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INSIDE:

See our Spring Home & Garden section starting on page 9

SUPPORTING A GREAT CAUSE: On the road to raise funds for autism

The Autism Heroes Road Trip arrived in Adjala-Tosorontio and Alliston on Tuesday, May 5. Local resident Adam McEachern is on a journey from Windsor to Ottawa to raise funds for Kerry's Place Autism Services in Toronto. Adjala-Tosorontio Mayor Scott Anderson presents a \$500 cheque to Mr. McEachern from the town in support of his efforts. BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

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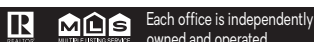
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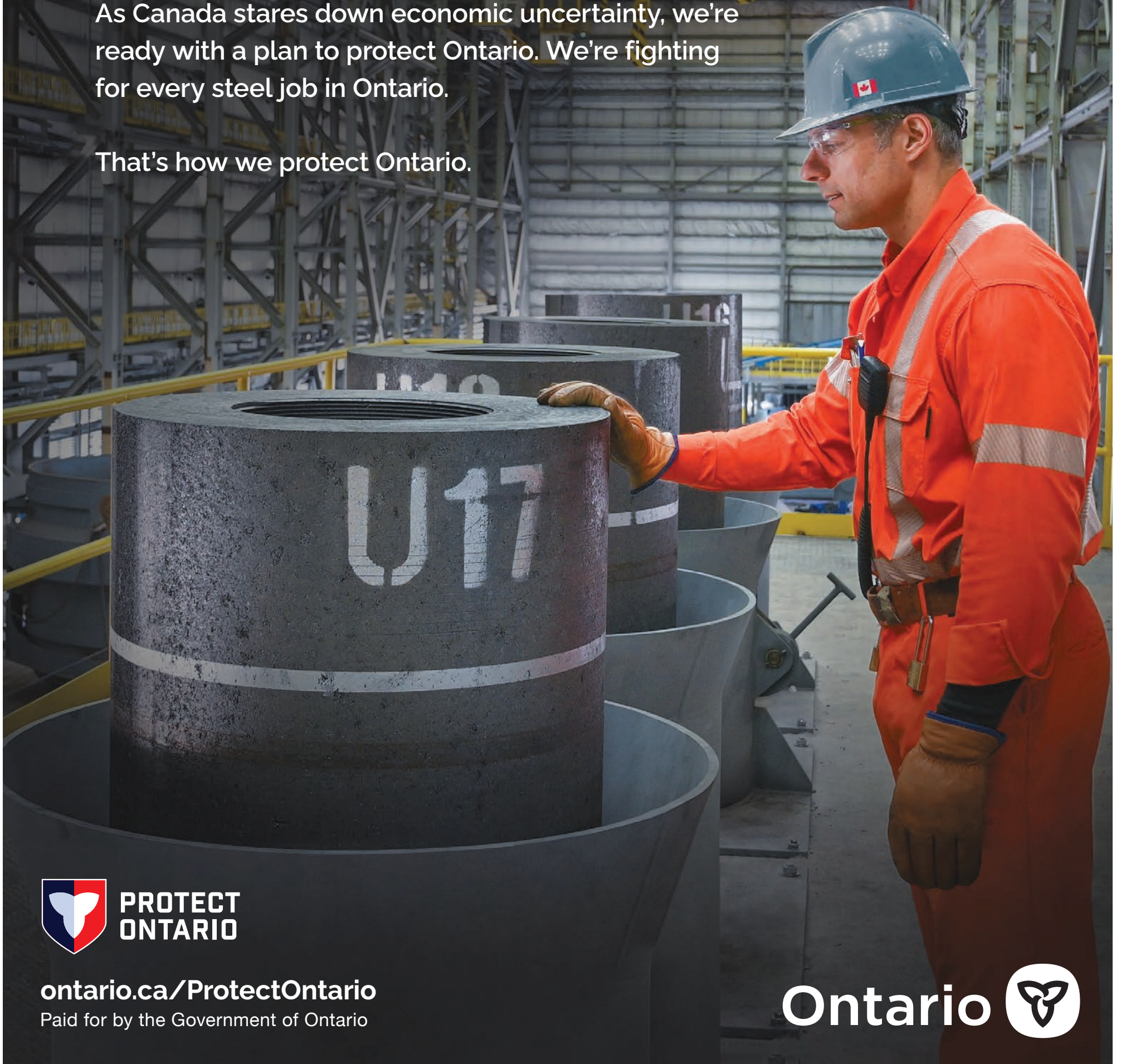
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New Tecumseth Mayor releases statement in support of local manufacturing

