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ROCK 'N' SPELL

Bee contestants take the stage in full rock star style

It was a night that required some concentration and a good knowledge of the language at the Grate Groan-Up Spelling Bee hosted by Next Step Literacy at the Club at Bond Head on Saturday, April 11. Teams dressed up in some pretty fun costumes and took on the challenge of trying to spell some obscure and difficult words. The event is the main fundraiser for Next Step Literacy in Alliston. Read a full story on Page 2.

BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO



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Nominations for town council candidates open next month

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Ontario will go to the polls on Oct. 26 to elect municipal governments across the province.

Nominations for interested candidates open on May 1.

In New Tecumseth, council positions include mayor, deputy mayor, and seven town councillors.

The mayor and councillors will make decisions about what happens in town and help advance the town's Strategic Plan by establishing specific priorities, targets, and goals that move the municipality closer to its long-term vision.

The Town of New Tecumseth has launched

its Candidate Guide, a comprehensive resource to help residents understand eligibility criteria and the step-by-step nomination process for the upcoming municipal election.

"Our goal is to make information clear, accessible, and non-partisan so anyone interested in serving their community can make an informed decision," said Pamela Fettes, New Tecumseth's director of administration services/clerk.

Residents can access the guide and related resources at newtecumseth.ca/Elections. Printed copies are also available at New Tecumseth Town Hall, 24 Tupper Street West, Alliston.

Elected officials in this upcoming election will serve from Nov. 15, 2026, to Nov. 14,

2030.

The mayor serves as head of council under the Municipal Act, including prescribed strong mayor and CEO responsibilities, and represents the Town of New Tecumseth as a member of Simcoe County Council.

The deputy mayor serves as a member of council with some enhanced duties in the absence of the mayor, as approved by council by-law.

A councillor serves as a member of council to represent the interests of residents and the community as outlined in the Municipal Act.

Members of council provide direction on municipal services and priorities, including infrastructure, fire services, land use planning, recreation and budgeting.

To be eligible to run for town council, you

must be a Canadian citizen and at least 18 years old. You must be a resident, property owner or tenant, or the spouse of one in New Tecumseth. You must not be legally prohibited from voting, and not otherwise disqualified from office.

Candidates may run for mayor, deputy mayor, or councillor, but may not run for more than one office at the same time.

To run, you must submit a nomination form, an endorsement form endorsed by a minimum of 25 persons who are eligible to vote in New Tecumseth, and pay a nomination fee of \$200 for mayor, and \$100 for deputy mayor or councillor.

You can find out more about running for municipal public office by visiting the Town website.

Grate Groan-Up Spelling Bee puts contestants' knowledge to the test in annual showdown

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

If you're going to enter a spelling bee, you might as well dress like you want to win.

Teams dressed in some pretty wild costumes for the Grate Groan-Up Spelling Bee, hosted by Next Step Literacy at the Club on Bond Head in Beeton on Saturday, April 11.

The event raises funds for Next Step Literacy.

As the night wore on, teams began dropping out after misspelling a word. As the evening progressed, the words got harder.

Even then, there were some pretty sharp minds who were getting the correct spelling of some obscure or difficult words.

"This is our 14th Annual Great Groan-Up Spelling Bee. This is our annual fundraiser

to raise money for the free programs that we offer at Next Step," explained Next Step Literacy Executive Director Shira Harrison McIntyre, who also serves as Ward 7 Councillor for New Tecumseth.

"We have free adult tutoring in reading, writing, math, and computers. And now we have free English as a second language classes in the evening."

The spelling bee has teams that take turns getting up on stage and trying to spell a word delivered by a moderator. Some of the words require serious thought, and contestants will spell the word on paper before giving their answer.

"Teams of three compete in a traditional spelling bee," Shira explained. "There are also prizes for best costume, most team spirit, and most pledges. We also have a silent auc-

tion and a dinner."

Several local businesses and organizations entered teams and dressed up in themes for the event.

One by one, teams dropped out of the com-

petition as the words became more obscure and harder to spell.

At the end of the night, one team left with bragging rights and the knowledge that they helped raise funds for a good cause.



ADULT SPELLING BEE – The Grate Groan Up Spelling Bee was held at the Club on Bond Head in Beeton on April 11, with teams of contestants dressing up in costume and doing their best to spell difficult words. BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

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Town seeks public comment on massive growth proposed

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A proposal by the provincial Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is causing significant concern among local residents.

The proposal outlines massive growth for New Tecumseth and the surrounding area. Towns considered include New Tecumseth, Bradford West Gwillimbury, Innisfil, Essa, and Adjala-Tosorontio.

The proposal was released by the province on April 8 and includes large-scale developments in Alliston, Beeton, and Tottenham.

In Tottenham, the plan calls for two devel-

opments. One development consists of 153 hectares on the east side of town that would include building 1,874 houses.

The second development would be on the northwest side of town, encompassing 433 hectares and 3,700 homes.

In Beeton, the proposed development would include 251.17 hectares and the building of 10,700 homes.

In Alliston, the proposal calls for a massive development spanning 1,955 hectares, with 12,700 homes built on the south side of the town. A second proposal for Alliston includes 78 hectares of land with 1,231 homes.

Everett could see the development of 152

hectares, and the hamlet of Baxter could see the development of 98 hectares and 1,470 homes.

The Town of New Tecumseth is aware of the proposal on the province's Environmental Registry of Ontario, 'Addressing Growth and Housing Needs in South Simcoe.'

The proposal is currently under review by senior Town staff and is expected to be brought forward for consideration at a future Council meeting.

The province has opened a 30-day public comment period, which will remain open until May 8.

"Public input is an important part of this

process," said New Tecumseth Mayor Richard Norcross. "We encourage residents to share their feedback during the province's commenting period."

A proposal to build a large development on the northwest side of Tottenham a couple of years ago was met with a strong negative response by local residents. A majority of people in town opposed a major development, citing that there is already too much traffic through town and that they want to keep its small-town vibe.

Residents are encouraged to submit their comments directly to the province by email at southsimcoegrowthstrategy@onatrio.ca.

Queen Street road resurfacing project to begin in Tottenham after previous delay

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

After a previous delay, the Queen Street resurfacing project in Tottenham is scheduled to run through spring.

The Town of New Tecumseth advises residents and property owners that Lisbon Paving Co. Ltd. will resume the road improvement work on Queen Street between Nolan Road and 177 Queen St. South, at the Tottenham water tower.

The project includes removing the existing asphalt surface, repaving the roadway, and installing new pavement markings, including parking spaces.

Construction is anticipated to be complete

by May 30.

Traffic will be affected by the project, but disruption is expected to be minimal.

To ensure safety and maintain mobility throughout the project, one lane of vehicular traffic will remain open during working hours. Two lanes of traffic will be open during non-working hours.

Safe pedestrian access will be maintained at all times.

The contractor will coordinate directly with residents regarding any temporary driveway disruptions or closures, ensuring impacts are minimized and temporary parking options are arranged as needed.

For vehicle, pedestrian, and worker safety, please obey all posted signage and follow

the direction of on-site personnel when travelling through the construction zone.

Residents may experience minor delays during construction.



Fundraising hockey game for Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation this weekend

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

While the hockey season is pretty much over, there is still one more game you can attend if you're a fan, and help raise funds for a good cause at the same time.

Hat Trick for Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation (SMHF) is a charity game taking place this weekend that will raise funds for the Foundation.

This will be a high-energy community hockey game featuring teams of first responders, hospital staff, and community members. There will also be members of the OPP, Alliston Hornets, Essa Minor Hockey, and municipal staff on the ice.

This family-friendly event will offer a fun afternoon at the arena and the last hockey game of the year before warm weather arrives and hockey players turn to the golf greens.

The Hat Trick for SMHF will take place at the New Tecumseth Recreation Centre on Sunday, April 19. The game will start at 1 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 and are available at the Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation at 39 Victoria Street East, in Alliston, and at the following municipal administration centres:

- New Tecumseth – 24 Tupper Street West, Alliston.
- Essa – 5786 County Road 21, Utopia.
- Adjala-Tosorontio – 7855 30th Sideroad, Alliston

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BRIAN SAUNDERSON
MPP, Simcoe-Grey



Editorial, Letters & Opinion

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

~ Stanislaw Jerzy Lec

Turn into the waves

When I was in my final year of high school, our entire Grade 12 class entered the gym to view the movie "A Tale of Two Cities."

