND STEAL – It’s a close call at third base during a Tottenham Old Timers slo-pitch game between the Silver Sluggers and 13 Shades of Grey at Keogh Park in Tottenham. Old Timers slo-pitch has a regular season schedule that runs through to the end of August. Shades of Grey won this game 13-8.

BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

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Local police seek public's assistance in tracking down stolen BMW

Nottawasaga Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers are investigating the theft of a 2024 black BMW 4 Series that occurred in Adjala-Tosorontio Township. On June 30, at approximately 10:15 p.m., officers responded to a report of a stolen vehicle on Concession Road 4, between County Road 1 and 20 Sideroad.

The victim was travelling northbound when they noticed another vehicle following closely. After attempting to pull over to allow the vehicle to pass, the suspect vehicle struck the rear of the victim's BMW. When the victim exited the vehicle to speak with the other driver, three males wearing ski

masks exited the suspect vehicle. One suspect demanded the keys and drove off in the BMW, while the other two suspects proceeded back into their vehicle fleeing the area. At this time, no suspect descriptions are available. Anyone with information or video sur-

veillance footage related to this incident is asked to contact the Nottawasaga OPP at 1-888-310-1122. Please reference report #E250856822 when contacting the police. Anyone who wishes to remain anonymous, can contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or submit a tip online at ontariocrimestoppers.ca.

Impaired driving charge laid following motor vehicle collision in New Tecumseth

Nottawasaga Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers have charged one individual with impaired driving following a motor vehicle collision in New Tecumseth. On June 29, shortly after 11:30 p.m., Not-

tawasaga OPP responded to a single vehicle driving over trees in a campground, in New Tecumseth. Officers located the vehicle and met with the driver. During the interaction, grounds were formed that the driver's ability

to operate a motor vehicle was impaired by alcohol, leading to the driver's arrest. As a result of the investigation, Bernadette Ruth, 55, Wasaga Beach was charged with operation while impaired - blood alcohol con-

centration (80 plus). The accused is scheduled to attend the Ontario Court of Justice in Bradford on July 31, 2025, to answer to the charge. The charge against Ruth has not been proven in court.

Alliston man faces impaired driving charges following stop on Albion Vaughan Road

Caledon Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers recently charged an Alliston man with impaired operation offences. On June 22, at approximately 3:30 a.m., Caledon OPP officers responded to a traffic complaint regarding a vehicle displaying poor driving behaviour. Shortly after, officers located the vehicle on Albion Vaughan Road, near Caledon King Townline, in the Town of Caledon. Investigating officers conducted a traffic stop upon the vehicle and formed grounds that the driver's ability to operate a motor vehicle was impaired by drugs.

Following the investigation, Donald Drysdale, 22, of Alliston, was charged with:

- Operation while impaired - drug
- Drive vehicle with cannabis readily available

But that wasn't the only impaired driving charge laid by Caledon OPP officers on June 22. Later that same day, officers received a report of a single vehicle collision on Olde Base Line Road, near Kennedy Road, in Caledon. Shortly after 11:30 p.m., officers arrived on scene and subsequently formed grounds that the driver's ability to operate a motor vehicle was impaired by alcohol.

As a result of the investigation, Lori Wood, 61, of Caledon, was charged with:

- Operation while impaired - blood alcohol concentration (80 plus)

The next day (June 23), at approximately 8:30 p.m., Caledon OPP officers responded to a report of a single vehicle collision on Rolling Hills Lane, near Station Road, in Caledon. Shortly after, officers arrived on scene and subsequently formed grounds that the driver's ability to operate a motor vehicle was impaired by alcohol. Following the investigation, James Price, 35,

of Bolton, was charged with:

- Fail to surrender licence
- Operation while impaired - blood alcohol concentration (80 plus)

All accused parties are scheduled to appear at the Ontario Court of Justice in Orangeville on July 10, 2025, to answer to their charges. The vehicles of the individuals charged were also impounded for a period of seven days, and their driver's licenses were suspended for a period of 90 days. None of the listed charges have been tested or proven in court.