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Following media reports that Honda Canada has decided to halt plans for an electric vehicle (EV) facility in Alliston, New Tecumseth Mayor Richard Norcross has issued a statement in support of local manufacturing.

The original announcement of the new EV facility was made in May 2024, when then Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Ontario Premier Doug Ford visited the Alliston plant to announce that the new plant would be subsidized by the federal and provincial governments.

In May of 2025, Honda announced it would delay the project for at least 2 years due to sluggish EV demand.

Reports have now come out from Japanese media saying the auto manufacturer has plans to halt the project. Honda management, however, has not yet issued a statement on the matter.

Based on these current reports, New Tecum-

seth issued a statement on May 7 in support of local manufacturing.

“This is a pivotal moment for Canada’s manufacturing sector. The federal government must adapt its policies to better support Canadian-made vehicles and ensure our industry remains competitive in a rapidly changing market. Through our Council and the Simcoe Auto Mayors, we are actively working together to advance these priorities, including upcoming engagement in Japan to reinforce relationships and advocate for continued investment. Here in New Tecumseth, we will continue working closely with Honda and all our manufacturing partners to protect local jobs, support investment, and position our community for long-term success,” reads Mayor Norcross’s statement.

“The Town of New Tecumseth is aware of recent media reports regarding Honda’s decision to halt plans for a proposed electric vehicle facility in Ontario. Our community has a long and proud history as a centre of automotive manufacturing, and Honda remains a val-

ued and significant partner in New Tecumseth. We will continue to work collaboratively with Honda and all our manufacturing partners to support ongoing operations, protect local jobs, and position our community for future investment opportunities.”

The statement continued, “This moment underscores the need for strong and coordinated leadership at the national level. The Government of Canada has a clear opportunity to modernize and adapt its policies and incentives to support Canadian-made vehicles—including hybrid and electrified technologies—ensuring our domestic manufacturing base remains resilient, competitive, and aligned with market realities.”

New Tecumseth council unanimously made requests of the federal government during a meeting on April 27.

Council requested the recognition and integration of Canadian hybrid vehicles into the Federal Auto Strategy, the federal government works with Quebec and British Columbia to

suspend their EV Mandates, and the federal government enacts strict policies within the Federal Auto Strategy to enable fair competition between existing Canadian Auto Manufacturers and Chinese EV manufacturers.

“Leading the Simcoe Auto Mayors, we are taking a coordinated approach—advocating for practical, market-aligned policies, strengthening relationships with industry leaders, and ensuring that the voice of municipalities is reflected in national decision-making. As part of this work, we will also be engaging directly in Japan to reinforce the importance of continued investment in our community and across Ontario’s manufacturing sector,” reads Mayor Norcross’s statement.

In the statement, he said New Tecumseth is taking a proactive, solutions-focused approach. Through council’s recent Manufacturing Sector Update and ongoing economic development efforts, it is working to:

Continued on Page 7

New Tecumseth council pushes back on provincial government’s massive South Simcoe growth plan

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

A province-wide proposal for massive development in New Tecumseth has raised significant concerns among residents and New Tecumseth council.

A special council meeting was held on April 29 to discuss growth and housing needs in South Simcoe.

Council received a presentation and correspondence related to growth management and Official Plan Amendment No. 5, as well as Report #PD-2026-13.

At this time, no decision has been made

on Official Plan Amendment No. 5, and staff are reviewing potential next steps.

The new potential plan calls for massive development in Alliston, Beeton, and Tottenham.