The teachers set up a large movie screen and ran the film through a projector.

We were studying the classic Charles Dickens novel in English class, and this was a good way to really bring the story to life.

I believe it was the 1958 version of the film.

There were a lot of crying girls at the end of the film when Sydney Carton stands in front of the guillotine, and his overdub states: "It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known."

It was a great way to learn about something you are studying.

If there is one film I have always thought that should be shown in schools, it would be the 1954 classic, "The Caine Mutiny," starring Humphrey Bogart, Fred MacMurray, Van Johnson, Robert Francis, and José Ferrer.

It is a great film, and the final scene is where the lesson is taught.

The film is set on a fictional U.S. minesweeper in the Pacific during World War

Two.

A new commander is taking over the ship. Lt. Cmdr. Queeg, played by Humphrey Bogart, is an old-school naval man who believes discipline and order are needed on a naval ship.

When Queeg assumes command, his executive officers are not pleased with his style. They begin to take notes on his behaviour.

At one point, several of the executive officers request a meeting with the Admiral to ask for Queeg's dismissal. However, as they wait for their meeting, one of the officers notices the behaviour of the sailors on the aircraft carrier.

He realizes those sailors were acting how you were supposed to behave on a naval ship, not the way the lackadaisical and undisciplined crew of the Caine behave, and they change their mind about meeting the Admiral.

Queeg certainly has some quirky habits, and it is suggested he is losing his nerve as a combat commander in a war zone.

The executive officers question his command and always give him a hard time. This frustrates Queeg, who is trying to run the ship as a naval vessel should operate.

During a severe storm in the Pacific,

when the entire fleet is in danger, Queeg refused to turn the ship into the waves or take on ballast, even though his executive officers are insisting on saving the ship, because the ship has received no orders to do so.

The officer played by Fred MacMurray steps in and orders Queeg to stand down, and he takes command of the vessel – effectively committing a mutiny.

In the resulting court-martial, in which the executive officers are on trial for mutiny, their attorney paints a picture of Queeg as being incompetent and possibly mentally unstable. He hails the officers as heroes for taking command from a faltering Queeg and saving the ship and the lives of everyone on board.

The officers are found not guilty as a result.

It is after the trial, when the executive officers are celebrating their acquittal at a party, that the real drama unfolds.

Their lawyer enters the room and is infuriated by the sight of the men celebrating.

He tells them what really happened. The lawyer tells them that to save them from being found guilty, he had to 'torpedo' Queeg and deliberately destroy a man's reputation.

If the executive officers had behaved

BRIAN LOCKHART
FROM THE SECOND ROW



like real naval officers and respected Queeg's command, he tells them, then likely during the storm, Queeg would have respected their advice and turned the ship into the waves.

He calls Henry Fonda's character the real villain and throws a drink in his face.

It is a story of deflecting the truth and avoiding responsibility and accountability.

Our current federal government is doing this all the time. Instead of addressing the concerns of our country's citizens, they make announcements about unpopular policies and tell us we should be thrilled about the decision.

The government gladly gives your tax dollars to other countries while we have homeless people sleeping on the streets. Our borders are not secure, but they tell us that building more houses will fix that, rather than addressing the real issue.

Violent criminals go unpunished while law-abiding citizens are threatened with more gun bans.

Canadians are a little too complacent when demanding responsibility and accountability from their politicians.

Minority reports

Like many Canadians on Monday night, I eagerly awaited the results of three Federal byelections – two in the GTA and one in the Montreal area.

Byelections, as a rule, don't typically capture the public's imagination, but it's closer to the rule in Minority Governments, as Canada has been in since the October 19, 2019, Federal election when Justin Trudeau's Liberals were reduced by some 20 seats in the House of Commons – 157 seats, down from the 177 they held prior to the writ dropping. The incumbent government's numbers improved slightly when Canadians next went to the polls, with the seat count "swelling" to 160 – still ten short to form a majority.

Going into last year's Federal Election under the newly-minted leadership of Mark Carney, their fortunes rose again – still a few short of the new threshold of 172 seats for a majority established by a redistribution of the electoral map, but enough to apparently put fresh breeze into the party's sails.

Each nation-wide election held since the Majority was lost in 2019 has been seen, as it so often is by pundits, as a litmus test on current leadership, whoever might be in a party's top job at the time. Monday's byelection results, as such, can certainly be seen as a win for Carney and the Liberals as they finally pieced together a Majority Government – despite how they got there.

The road to a Majority has had its fair share of supporters and detractors.

The green-carpeted road across the floor of the House of Commons is not without its potholes and those who have made the move from the Conservatives and the NDP towards the Liberal Government have faced their fair share of heat for doing so. They will face their constituents in the next nationwide election but, for now, they are confident they made the right move – if not for their constituents, but certainly for their careers. Their constituents, however, might have a different opinion.

Whether or not the floor-crossers did

so to further their own ambitions, achieve the best results for their electorate, or to further the work of the incumbent government given the extraordinary geopolitical situation we find ourselves in as Canadians, is known only to them, but, at the very least, it's brought this country a degree of stability it hasn't had in more than half-a-decade.

Those most fervent against floor crossings – typically the more partisan among us, and generally only when the move across the floor goes against their preferred grain, and certainly not when the tides turn in their favour – might see it as an affront against democracy, despite it being something that has occurred relatively regularly in our Westminster-style democracy, but, without a shred of partisanship here, it's nice to have some certainty amongst our leadership for the time being when so much uncertainty exists elsewhere.

Canadians continue to redefine not only our relationship with the United States in these extraordinary circum-

stances but our role in the wider world, which too is adjusting to the same uncertainties as we are. Despite how we got here, it is a positive that our partners know who they will be dealing with for the foreseeable future and we, in turn, know that the policies put forward by the party in charge will be done with more than just political longevity in mind.

As was my view when Stephen Harper's Conservative Party of Canada finally formed a Majority Government in 2011 after losing a Confidence vote in the House of Commons, it will be a refreshing change of pace not to be in constant "election mode" and see what can be accomplished without so many pieces of legislation leaving the entirety of the machine of government teetering on a knife's edge.

Continued on Page 15

BROCK WEIR
BROCK'S BANTER



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Continued on Page 15

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Hungary: The tide goes out

GWYNNE DYER
OUR WORLD TODAY



Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk sent a message congratulating Hungary's newly elected prime minister, Peter Magyar, for having evicted long-serving populist leader Viktor Orban (aka 'The Viktator') from power. All the usual welcoming words, but Tusk's message ended with two slightly mysterious words in Hungarian: "Ruszkik Haza" – Russians Go Home.

There are no Russians in Hungary, apart from occasional visitors, so what was that about? It dates back to 1989, when a then-youthful student leader called Viktor Orban became an overnight national hero by giving a speech telling the Russians to end their 45-year-old military occupation and go home.

They did go home then, but their influence returned with Orban's return to the prime ministership. He had previously occupied the office as a conventional conservative in 1998-2002, but he practically invented modern populism – 'illiberalism', as he called it – for his comeback in 2010. And this time the Russians were with him all the way.

Hungary's value to Moscow was its membership in the European Union and NATO, which enabled it

to pass on all the information that its representatives had access to as members. Orban also blocked various EU decisions that Russia disapproved of, like his recent veto of a \$105 billion EU loan to Ukraine to replace the US aid that Trump cancelled.

That loan will now go through. Repairing the huge damage done by sixteen years of Orban will take a lot longer: the judiciary has been packed, the government is a kleptocracy, the media are 80%-owned by Orban's cronies, and the electoral map has been gerrymandered. But the main interest for non-Hungarians is the possibility that this is a communicable disease.