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Unfortunately deadlines do not allow us to take ads after 5:00 p.m. on Monday. When there is a holiday Monday, the deadlines will be Friday at 5:00 p.m. All ads must be paid in advance by deadline or the ad will not run. WE ACCEPT VISA, MASTERCARD, AND AMERICAN EXPRESS PAYMENTS OVER THE PHONE

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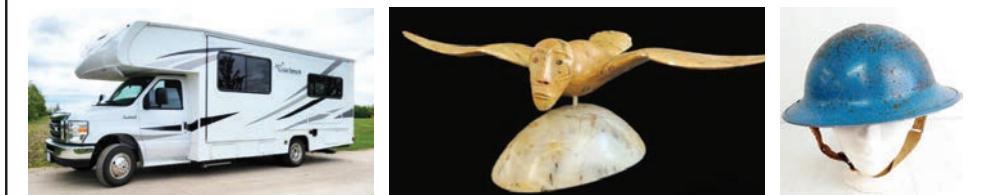
Family comes first at Kidd Family Auctions—right after coffee and a good laugh. (Dennis insists they're all equally important.)

Now that we're done giggling, take a peek at what's on the auction calendar:

CONSIGN NOW. SPOTS FILL UP QUICKLY!

- JUL 11TH.....TOOLS & EQUIPMENT AUCTION.
- JUL 19TH.....LOCKED & LOADED AUCTION.
- JUL 25TH.....INUIT / ART / JEWELRY AUCTION.
- AUG 19TH-23RD.....STRAIGHT SHOOTER SALE.
- SEPT 12TH.....GAS & OIL / TOY MEMORABILIA SALE.
- SEPT 26TH.....ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES & QUALITY HOUSEHOLD ITEMS.
- NOV 7TH.....CURRENCY COLLECTOR'S AUCTION.

NOTE: DATES COMING FOR CURRENCY SALE. AUGUST PETROLIANA / GENERAL STORE AUCTION. AND OF COURSE, MORE ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES WILL BE UP FOR GRABS SOON.



Selling in the July 11th / July 25th / Aug 20th Auctions

Call, text or email anytime. | 519-288-2228
Lyn@KiddFamilyAuctions.com | www.KiddFamilyAuctions.com

708 OBITUARIES

James (Jim) Diotte



James (Jim) Diotte passed away at Vaughan Hospice on Friday, June 27th, 2025, at the age of 60.

Born in Welland, he is survived by his wife Sandra (Harris) and children Alex and Cassie. He grew up in Elliot Lake with siblings Stephen and Lorna.

Jim graduated from McMaster University and had a long, distinguished career in HR that took him all over the world, which tied in with his love of travel.

Jim was an avid golfer, diehard Habs fan and loved all sports. Nothing better than strapping on the pads and getting on the ice.

Jim was the guy you always wanted at a dinner party. His love of life was contagious. The man of AND not OR. He will be missed so much.

Funeral service will be held on Monday, July 14th at 11am at Roadhouse & Rose funeral home in Newmarket, ON. In lieu of flowers, kindly consider donating to the Canada Cancer Society and to Hospice Vaughan.



701 COMING EVENTS

 **Annual Pork BBQ**
Trinity Centennial United Church
4903 2nd Concession, Toronto, Rosemont at Hwy 89
Saturday, July 19, 2025
from 4:00 to 6:30 pm
Delicious smoked pork chop, apple sauce, baked potato, baked beans, coleslaw and choice of pie for dessert.
Adults \$25; Children 6-12 years \$15; Under 6 - free
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UPCOMING

LIVE AUCTION SALE

for **Keith Johnston**
Saturday July 19th, 10:00am

4958 Wellington Rd 125, Acton, ON From the town of Acton come North on Wellington 125, for 3km to sale on west side of road OR from the town of Hillsburgh, come south on Trafalgar Rd for 7.5km to Regional Rd 124. Then west on 124 for 6.5km to Wellington 125. then south on 125 for 7km to sale on west side of road. **** PARKING ON SITE****

Tractors/Skid Steer: Kubota M6-131 4x4 tractor, 104hrs; NH TM75 4x4 tractor, 4135hrs, new clutch, Quicke loader; MF 275, 4351hrs, new clutch; Case 1825B skid steer, 1930hrs, diesel; Kubota TB1860 riding mower. **Truck, Trailers:** 2011 Ford F250 Super Duty, FX4 Off Road; Royal 6'x12' enclosed trailer; & sm trailers. **Mach/Equip/Accs:** Great Plains 1005NF no till drill; 30' header wagon; (3) gravity wagons; AGI WRX 10-51 auger; Hardi 500 sprayer; Kuhn Optimizer D1008 disc; Hydra Spread 200 manure spreader; Kubota RA1035 rotary rake; Hydra Farm King 12' harrows; 6"x36" PTO drive auger; 16' Watveare cultivator; 18' pony harrows; 10' chain harrows & drawbar; John Deere 18" disc, man wings; and many more pieces. **Shop/Farm Rel:** Wallenstein BX62R woodchipper; North Forest firewood processor, Kohler motor, takes up to 24" diam logs; 4t hopper bottom plastic bin; (2) grain bins-19"x4 rings; WinPower PTO drive generator; and much much more.