Arguments against such development were discussed at the Council meeting, with concerns about infrastructure, the inability of close to 100,000 new residents to be able to commute to jobs in other towns effectively, and the changing dynamic of so many new people in a town that was not designed to accommodate a population of that size.

Council also unanimously passed a reso-

lution directing that Report #PD 2026 14 be forwarded to the Province of Ontario as part of the consultation process for Environmental Registry of Ontario posting No. 026 0383.

Through this resolution, council confirmed that it does not support the provincial priority projects and that its comments made during the Special Council Meeting be included in the communication to the province. Council further directed that the town be a party to discussions to better define potential community benefits related to the proposed projects, and that the correspondence be circulated to Council and

made publicly available.

“As a community, we understand the importance of growth and the role municipalities play,” said Mayor Richard Norcross. “We are prepared to work with the Province, but when proposals move forward without the funding, tools, or clarity municipalities need to support them responsibly, then respectfully, that is a no thank you. Our focus must remain on building complete, sustainable communities that work for our residents.”

Council passed a motion to forward a letter to the province with its concerns about the proposed development.

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- STANDING UP for the residents of Alliston, Beeton, and Tottenham in Parliament
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You owe how much?

You just can't escape paying bills. By the time you open your eyes in the morning, you already owe income tax on the money you earned the previous day. Filling up the gas tank to get to work that morning means another chunk of your money is gone, along with the tax you paid on that gas. While driving to work, you have already paid for car insurance and house insurance in case a tornado touches down on your street that afternoon. From the money you make during your day's work, you'll have to put some aside for your upcoming property tax bill. Having a hamburger for lunch? There's another 13 per cent because someone threw it on the grill for you. Need a new pair of jeans? Yup, you pay more tax so you don't have to go to work in your bathing suit. Then there are the non-stop bills you have to pay just to get through life. Every three months, you are charged for water and sewer services. You pay the bills for electricity, gas, a telephone (if you still have one), a cell phone, and probably cable or satellite television and internet.

With the rising cost of food, just putting dinner on the table every night is becoming a challenge. I think there must be a lot of young parents who are very creative when it comes to buying food and keeping their kids fed. With all the bills we have to pay, I'm surprised anyone has any money left over at the end of the month to save or spend on something for themselves. In fact, household debt across the country is at record levels. On top of mortgage debt, credit card debt levels are at the highest they have ever been. It seems most people are struggling just to keep their heads above water. Now imagine what life would be like if all those bills suddenly doubled – or tripled. It makes no sense to go through life borrowing money to pay your bills just so you can have a roof over your head. However, in current times, many people are doing exactly that to stay afloat – and so is our country. I tried to find the correct number for the current Canadian debt. However, there are many conflicting figures depending on which source you use. It definitely is in the hundreds of bil-

lions of dollars, maybe more. And we are not alone. Almost every country on the planet has a massive amount of debt. The leaders are China and the US, which now has a national debt of over \$30 trillion. All Western European countries have a huge national debt. Even smaller countries can't seem to manage their money. If individual households can't survive by living on borrowed money, what makes government leaders think a country can? Under the Ontario Municipal Act, (Section 290), “for each year, a local municipality shall, in the year or the immediately preceding year, prepare and adopt a budget including estimates of all sums required during the year for the purposes of the municipality, including (a) amounts sufficient to pay all debts of the municipality falling due within the year.” Municipalities are allowed to incur debt at times for big projects; however, there is a financial limit, and it cannot continue year after year. They must pay their debt and get on with business. There's a good reason for this. Taxpayers fund the town.

Can you imagine the outcry if a municipality spent ten times what they should have, then raised residents' tax bill by the same margin to pay it off? There seems to be no responsibility anywhere at the federal level when it comes to spending, and it's getting worse every year. Someone once quoted, “sooner or later you run out of someone else's money.” Depending on your age, it is likely that your grandchildren will be paying the price for all this spending. You can't keep borrowing forever. Sooner or later, someone will want their money back. Calling in a debt could spark a chain reaction – as seen during the Great Depression of 1929 – and a total economic collapse could follow. And what will the leaders who caused all this be doing? Most likely, they will be packing their suitcases with money and spending their time drinking mint juleps at their beach house while the rest of the population tries to figure out how to make a head of cabbage last for a month to feed their families.