Populists all over the place clearly fear that it might be. Orban rose to power when Donald Trump was a property developer, Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni was a junior minister, France's Marine Le Pen and Britain's Nigel Farage were fringe figures, and Germany's Alice Weidel was a financial consultant.

They all found time in their busy schedules to offer their support to Viktor Orban, and now they are strangely silent. It's like when your parents die: you realise that it's now you on the front line.

Last week, with Orban trailing badly, they pulled all the stops out. Trump, in his fifth intervention in support of Orban in six months, posted "I AM WITH HIM ALL THE WAY", and Vice-President JD Vance showed up in Budapest in person on the way to his equally unsuccessful performance in the 'peace talks' in Islamabad.

This is an unusual amount of attention to lavish on an election in a country of nine million people located in the unfashionable end of Europe. You only have to compare it to the attention that the world media gave to the 2023 election that brought Orban clone Robert Fico back to power in Slovakia.

That event got almost zero attention, whereas Sunday's election in Hungary got front-page coverage almost everywhere. The difference is entirely due to the

fact that Orban's loss was seen as a defeat for the founding father for the populist strategy, at least in its current incarnation – and possibly a harbinger of the future.

The anxiety of some and the hopes of other have been stoked by the growing likelihood that the populist formula is failing in its natural homeland, the United States. Trump's own erratic behaviour is part of the problem, but the economic dislocation caused by his war against Iran is an even bigger reason for them to fear defeat in the midterm elections next November.

The governing party losing control of one House of Congress in the midterms, or even of both, is a frequent feature of national politics in the United States, and it normally doesn't cause despair. It's a protest vote, and it's not even a reliable predictor of what will happen in the general election.

Yet Trump & Co. in the United States, and even more so their fellow travelers in Europe and far-flung outposts like Argentina, seem concerned that the wind has changed, even though nobody else has noticed it yet.

Maybe they are wrong, and this is only a minor setback in their inevitable march to power everywhere in the West. But protest-based mass movements have an average lifetime of 10-15 years, so a steep decline in the health and longevity of populist governments starting about now would not be untypical.

On the other hand, Trump's desperate antics as he seeks a face-saving way out of his war on Iran are prolonging an economic downturn that could end in a major recession.

Voters punish whichever government is in power when a recession arrives with complete disregard for the actual causes, so we could see old populist regimes go down even as new ones emerge elsewhere.



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 5. Tropical American blue jay-like bird
 10. Abba __, Israeli politician
 14. Dark olive black
 15. Light, crinkled fabric
 16. Notre Dame has a golden one
 17. Leaked blood
 18. Confronted
 19. Negligible amount
 20. Facilitated
 22. Hill or rocky peak
 23. Minneapolis suburb
 24. Songs to one's beloved
 27. Brake horsepower
 30. Angry
 31. Children's game
 32. Spelling is a type of one
 35. Obtained in return for labor
 37. Indicates center
 38. Chinese dynasty
 39. Old World
 - buffaloes
 40. Slang for time off
 41. Fabric
 42. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
 43. Defunct regional economic organization
 44. Philly footballers
 45. Female sibling
 46. Peter Griffin's daughter
 47. Digital audiotape
 48. Insecticide
 49. Scientific instrument
 52. Pages may be dog-__
 55. Israeli city __ Aviv
 56. Type of sword
 60. Middle Eastern military title
 61. Wise individuals
 63. French Polynesian island Bora __
 64. Popular shoe type
 65. One of 50
 66. Divulge a secret
 67. Dish of cooked meat mixed with potatoes
 68. Actress Zellweger
 69. Romanian city
- CLUES DOWN**
- Greek cupbearer of the Gods
 - Ancient Syrian city
 - Small Eurasian deer (pl.)
 - Range of mountains
 - One thousand cubic feet (abbr.)
 - Spoke
 - City in Georgia
 - Theatrical
 - CNN's founder
 - Icelandic poems
 - Bjorn __, tennis player
 - Bowfin genus
 - One point north of northeast
 - Political divisions in ancient Greece
 23. Electroencephalograph
 - Cool!
 - Male parent
 - Where some gymnasts work
 28. Capital of Vietnam
 29. Sailboats
 32. Shelter (Scottish)
 33. Completed
 34. Discharge
 36. Arrest
 37. Partner to cheese
 38. Coffee receptacle
 40. Stagnate
 41. Satisfies
 43. Snakelike fish
 44. Consume food
 46. Type of school
 47. Erase
 49. Inform
 50. Girl's given name
 - Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
 52. Every one of two or more things
 53. Northern India city
 - Seventeenth stars in a constellation
 57. Weapon
 58. Amounts of time
 59. Isodor __, American Nobel physicist
 61. Soviet Socialist Republic
 62. Witness

No one has more self-confidence than the person who does a crossword puzzle with a pen.

COMMUNITY VOICE

Monthly Message: A day in the life of a volunteer at the Alliston Food Bank

What does a day in the life of a volunteer at the Alliston Food Bank really look like?

From the outside, it may seem simple. You might picture a few people sorting donations or handing out food. But step inside, and you'll quickly see that every day is a coordinated effort powered by dedicated volunteers working together to support our community.

Each day begins behind the scenes, where our sorters and inventory volunteers play a key role. Donations arrive from local stores, food drives, and community members, and every item is carefully checked, sorted, and organized. It is important work that ensures everything we distribute is safe, usable, and ready for our shelves.

At the same time, our drivers and passengers are out in the community, picking up donations from our partner locations. These deliveries are a vital part of keeping our shelves stocked and reflect the strong partnerships we have built throughout our community.

Once donations are sorted, our stockers and prep volunteers step in. Shelves are filled, displays are organized, and food

is prepared for distribution. Everything is thoughtfully arranged to create a space that is easy to navigate and welcoming for the individuals and families we serve.

An important part of keeping our space clean, organized, and inviting is the help of our student volunteers. From tidying shelves to organizing products and supporting general upkeep, students play a valuable role in maintaining a positive environment for everyone who walks through our doors. Their energy, willingness to help, and commitment to giving back make a meaningful difference each day.

As we move into client service hours, the pace shifts and our front-line volunteers take the lead.

Our reception volunteers are often the first point of contact. They greet clients, check them in, and help guide them through the process. This role requires compassion, patience, and a strong sense of confidentiality.



Our client support volunteers work closely with individuals who may be visiting for the first time or who need additional assistance. They help explain how the food bank works, answer questions, and ensure that each person feels comfortable and

supported.

On the floor, our counters walk alongside clients as they shop. They help track points, assist in finding items, and provide a friendly and welcoming presence. These interactions are at the heart of what we do, ensuring that everyone who visits feels respected and valued.

Outside attendants play an equally important role, helping carry groceries to vehicles and supporting the flow of clients coming in and out of the building. They also assist with restocking between client waves, keeping everything running smoothly.

Overseeing it all are our shift supervisors, who help coordinate the day, support volun-

teers, and ensure operations run efficiently. They are a key part of keeping everything organized and making sure both volunteers and clients have a positive experience.

Throughout the day, there is a constant sense of teamwork. Volunteers support one another, step in where needed, and work together to ensure no task is left undone. It is a fast-paced environment, but one filled with purpose.

What makes volunteering at the Alliston Food Bank truly special is the impact. Every role, whether behind the scenes or directly with clients, contributes to something bigger. It is about more than food. It is about dignity, respect, and community.