Lunch Booth & Washroom Available **Preview: Friday July 18, 1-6pm**

Terms & Conditions: Cash or Cheque with proper I.D. on day of sale. Owner and/or Auctioneer will not be held responsible for accident or loss on day of sale. All items are sold "As Is". All verbal announcements on day of sale take precedence over written ads.

Owner: Keith Johnston (519) 835-4718
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www.theauctionadvertiser.com/KMcArthur - full listing & photos

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Nottawasaga OPP looking to identify suspects involved in an LCBO theft

Officers from the Nottawasaga Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) are currently investigating a shoplift and are requesting the public's assistance to identify four individuals.

On June 26, Nottawasaga OPP responded to a shoplift incident at a LCBO located on Dunham Drive in the Town of New Tecumseth.

Shortly after 7:35 p.m. Four individuals were seen entering the store and taking \$3,116

worth of alcohol then exiting the store with no attempt to pay exiting through the front door.

The suspects departed in a Grey Acura travelling east bound on Highway 89. Officers were unable to locate the vehicle at this time.

Suspect one is described as: a South Asian male, medium build, with short black hair and a beard. Approximately 30 to 40 years old. The male was seen wearing a blue jay hat, grey button up shirt, black pants, black shoes.

Suspect two is described as: a South Asian male, small build, with short black hair and beard. He was wearing a red shirt with "Canada" written on it, black pants, black adidas shoes, crossbody satchel approximately 30-40 years old.

Suspect three is described as: a South Asian male, medium build, with black hair in a pony tail, and a beard. He was wearing grey pants, grey button up shirt, black hat, and blue shoes.

He is approximately 30-40 years old.

Suspect four is described as: a South Asian male, small build, wearing glasses, and had a beard. Was seen wearing Black pants, grey button up, black hat, and a black backpack. He is approximately 30-40 years old.

If you know these individuals or have seen them, please call the Nottawasaga Detachment at 1-888-310-1122 (reference number E250831070).

Continued from Page 4

Brock's Banter: Considering Ajuinnata

As much as the Prime Minister focused on the political issues of the day – not unexpected for our Head of Government – the message delivered by Governor General Mary Simon, the representative of our Head of State in Canada, hit just the right note for me, although admittedly, the reasons why didn't rise to the top immediately.

"Today, I want to share what I like about Canada," Simon began, stating that kindness is a thread that binds us together, underscoring her sentiment by sharing the Inuit word "Ajuinnata," which, she said, means "you have perseverance in the face of adversity."

"When we commemorate our soldiers, when we see our athletes compete, or students graduate – I see Ajuinnata. It's

part of Canada's story and one of the reasons we're all here today. In Canada, we stand for respect. We stand for an equal and compassionate society, where everyone belongs. We work together to improve and protect this beautiful creation called Canada. And when we include everyone, humanity is better for it."

Indeed it is, and while that sentiment resonated strong enough, at the end of the day, what struck me was Simon's determination to share what she "likes about Canada."

Given how much grumbling we've seen lately, coming straight out with a "What I like about Canada" speech was as simple as it was novel.

In our last Federal election, we heard so

much about what was apparently wrong or allegedly "broken" in Canada. Any time we log onto the internet, let alone our social media platforms at large, the algorithms in play never fail to serve up steaming piles of dissatisfaction, some of which has merit, but most of which, in my view, does not.

In my observation, particularly on social media, what's "wrong" with Canada seems to be increasingly pitched accompanied by images of non-white individuals, simply going about their day, sometimes wearing clothing that does not fall within the narrow definitions of "western."

"What's wrong?" you might ask. Well, it seems the offending matter is simply difference. To hear them tell it, this alleged

proliferation of "different" is a phenomenon of the last five, ten, twenty or more years and the world, the way, is going to hell in a handbasket for it.

I don't know where these spleen-venters grew up in this country, but the world they're apparently nostalgic for is not a world I've experienced as a life-long Canadian who is now staring down the barrel of his 40th birthday.

What's changed, however, in my view, is tolerance and levels of vitriol that are causing so many to lose sight of the rich, diverse, Canadian tapestry.

That's one of the things I for one like about Canada – a country that could not have been built without Ajuinnata, and will certainly not thrive without it.

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