BRIAN LOCKHART
FROM THE SECOND ROW



Cellphone couples counselling

I didn't see the point of it at first, but, for reasons I couldn't quite rationalize, I certainly wanted to be a part of it. Maybe it was the exclusivity of it all. There are few things more intriguing than what's behind a closed door when you can see shadows behind it milling about through some frosted glass. When that door opens, you're inevitably going to have that rush of “FINALLY!” or that gut-sinking feeling of, “That's it? That's what all the fuss was about?” It seems like a distant memory now, but, once upon a time, such was the level of intrigue over the new online platform known as Facebook. When the platform itself first hit my radar as a university student, it was almost exclusively for that particular demographic. But it wasn't open to just any university student – much like the early days of the also-now-ubiquitous Gmail, one had to be invited to join by an existing user before you could see what was going on behind the proverbial curtain.

It took a while to get that highly-anticipated invitation to see what all the fuss was about, and I'm afraid I was in the “That's it?” crowd. As it was a mostly student-driven platform at the time, most of the people I'd even consider connecting with were those I invariably saw in person at some point every week. The impact of almost pre-historic status updates like “Joe Q. Public is...” and picking something like “hungry” as the blank-filler from a drop-down menu was minimal at best when you were sitting across the cafeteria table from Joe himself. My interest waned pretty quickly. It took a couple of years for my interest to become piqued again when the platform was opened up wider and one could then stay in much closer touch with further-flung friends and family, find others with shared interest, and see communities of these interests spring up – and many of these communities gradually became what their name suggests. But, for every positive, there has been

a negative, and this has proven true not just with Facebook, but in just about every platform that was emerged in the last couple of decades. As connected as we have become virtually, it seems some are becoming more and more disconnected from our common reality. In recent months, I have watched with no small degree of alarm as an acquaintance borne out of those online communities introduced their significant other to the group – only for it to become clearer and clearer in time that this “significant other” was the other side of their preferred AI chatbot. While I'm happy that this person has found a way to stave off loneliness, if that is what they were indeed feeling, it has become concerning that the clear line between reality, fantasy, and wherever something like this falls, has become ever more blurred. Maybe I was right in my first instinct to become a committed social media luddite, but I don't discount the value these

tools and platforms bring to our society if they are used right and with full knowledge of how they can impact our lives. I'm sure teachers, administrators and others in our education system might be nostalgic for the days when such platforms and outlets were invite-only and their impact could be rather contained – particularly when jurisdictions here at home and abroad consider wider-ranging social media and AI bans in the classroom. Late last month, the Province of Manitoba announced it would take their cell phone ban in classrooms, first put in place in 2024, to the next level in banning youth from using social media and AI chatbots, citing the “harmful” effects these platforms and programs have on those who use them.

Continued on Page 15





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Israel: The widening war

GWYNNE DYER
OUR WORLD TODAY



There are really two wars in the Middle East, and only one of them is paused. The US-Iran war has been stuck in a ragged ceasefire for more than a month, with the participants only indulging in occasional tit-for-tat strikes that Donald Trump likes to call "love taps": fewer than five killed.

Israel was part of that war too in March, dropping thousands of bombs on Iran, but Trump then told Israel's Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to observe the ceasefire with Iran and he actually did. However, he went right on bombing Hezbollah, a Lebanon-based organization that acts as Iran's proxy in the country, even attacking Israel on Iran's behalf.

It's an odd alliance, based only on the fact that both Iran (92 million people) and the minority of Lebanese who support Hezbollah (fewer than 2 million) follow the same Shia strand of Islam. The real attraction for both groups, probably, is that Shiism is emotionally all about victimhood. For Iranians, it is a historical grievance; for Lebanese Shias, it is omnipresent.