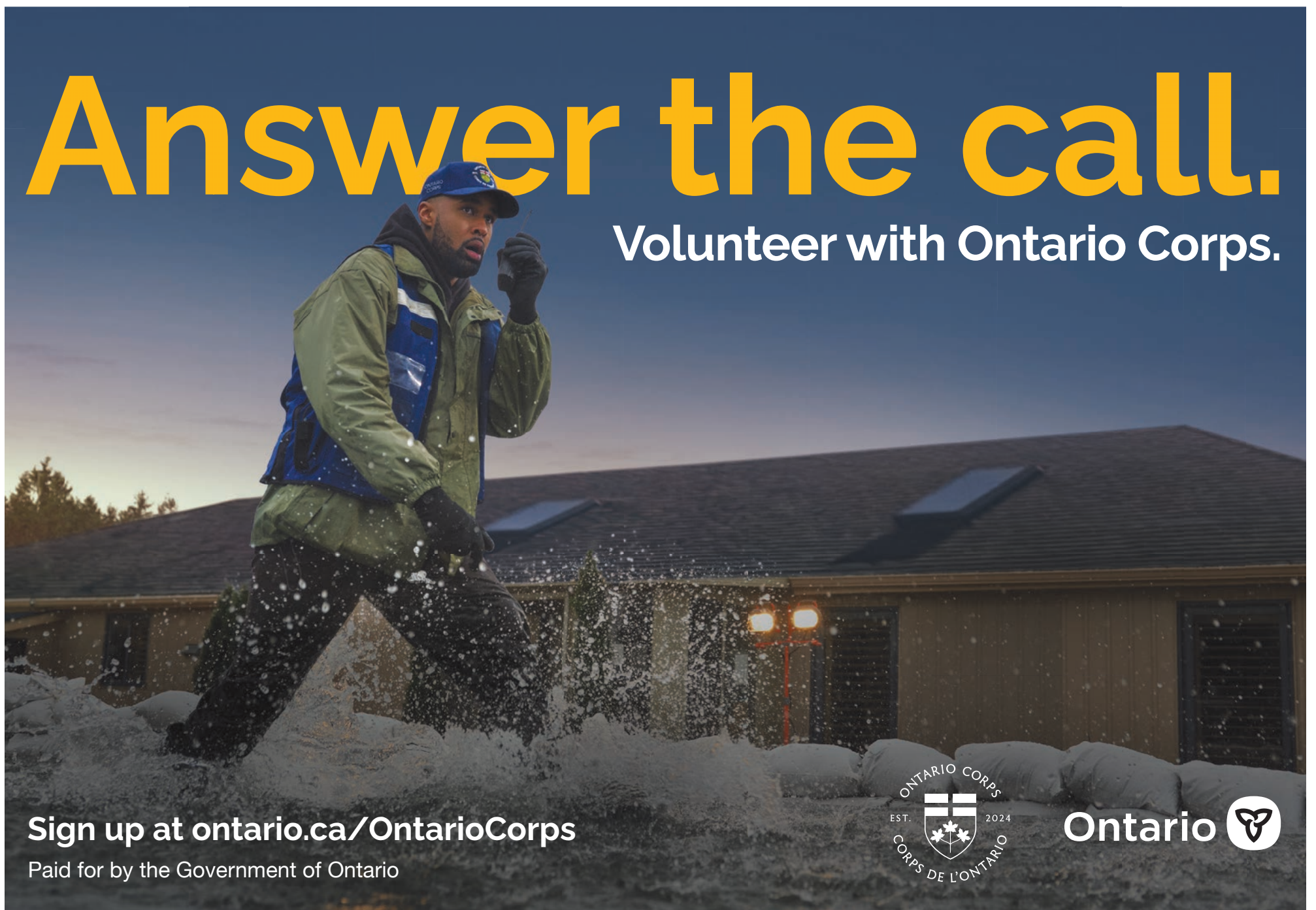
Many of our volunteers come looking for a way to give back, but stay because of the connections they build and the difference they see firsthand.

As the need in our community continues to grow, so does our need for volunteers. If you have ever wondered what it is like to be part of the Alliston Food Bank, we invite you to learn more.

There is a place for everyone here, and every role truly makes a difference.





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 Paid for by the Government of Ontario

Demystifying public health food safety inspections

Health inspections take place in many different settings, but they all have the same goal: making sure that the right steps are being taken to protect people from getting sick, injured, or, in the most serious cases, dying. One of the most noticeable ways this work is done is through food safety inspections in restaurants throughout the community.

Signs are posted at all places the health unit inspects, including restaurants and other food businesses. The signs include a QR code and information on where you can see the results of the health unit's inspections. These results are posted on the health unit's website, and news outlets will sometimes share stories about recent inspection results. All of this is done to help the public make informed choices about where they may want to eat or visit.

In 2025, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) public health

inspectors (PHIs) completed more than 8,300 inspections at food premises, including restaurants, food trucks and kitchens in long-term care homes. This includes routine and follow-up inspections, and responses to complaints made by the public.

All health units in Ontario are required under Ontario Regulation 493/17 Food Premises of the Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA) to make inspection reports available to the public. These reports remain online for two years and include what the inspector found, and the actions required by the restaurant.

When an inspector identifies conditions or practices that could put people's health at risk, they document the problem (infraction) using words from the legislation, but the specific details are not publicly accessible to protect confidentiality and maintain consistency with legal requirements. What is included

is the severity of the problem, such as whether it is a critical issue, meaning it could cause illness, or a non critical issue, meaning that it is required by law but does not pose an immediate health risk.

Once the inspection is complete, the inspector will prepare a report and share it with business and provide feedback. When no problems are found, the report will say "satisfactory." However, if a problem is found, the business is given instruction and a deadline to correct it, and the report will say "action required."

Some of the terms used in health inspection reports are straightforward, while others can be confusing without context. For example, "education provided" means that the health inspector took time to explain the issue to the business operator and offered guidance on how to correct it. Other terms such as "equipment/product seized and

destroyed" can sound alarming, but it can often refer to routine steps such as throwing out hazardous food or damaged equipment, like a cracked cutting board that can't be cleaned properly.

Public health inspectors work closely with business operators to resolve issues quickly. Their goal is to ensure that any problems identified during an inspection are corrected promptly so operators can continue serving the community safely while protecting the health of the public.

For more information about public health inspections, visit SMDHU's InspectionConnection.

Dr. Michelle Quaye is a public health physician at the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. Her primary responsibilities are in the areas of environmental health, family and community health, population health assessment and health equity.

DR. MICHELLE QUAYE
PUBLIC HEALTH PHYSICIAN



Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority issues water level warning after several days of rain

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority has issued a water level warning after warmer temperatures and associated snowmelt, combined with several days of precipitation, have resulted in above-seasonal water levels throughout the Nottawasaga watershed.

However, the flood risk remains low at this time.

The public, especially children and pets, is advised to stay away from all local water

bodies, as unstable ice cover, slippery banks, and fast-flowing water have created dangerous conditions.

A significant portion of the snowpack has melted due to rainfall and above-zero temperatures.

The warmer temperatures are expected to accelerate snowmelt in the watershed areas with remaining snowpack.

This has resulted in increased water levels and flows.

In addition, the warmer temperatures have caused the breakup of ice cover. At this time of year, there is always the poten-

tial for localized flooding from any remaining ice jams.

The NVCA staff will closely monitor the situation and provide an update if conditions change.



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Arts & Local Events



Sweet Success



The Spring Tonic Festival 2026 came to the Tiffin Centre for Conservation in Utopia on April 11 and 12, with thousands of attendees enjoying the all-Canadian tradition of crafting maple syrup. Visitors were taken on a tour where they learned how maple syrup was made historically and how it's made today. The tour ended with a pancake and sausage breakfast, topped with freshly harvested maple syrup.

BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO



HILLSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

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A free event for girls of all ages

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<https://www.hillsidecommunity.ca/>

Shop LOCAL

SCDSB students to represent Simcoe County at national science fair

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

In late March, elementary and secondary students from across Simcoe County represented their schools at the Simcoe County Regional Science and Technology Fair (SCRSTF), an annual event celebrating excellence in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

Nearly 400 students submitted almost 250 projects, separated into five categories: Animal and Plant Sciences, Computer Science and Engineering, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Human and Health Sciences, and Physical and Mathematical Sciences.

Five projects from Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) students in Grades 7 to 12 were selected to move forward to represent

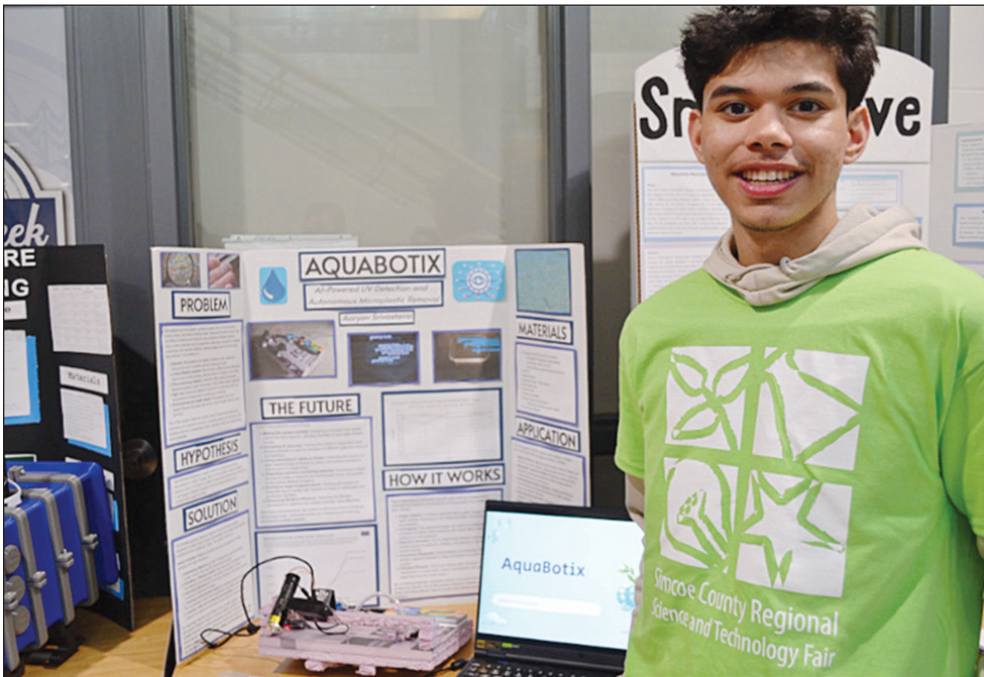
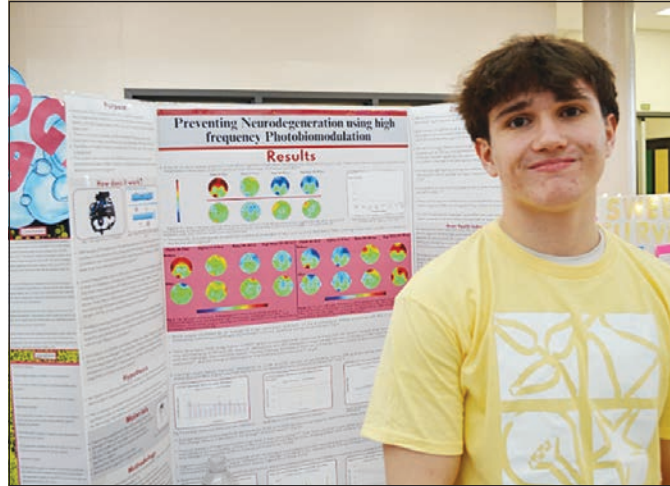
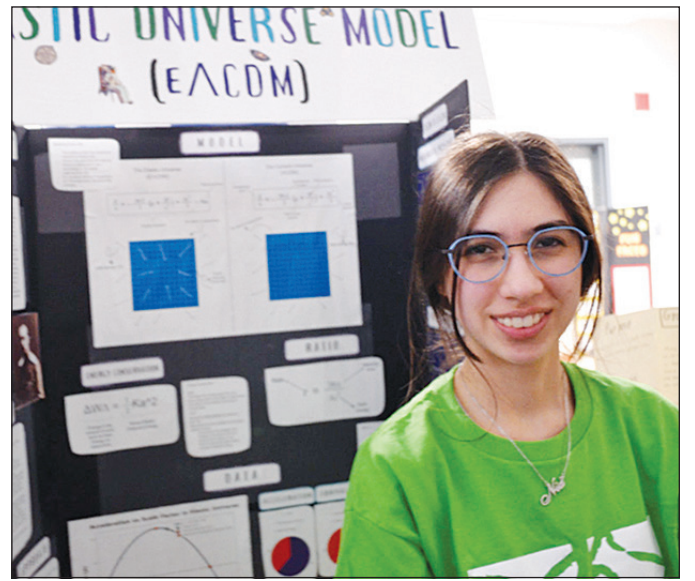
Simcoe County at the Canada-Wide Science Fair from May 23 to 28. The following SCDSB students are members of Team Simcoe at this year's national fair in Edmonton, Alberta:

- Anne B. – Bear Creek SS, Petal to the Metal – using Chlorella Algae to Remove Heavy Metals from Mining Runoff
 - Jasper C. – Codrington PS, Follow the Light
 - Nia H. – Bear Creek SS, The Elastic Universe Model
 - Solomon K. – Bear Creek SS, Mitigating cognitive decline in the elderly using high frequency near-infrared light
 - Aaryav S. – Bradford District HS, Aquabotix: AI-Powered UV Detection and Autonomous Microplastic Removal
- Projects are recognized with awards in divi-

sional and special award categories. In the divisional awards categories, students from SCDSB schools received 31 honourable mentions, 18 bronze medals, 12 silver medals, and seven gold medals.

SCDSB students were also recognized with 31 special awards, which are sponsored by community organizations and other SCRSTF partners.

To view the full results from the 2026 SCRSTF and learn more, visit simcoe-sciencefair.ca.



SUCCESS AT THE SCIENCE FAIR – Students from schools within the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) show off their displays at the Simcoe County Regional Science and Technology Fair. Several projects are being recognized from students in Grades 7 to 12. In the divisional awards categories, students from SCDSB schools received 31 honourable mentions, 18 bronze medals, 12 silver medals, and seven gold medals. SCDSB students were also recognized with 31 special awards, which are sponsored by community organizations and other SCRSTF partners.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

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A holiday artisan shopping experience

We're decking the halls once again and inviting unique, passionate vendors to join us in making HollyFest even more magical in its second year. After an incredible inaugural event, we're excited to welcome new businesses and continue growing Orangeville Citizen's signature holiday shopping experience.

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Magic

Magic is 7 years old and head of the greeting committee. He loves to get his pets and runs to meet the volunteers. Magic is very playful and will spend hours with a wand toy. This handsome stud has a best buddy Rufus, who although isn't as outgoing, also loves his pets (yes you can adopt both!).

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SPORTS

NEW TECUMSETH TIMES

Alliston Curling Club hosts Meltdown Spiel to celebrate end of season

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

It was the final time for many club members to get out on the ice sheets and enjoy one last day of curling before the ice is removed at the Alliston Curling Club.

The club hosted its annual Meltdown Spiel on Saturday, April 11, and it had a full turnout of curlers who wanted to have one final match in a non-competitive afternoon of play.

Curlers will have to wait until October when new ice is made before they can enjoy their sport again.

“We started doing the Meltdown Spiel years ago. This is an annual event,” said Alliston Curling Club President Shawn Evans. “The event is just for fun. It’s not competitive. The ice comes out on Thursday of next week, so that’s why we call it the meltdown. It’s the final club event before all the leagues wrap up for the year.”

The ice at the club is normally removed

in April of each year. It is a process that takes several days, as the ice sheets are around three inches thick and produce a lot of water that has to be pumped out of the facility.

“It takes two to three weeks to remove the ice,” Evans explained. “They shut the ice plant down, then it takes a good week for it to melt, then it all has to be pumped out.”

A total of 64 curlers were on the ice, and games went on all day. There were 16 teams of four players – the maximum number of

players that can fill the bonspiel on the four ice sheets.

Each team played two games.

The Alliston Curling Club is currently celebrating 125 years as a club. The current building was built in 1956, and a lot of the work was done by volunteers.

The club will be celebrating the anniversary with a big party on May 31.

Club members enjoyed the final day of non-competitive fun on the ice before they moved on to summer sports.



END OF SEASON PLAY – Curlers enjoy their last day on the ice during the Alliston Curling Club’s annual Meltdown Spiel to end the season on Saturday, Apr. 11. The ice will be coming out of the facility for the summer. The Curling Club is currently celebrating its 125th anniversary.

BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

Stayner eliminated from PJHL playoffs after losing to Fergus in four-game sweep

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Three out of four conference finals have been decided in the Provincial Junior Hockey League (PJHL) after weekend play.

Locally, the Stayner Siskens are done for the season after losing in a four-game sweep to the Fergus Whalers.

The final game was played in Fergus on Sunday, April 12, and ended with a 3-2 win for the Whalers.

The Siskens eliminated the Alliston Hor-

nets in the North Carruthers division championship in a series that went six games. That series wrapped up on April 1 in Alliston.

Fergus will go on to play the East Conference winner once that series is finished in the Schmalz Cup semi-final.

The Frankford Huskies are currently leading the Uxbridge Bruins 3-2 in the East Conference.

Frankford had a solid 3-1 lead, but the Bruins got back into the series with a 3-1 win in Game 5 on Sunday, April 12, on Frankford’s home ice.

Game 6 of the East Conference series was scheduled for April 14, with results not available at press time.

In the South conference, the Tavistock Braves have emerged as the 2026 champions after eliminating the Dundas Blues in a series that went four games.

The series ended on Saturday, April 11, on Tavistock home ice with a 3-2 win for the Braves.

Tavistock will now move on to the semi-final round of competition.

They will face the Lakeshore Canadiens

in the semi-final.

The Canadiens won the West Conference title by knocking out the Mt. Brydges Bulldogs in a four-game sweep.

Lakeshore had an easy series win, dominating all four games.

The two teams remaining after the semi-final round of the playoffs will compete for the 2026 Schmalz Cup Junior C championship.

It has been a long season with a lot of exciting small-town hockey around the province.

Local equine therapy centre inspires playwright to document her journey

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

When playwright Anita La Selva lost her partner of many years to alcoholism, she began searching for a way to work through her grief.

She was introduced to Horse Spirit Connection in Tottenham.

This centre partners individuals with horses that act therapeutically with visitors.

Anita connected with Spirit Walker, a thoroughbred horse at the equine centre. The results of the interaction worked so well that it inspired Anita to begin work on a play about her experience.

After starting the play, things went awry during the pandemic, and she shifted focus to make a short film instead. The film went on to screen at 18 international film festivals.

“Once the pandemic was over, I wanted to continue and workshop it, and continue to develop it as a play, which is what I have been doing over the past three years,” Anita explained.

Anita is an accomplished actor, director, creator, and playwright, and is active in the

theatre industry.

She admits getting the play up and running is a difficult process, as there is so much involved in putting a production together.

Her play, titled “12 Litres 8800 Steps,” is about the toll that addiction places on caregivers and family and her own healing experience with equine therapy.

The play features two actors. Anita plays a version of herself on stage, and her character can also be described as her alter ego.

In the role of the horse Spirit Walker, Brad Cook brings a horse to life on stage by costume, mask, and movement.

This isn’t your typical play of actors repeating dialogue on a stage. Anita prefers to refer to her work as ‘pieces.’

“I’m not a linear playwright,” Anita explained. “I call myself more of a creator than a playwright, in the sense that I don’t write scripts with people having conversations. My pieces are inter-disciplinary, meaning they have movement, choreography, and dance. They have video, sometimes music and sound.”

“12 Litres 8800 Steps” doesn’t take place at a single time. The action takes place at differ-

ent times in Anita’s life.

“The story is told in a series of vignettes that jump through time, from past to present,” Anita said. “It includes my childhood and my adulthood – it jumps around. I jump to some flashback to myself and my partner, and then to conversations I wish I could have had. I put it together very much like a collage rather than a straight narrative.”

The result is a production that blends surrealism with reality and transcends time through one person’s journey through grief and redemption.

12 Litres 8800 Steps will be performed at the Factory Theatre in Toronto from May 1 to 17.

SHARING HER JOURNEY – Playwright Anita La Selva was inspired to write her play “12 Litres 8800 Steps” based on her experience working with a horse named Spirit Walker at the Horse Spirit Connection in Tottenham. The play deals with Anita’s grief of losing her partner, and her healing journey working with Spirit Walker. The play will be performed at the Factory Theatre in Toronto from May 1 to 17.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Celebrate Earth Day at the Simcoe County Museum and join a grassroots demonstration

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970, when activists called on people to join a grassroots demonstration.

In response to dangerously serious issues such as toxic drinking water, air pollution, and the effects of pesticides, an impressive 20 million people ventured outdoors to pro-

test together.

Earth Day has become a day to recognize the balance of nature and to respect and take care of the planet.

You can celebrate Earth Day at the Simcoe County Museum and explore the incredible forces that power the planet, earth, sun, wind, and water.

This year’s theme, “Our Power, Our Planet,” invites visitors of all ages to dis-

cover how renewable energy can help create a cleaner, more sustainable future.

From hands-on experiments to engaging facts and demonstrations, guests will learn how natural energy sources can reduce our carbon footprint and inspire new ways of thinking about power.

Whether you’re curious about solar energy, fascinated by wind power, or interested in how water and the earth itself generate

energy, there’s something for everyone to explore.

Earth Day at the Simcoe County Museum will take place on Sunday, April 19, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission is \$8 for adults (21-64), \$6 for seniors (65+), \$6 for youth (12-20), and \$4 for children (4-11). Admission is free for pre-schoolers and museum members

For more details, visit museum.simcoe.ca.

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Youth arrested in connection to targeted assault of disabled person

Officers from South Simcoe Police have arrested and charged a youth in connection to what it calls a targeted and disturbing assault on a vulnerable member of the Bradford West Gwillimbury community.

“Over the past several weeks, police have been actively investigating a series of incidents involving social media platforms, including Snapchat, in which a person with a disability was deliberately targeted, harassed, and bullied by a group of youths,” reads a press release from the South Simcoe Police.

“The investigation intensified following

the circulation of a video depicting a violent assault on the victim. In the video, the victim was led to a secluded area, where they were subjected to repeated acts of violence while the incident was recorded and shared online.”

As a result of the investigation, a 14-year-old youth from York Region, turned themselves in to South Simcoe Police on April 7, and has been charged with multiple counts of assault contrary to Section 266 of the Criminal Code of Canada.

The accused has been released from custody and is scheduled to appear before the Ontario

Court of Justice at a later date. In accordance with the provisions of the Youth Criminal Justice Act, the identity of the accused cannot be released.

The investigation remains ongoing, and additional arrests and charges may follow. Police are urging parents and guardians to speak with their children about responsible social media use, the importance of treating others with respect and compassion, and the serious consequences that can result from engaging in or promoting violent, harassing, or bullying behaviour.

Anyone with information related to this investigation is asked to contact Police Constable Chelsea Trenouth at 905-775-3311 or email chelsea.trenouth@southsimcoepolice.ca.

Should you wish to remain anonymous, contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS). You can submit information online at www.crimestoppersdm.com.

Crime Stoppers does not subscribe to call display, and you will remain anonymous.

Being anonymous, you will not testify in court and your information may lead to a cash reward of up to \$2,000.

Absence of seat belts remain the primary cause of preventable death on roadways

BY SAM ODROWSKI

The primary safety feature in any automobile – seat belts – have been mandatory for 50 years.

Ontario enacted its first seat belt law on Jan. 1, 1976, setting penalties for drivers and passengers who refused to buckle up.

It was one of the first jurisdictions in North America to pass a seat belt law, and since its enactment, the Government of Ontario estimates that over 9,000 lives have been saved in the province.

Despite the success of seat belt enforcement in the decades following the first seat belt law, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) reports that nearly one in four road fatalities involve someone not wearing a seat belt.

“Dealing with dozens of deaths linked to lack of seat belt use every year, the OPP rec-

ognizes that what makes these incidents even more tragic for the surviving families is learning that their loved one made the choice to not wear their seat belt before heading out on the road,” the OPP stated.

During the Easter long weekend, OPP officers conducted a province-wide seat belt campaign, with the goal of ensuring all drivers and passengers are buckling up. This includes ensuring all children are properly secured in an appropriate child car seat, booster seat, or seat belt for their weight, height, and age.