Lebanese Shias are not Palestinians and have no direct grievance with Israel. Their true grievance is

that they are impoverished, downtrodden and often despised by the other two-thirds of Lebanese society, who are Sunni Muslims or Christians of various kinds.

A sociologist would probably say that while the Lebanese Shias truly believe they are fighting for the rights of the Palestinian underdogs, their dedicated and heavily armed support for the Palestinian cause is really a way of extorting respect and gaining power over the more privileged parts of Lebanese society.

At any rate, Hezbollah are very tough fighters and a permanent thorn in the side of both the Israelis and the Lebanese state. A 15-year civil war (1975-90) proved that the Lebanese government dares not confront them openly, while Israel is obsessed with them since their home territory, the southern third of Lebanon, is the part that borders directly on Israel.

But now, at last, Binyamin Netanyahu thinks he has discovered a solution to this problem.

Over the past two years the Israel Defence Force (IDF) has methodically destroyed the homes and infrastructure that served two million people in the Gaza Strip. Now the survivors live in tents and most

countries in the world call it 'genocide,' but nobody does anything about it. So why not do the same in southern Lebanon and destroy the home base of that other 'nest of terrorists?' That is precisely what the IDF is doing in southern Lebanon at the moment: ordering the residents to leave and systematically destroying the villages and towns all the way up to Beirut.

They are less than halfway through their work at this point, but the final product will look exactly the same. (The second genocide is always easier.) Trump's endless attempts to avoid the blame for his foolish war may well give the IDF time to finish the demolition job properly, although bits of Hezbollah will doubtless live on under the wreckage.

And meanwhile what about the Gaza Strip, which has been under a kind of ceasefire since last October? There have been only 850 Palestinians killed since the ceasefire, compared to more than 73,000 deaths in the previous two years. However, Hamas is now refusing to disarm (just as everybody who crafted this ceasefire knew it would).

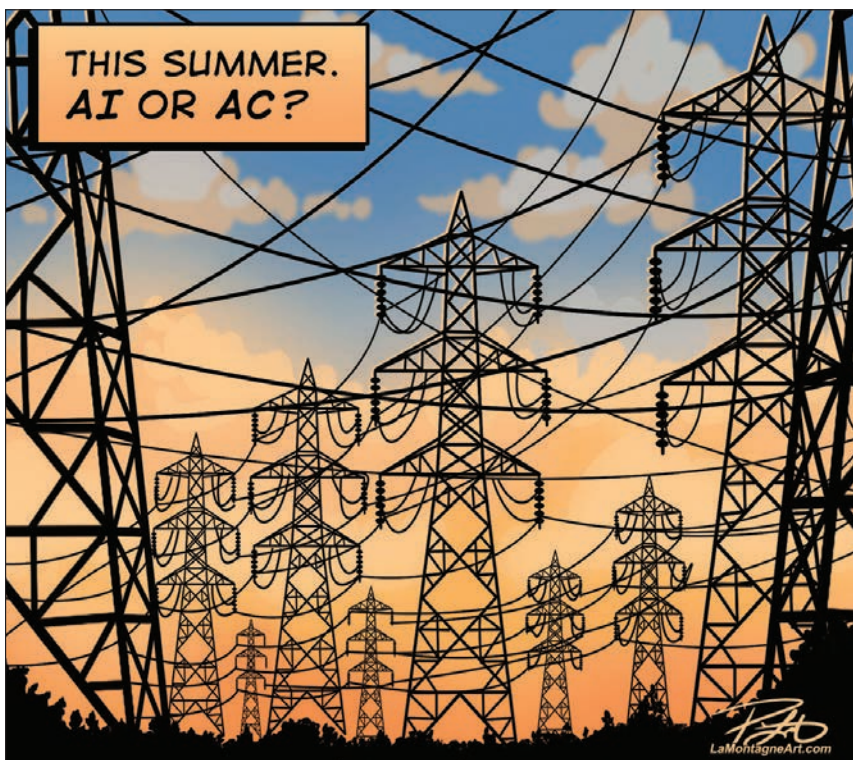
This would give Netanyahu an opportunity to reopen the war and resume the task of driving all the Palestinians of Gaza down to a small enclave in the southwest from which they could be more easily exported to somewhere else entirely.

The October ceasefire interrupted that process, leaving the IDF in sole control of only 60 per cent of the Gaza Strip. Israel's Channel 12 News recently reported that Washington has given Israel "a green light" to "resume operations", presumably to occupy and destroy any remaining built-up areas in the Strip and cleanse it of Palestinians – but it probably won't happen.

There have been too many interruptions to the grand plan (if there ever was one). Public opinion about incomplete and proposed genocides is shifting even in Israel. Netanyahu is almost certain to lose the October election. Israel has become a pariah country and can no longer demand special treatment because of its tragic past.

There is a way back, of course, but none of the men who are likely to form the coalition that evicts Netanyahu from office – Naftali Bennett, Yair Lapid, and Gadi Eisenkot – seem inclined to do penance for his behaviour in office. It will be a long way back.

NB: The crime of genocide is not confined to death camps and gas chambers. It includes "specific acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group."



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- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Notable casino destination
 - 6. Current units
 - 10. Roman military unit
 - 14. American lizard
 - 15. Fates
 - 17. The Yankees have lots of these
 - 19. Unhappy
 - 20. Mimic
 - 21. Remove from the record
 - 22. Where cargo ships dock (abbr.)
 - 23. A way to fight
 - 24. Turfs
 - 26. Contract
 - 29. Country along the Arabian peninsula
 - 31. Tree species
 - 32. Pituitary gland secretion (abbr.)
 - 34. Perfect
 - 35. "Partner" to groans
 - 37. Jewish calendar
 - month
 - 38. Where wrestlers work
 - 39. Egotistical
 - 40. Potted plants
 - 41. Containers
 - 43. Large, flightless birds
 - 45. Part of a book
 - 46. American spies
 - 47. Pancakes made of buckwheat flour
 - 49. Swiss river
 - 50. Disfigure
 - 53. Have surgery
 - 57. Formal withdrawal
 - 58. Early English council
 - 59. Area units
 - 60. 2,000 lbs.
 - 61. Siskel and __
- CLUES DOWN**
- 4. Every
 - 5. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
 - 6. Very skilled
 - 7. No more than what is specified
 - 8. Tire measurement
 - 9. Towers
 - 10. Forward
 - 11. Jacob __, American journalist
 - 12. Vale
 - 13. Former CIA
 - 16. Middle Eastern nation
 - 18. Exhausts
 - 22. South Dakota
 - 23. The complete duration of something
 - 24. Kids love him
 - 25. Singular
 - 27. Cod genus
 - 28. Mild yellow Dutch cheese
 - 29. Resistance unit
 - 30. Ancient kingdom
 - near Dead Sea
 - 31. Cast out
 - 33. 60-minute periods
 - 35. Most worn
 - 36. European river
 - 37. Atomic mass unit
 - 39. Items of food
 - 42. Body parts
 - 43. Ireland
 - 44. Partner to Pa
 - 46. Sammy __, songwriter
 - 47. Dutch settler
 - 48. Full-grown pike fish
 - 49. Sun or solar disk
 - 50. Minute arachnid
 - 51. From a distance
 - 52. A monthly expense
 - 53. Young women's association
 - 54. Brazilian state
 - 55. Air freight provider
 - 56. Pointed end of a pen

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

COMMUNITY VOICE

Monthly Message: From hand me downs to community impact, recycling at The Clothes Lines

For many of us, our first experience with recycled clothing began long before we understood the word “sustainability.” It started with hand me downs — shirts passed from older siblings, pants hemmed and re hemmed, winter coats that provided warmth for every child year after year. Those clothes carried stories, resilience, and practicality, and they taught an early lesson: clothing still has value long after its first owner.

Today, that simple idea has grown into a powerful movement, and CONTACT’s Clothes Line stores carry it forward in Alliston, Bradford and throughout South Simcoe. What once felt like a necessity for families has become a meaningful choice embraced by people of all ages, backgrounds, and incomes — one that benefits both our planet and our community.