In total, 260 charges were laid during Dufferin OPP’s Easter long weekend seat belt campaign, with 26 seat belt charges, 116 speeding charges, three distracted driving charges, five stunt driving charges, and five impaired driving charges. There was also 105 charges issues for other miscellaneous offences.

“Too many lives are lost to something entirely preventable. Buckling up takes seconds, but it can mean the difference between making it home or not. Seat belts save lives, it is that simple,” said Ontario Solicitor General Michael Kerzner.

“I want to thank the OPP for their continued leadership in education and enforcement, especially during [the recent] busy long weekend, helping keep families safe on roads and highways across Ontario.”

During a collision, the threat of serious injury or death rises steeply when a person is thrown into a rapidly opening frontal air bag without a seat belt strapping them in place.

The OPP laid 13,560 seat belt charges in 2025. Failure to wear a seat belt carries a fine of \$200 to \$1,000 and two demerit points, which remain on your driving record for 2 years.

“In 2025, the OPP responded to 41 road fatalities in which lack of seat belt use was either the cause or a contributing factor. At any time, you can become involved in a collision caused by another driver. The single most important thing you can do to protect yourself during a crash is to ensure you and all other vehicle occupants are properly buckled in,” said OPP Commissioner Thomas Carrique.

Within Ontario, people involved in collisions are 36 times more likely to die when not wearing a seat belt, according to the provincial Ministry of Transportation.

“Wearing a seat belt takes only a few seconds, but it can save your life and your family’s,” said Prabmeet Sarkaria, Ontario Minister of Transportation.

“Help protect Ontario by buckling up and making sure every passenger is properly secured before every trip.”

As bears exit hibernation, Ontario Provincial Police and province urge caution during encounters

BY SAM ODROWSKI

As the seasons change and bears emerge from hibernation, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is working with the provincial government to inform the public on how to stay safe and prevent attacks.

While black bear attacks are extremely rare in Ontario, averaging less than one per year and often happening in remote areas, there is currently little natural food for bears. This results in them searching for other food sources, lying in garbage bins, bird feeders, and other residential receptacles, bringing

them into populated areas.

If bears begin to make their presence known, there are several things the public can do to stay safe.

The OPP and the province suggest never feeding or approaching bears, storing garbage in waste containers with tight-fitting lids (preferably indoors), and waiting until pickup day to put out garbage for collection to reduce the odds of an encounter.

Another key suggestion is to remove bird feeders for spring and summer and instead offer birds natural alternatives, such as flower, nesting boxes, or fresh water.

After barbecuing, be sure to clean the grill and grease traps of any food residue.

Keeping dogs on a leash and storing pet food indoors are two other ways to reduce one’s chances of encountering a bear, according to a joint statement by the province and OPP.

Bears have excellent memories and will return to where they have found food in the past, sometimes travelling over 100 kilometres. If bears have been an issue at your property in the past, remain vigilant for their return, especially as the weather warms and they emerge from hibernation.

“Alert neighbours about any bear activity and share these Bear Wise tips to reduce attractants in your community,” reads the province’s joint statement with the OPP.

When encountering a bear in a non-life-threatening setting, the public is encouraged to call a non-emergency, toll-free Bear Wise reporting line at 1-866-514-2327. The line operates from April 1 to Nov. 30 and is available 24/7.

If a bear poses an immediate threat by exhibiting threatening or aggressive behaviour, remain calm and call 911.

Don’t go fishing for your news, community highlights, current events and more!

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Ontario's minimum wage rises to nearly \$18 per hour this fall

BY SAM ODROWSKI

Minimum wage will increase from \$17.60 to \$17.95 per hour on Oct. 1.

The Ontario government announced the increase on April 1, which will result in a roughly 2 per cent pay increase for more than 700,000 minimum-wage workers.

The yearly increase is tied to the province's Consumer Price Index (CPI), currently at 1.9 per cent.

The provincial government says the \$0.35 per hour pay raise helps to ensure wages "continue to reflect economic conditions while protecting workers and providing businesses with greater stability."

According to the Ontario government, approximately 35 per cent of minimum-wage workers are employed in retail trade and 24 per cent in accommodation and food services.

"Ontario workers are the engine of this province," said David Piccini, Ontario's Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and

Skills Development. "By raising the minimum wage to one of the highest in Canada, our government is putting more money in the pockets of Ontario workers, supporting families through economic uncertainty and giving businesses the stability and predictability they need to plan and grow."

A minimum wage worker who works 40 hours per week will see an annual pay increase of roughly \$728.

In Ontario, minimum wage rises every Oct. 1 based on provincial CPI.

"Our government continues to take decisive action to protect workers, businesses and communities in the face of global economic uncertainty," reads a press release from the Ontario government. "By ensuring fair wages, investing in skills training and helping employers retain experienced staff, the province is building a more competitive self-resilient and self-sufficient economy that can create good-paying jobs for generations to come."



Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit offers programs to help families get dental care

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health is highlighting the importance of oral health during April – Oral Health Month in Canada – and the publicly funded dental services available to support local families.

"Good oral health is an essential part of overall health and well-being at every stage of life," said Shelly-Ann Morgan, manager of SMDHU's community oral health program. "For children, healthy teeth and gums do more than create bright smiles, they support proper nutrition, speech development and

self-confidence. Establishing positive dental habits early can prevent painful infections and reduce the need for more complex treatment later."

Parents and guardians are encouraged to take their children for their first dental visit by age one and keep up with regular checkups. Early dental care helps teeth grow properly and lowers the risk of future problems, building a strong foundation for lifelong oral health.

Families worried about the cost of dental care may be able to access low-cost and publicly funded programs offered by the Health Unit.

These programs provide regular checkups

and emergency dental services to eligible children and youth up to age 17.

Health Unit staff are available to help families understand who qualifies for these programs and can guide them through the registration steps.

In addition, dental clinics at the Health Unit also provide dental care to eligible adults through the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program.

"Our clinics provide a welcoming and respectful environment where children and families are treated with compassion and care," Morgan explained. "We encourage families to check their eligibility with us, as

many are pleasantly surprised to discover they qualify."

The Health Unit recognizes that dental visits can feel overwhelming. Dental anxiety is common, and the Health Unit's experienced team explains what work is being done and uses gentle techniques to ensure everyone feels safe, comfortable, and supported.

Appointments are available at SMDHU clinic locations in Barrie and Gravenhurst.

Families seeking more information about eligibility or wishing to book an appointment can call 705-721-7520 ext. 8818, toll-free at 1-877-721-7520, or visit online at smdhu.org/DentalCare.

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Continued from Page 4

Brock's Banter: Minority reports

Carney's Liberal Government has become a very different beast from the one formed under the leadership of Justin Trudeau. If Marilyn Gladu, a woman whose views largely aligned with the more socially conservative wing of the Conservative party can find a place within the party despite, to my eyes, having little in common with it, it will be interesting to see how the Liberals will continue to evolve as a party that takes all perspectives into consideration.

For better. For Worse. For everything in between. And, barring a reverse exodus away from Carney and back into the arms of the Poilievre Conservatives, it's poised to be a situation with some staying power.

Stay tuned.

Democracy was at work at the Provincial level on Monday as well when Ontario Minister of Education Paul Calandra announced a significant restructuring of Ontario's school boards.

Above and beyond the shift away from traditional Directors of Education towards a Chief Executive Officer with business experience, as if our publicly-funded schools are businesses, was the somewhat welcome news that the publicly-elected roles of school trustees will continue to exist as Ontario gets ready for the 2026 Municipal Elections this October.

Although the role of the trustees will be significantly diminished from what they were elected to do in the 2022 – no longer being able to make changes to the CEO-derived budget, for one – it was nice to see the Minister acknowledge the community-level role these positions hold and offer some certainty to those seeking to put themselves forward to advocate for the educational needs of their families, neighbours, and constituents.

Again, somewhat.

There is still no clarity what role trustees will have, if any, in school boards

currently under Provincial Supervision, such as the York Catholic District School Board and Peel District School Board, ahead of the October election.

Should these "supervised" boards not satisfy the Ministry that the requisite changes have been made, trustees will continue to have no role, aside from matters of faith in the case of Catholic trustees, until Queen's Park is satisfied with an impacted Board's performance.

Yet, by the sounds of it, members of the public can continue to put themselves on this fall's ballot – only to find themselves placed essentially into suspended animation until the Ministry decides otherwise.

That doesn't sound like a particularly attractive prospect from where I sit, nor does it do anything, in my view, to strengthen our democratic process.

It sounds like the governmental equivalent of paying for the privilege of being placed on a list for the opportunity to get a chance to potentially buy

a highly-coveted concert ticket, but no guarantee of getting to see the show, no matter how much money you're prepared to throw at it. There's no certainty in any election as voters cast their ballots for different reasons, but usually – USUALLY – there's a position for someone to win and be the community voice they were elected to be.

Unless things change in the coming months, in jurisdictions where these Boards are suspended, it's a race for a title and nothing more.

I've previously expressed by concerns in this space with some of the things I have seen unfold at the YCDSB, but given the choice between having community representation at the table versus none, I know where I stand – and so do incumbent, prospective, and in-limbo trustees.

In their case, however, there is no floor to cross for greener pastures, whatever colour you're looking for. How about an ecclesial aisle?

Heavy rainfall causes unsafe road conditions for drivers throughout the region: OPP

As heavy rainfall continues across the region, the Central Region Headquarters of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is reminding drivers that safety starts behind the wheel.

Wet roads, reduced visibility, pooling water, localized flooding, and the potential for dense fog in some areas can make driving hazardous when conditions can change quickly.

Significant rainfall has occurred throughout the week and is expected to persist over the coming days, increasing the risk of water collecting on roadways, washouts, debris, and sudden road closures. These conditions may develop rapidly and can be difficult to predict, particularly in rural areas.

Before leaving home, drivers are encouraged to check current road conditions, closures, and travel advisories through 511on.ca and municipal511.ca, monitor localized weather forecasts through The Weather

Network, and follow OPP Central Region social media channels for timely updates on active road closures.

Police remind all road users to take the following precautions:

- Slow down and increase following distance, as visibility can change quickly and wet roads reduce stopping ability
- Ensure all vehicle lights are turned on, including headlights and taillights, to improve visibility and help other drivers see you in poor weather conditions
- Avoid driving through flooded areas or large puddles, as water depth can be difficult to judge and may conceal roadway hazards
- Remain alert for washouts, debris, and the risk of hydroplaning
- Obey all posted signage and road closures

Flood conditions can develop quickly and may present serious dangers to motorists. Drivers are encouraged to choose

alternate routes or delay travel when conditions worsen.

Taking a few extra precautions can make all the difference. Plan ahead, stay alert, and stay safe.

Anyone requiring emergency assistance is reminded to call 911. For non-emergency incidents, the public may contact the Ontario Provincial Police non-emergency number at 1 888 310 1122.



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KEVIN LORD

April 16, 1986 – April 29, 2006

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But without you, nothing will ever be the same

Not until the day comes

When we are back together again

Happy 40th Birthday, Kevin

Love you and miss you so very much.

Mom, Dad and Lindsay



OBITUARIES

FOREVER IN OUR *Hearts*



Rolph: Hugh Gordon

May 22, 1938 – April 1, 2026

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Hugh Gordon Rolph, who passed away peacefully at Stevenson Memorial Hospital in Alliston.

Loving husband of Anne Rolph (née Ellis). Devoted father of Sandra (Tim) and Mali (Kolt) Luty. Cherished grandfather of Rush Danger, Holiday Rebel, Eli, and Maple. Hugh will be sadly missed by his brother Tony (the late Wendy). Predeceased by his parents, Ernest and Mary Rolph.

Hugh will be fondly remembered by his friends, extended family, and many nieces and nephews.

Cremation has taken place. The family will receive friends at Rod Abrams Funeral Home, 1666 Tottenham Rd., Tottenham (905-936-3477), on Saturday, May 2, 2026, for visitation from 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m., when a memorial service will be held in the chapel.

In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Hugh may be made to St. Andrew's College or to the charity of your choice.

Condolences and memories may be shared with the family at
www.RodAbramsFuneralHome.com.

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M&M FOOD MARKET

MAKE DINNER EFFORTLESS

INCREDIBLE PRICE **SAVE \$7**

17⁹⁹

Breaded Chicken Breasts
8 PIECES 907 g
Choose from 3 varieties.
Also available, Chicken Breast Grills 8 PIECES 800 g \$17.99 **SAVE \$7**

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GREAT FOR THE GRILL!

INCREDIBLE PRICE **SAVE \$8**

24⁹⁹

Slow Cooked Beef Pot Roast 907 g

BACK TO OUR LOWEST PRICE OF THE YEAR*
*Lowest price of the year matches the lowest price of 2026 to date.

SAVE \$5

INCREDIBLE PRICE **9⁹⁹** each

Apple Butter Pork Tenderloin 400 g

Wagyu Beef Sliders
9 SLIDERS x 51 g/1.8 oz

SAVE \$7

INCREDIBLE PRICE **14⁹⁹**

Boneless, Skinless Chicken Breasts
4-6 BREASTS 680 g

*** MULTI BUY ***
Buy 2 for \$10 **SAVE \$3⁹⁸**

MIX AND MATCH

Soups
255 g - 400 mL
5 Varieties
Individual price: \$6.99 each

French Onion, Wonton, Tomato and Grilled Cheese

MEAL KITS 840 g - 1.05 kg

Beef Lo Mein **SAVE \$2** **19⁹⁹** each

NEW! Creamy Tuscan Style Chicken and Pasta

Chicken Stir Fry **19⁹⁹** each

NEW! Chicken Parmesan & Spaghetti

Other varieties available at \$19.99 each **SAVE \$2**:
• **NEW!** Shrimp Fettuccine Alfredo • Lemon Herb Chicken and Pasta • Creamy Rosé Chicken & Pasta • Beef Teriyaki

Beef Stroganoff **IT'S BACK!** **SAVE \$2** **22⁹⁹** each

Chicken Fajitas

SAVE \$2

9⁹⁹ each

Sausage Rolls
26-28 PIECES 500 g

EVERYDAY LOW PRICE

9⁹⁹ each

Lasagna 907 g

24⁹⁹

Breaded Haddock
7-10 PIECES 907 g

21⁹⁹

Battered Haddock
6-9 PIECES 680 g

SATISFY YOUR SWEET TOOTH

SALE **5⁹⁹** each
Cakes
2 CAKES 228 g - 280 g

SALE **8⁹⁹** each
Cake Pops
6 PIECES 216 g

9⁹⁹
Portuguese Style Custard Tarts
6 PIECES 450 g 2 Varieties

BBQ FAVOURITES

SAVE \$5 **59⁹⁹**
Bacon Wrapped Beef Filet Mignons
4 STEAKS x 170 g/6 oz
Other size available, 6 STEAKS x 113 g/4 oz \$59.99 **SAVE \$5**

SAVE \$3 **19⁹⁹**
Bavette Steaks
2 STEAKS x 170 g/6 oz 2 Varieties

SAVE \$2 **17⁹⁹**
SmashHouse Angus Beef Burgers
8 BURGERS x 113 g/4 oz

SAVE \$2 **17⁹⁹**
Cheddar & Bacon Stuffed Beef Burgers
4 BURGERS x 170 g/6 oz

SAVE \$2 **17⁹⁹**
Sausages
8-9 PIECES 900 g 2 Varieties

SAVE \$2 **17⁹⁹**
Frankfurters
18 PIECES 1 kg

ANY-OCCASION APPETIZERS

SALE **18⁹⁹**
Panko Shrimp 454 g

SAVE \$7 **19⁹⁹**
Chicken Chunks
17-28 PIECES 680 g
WHILE QUANTITIES LAST

Shrimp Tempura
13-15 PIECES 340 g

SALE **11⁹⁹** each

Jamaican-Style Beef Patty Bites 500 g

SALE **8⁹⁹** each
Mini Franks in Pastry
15 PIECES 279 g

Beef Empanada Bites 12 PIECES 240 g

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