In recent years, thrift shopping has surged in popularity. Once viewed primarily as a budget-friendly option, second hand shopping is now celebrated for its environmental benefits, affordability, and individuality. In this world of fast fashion, younger generations in particular are embracing thrifting as a statement against waste, while long time shoppers continue to value the smart reuse of quality items.

The Clothes Lines stores reflect this shift. Shoppers no longer come only out of necessity, but out of intention — to reduce waste, find unique items, and support local community services. Each purchase represents a choice to



reuse rather than discard, proving that sustainable living can be both practical and personal.

While a single donated sweater may feel small, the collective impact of community donations is extraordinary. Each year, over 200,000 pounds of clothing, household goods, and other items are recycled through The Clothes Line stores. That is more than 100 tons annually diverted from landfills — items that might otherwise contribute to growing environmental strain.

CONTACT’s 20th Annual Coats for Kids drive alone provided 90 children and individuals with free warm winter clothing last year. Community donations of coats and boots in the colder months go a long way, helping our neighbours who are struggling, in a dignity-driven and inclusive way.

Every day, community donations are carefully sorted, assessed, and either sold or responsibly recycled. Clothing and items find second lives in new homes, extending their usefulness and conserving resources such as water, energy, and raw materials needed to produce new goods.

What truly sets The Clothes Lines apart is

what happens next. The funds generated through these generous community donations directly support CONTACT Community Services, creating a powerful link between sustainability and social wellbeing.

Proceeds help fund essential programs, including housing supports, which assist individuals and families in our community who are experiencing housing instability; employment services, which provide job search assistance, training, and skill building; and community programs like our Smartphone drive that helps connect someone in need with family and community supports, as well as programs that address social isolation for our local seniors. Each donated item and each purchase help to ensure that these services remain available to our most vulnerable community members.

Recycling through the Clothes Line is more than an environmental action; it is an act of neighbourly support. A donated jacket may help someone stay warm, but it may also contribute to helping another person secure housing or find employment. The connection is direct and meaningful.

Affordability is another critical piece of this story. The Clothes Lines stores provide access to quality clothing and items at prices that support dignity and choice. Families can clothe children for school, job seekers can find

appropriate attire for interviews, and individuals can meet everyday needs without financial strain.

At the same time, shoppers from across the community — regardless of income — browse the racks together. This shared space breaks down stigma around second hand shopping and reinforces the idea that reuse is a responsible, community minded choice for everyone.

From childhood hand me downs to today’s intentional thrift culture, recycling clothing has always been about more than fabric. It is about care — for resources, for people, and for the future. CONTACT’s Clothes Line stores embody this philosophy, proving that small individual actions add up to lasting collective impact.

Each bag of donations, each thoughtful purchase, and each pound of recycled material help reduce waste, strengthen community services, and build a more sustainable local future. In choosing to recycle through the Clothes Line stores, we honour the lessons we learned early on: that nothing useful should go to waste, and that sharing what we have makes all of us stronger.

To learn more about CONTACT Community Services Clothes Line stores, visit our website, contactcommunityservices.ca or check out our stores in Alliston at 55 Victoria Street West and in Bradford at 95 Holland Street West. We look forward to welcoming you.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Passionate about an issue you’ve read about within the pages of the New Tecumseth Times? Want to share your opinion? Email us a letter to the editor to: newtectimeseditorial@gmail.com. Be sure to include your name and town.

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Film explores the questions surrounding the sudden death of a local youth

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

He was just 17 years old and a well-known local hockey player with the Beeton Stingers.

Sean Hartman died suddenly in 2021, leaving his grieving family with many questions as to why a healthy young person would suddenly pass away.

The questions kept leading back to the same source.

Sean had received the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine just a couple of weeks earlier, and almost immediately, he started feeling ill. At the time, a COVID-19 vaccination was required for participation in minor hockey.

Although the resulting investigation could not determine the exact cause of death, Sean's father Dan, kept looking for answers.

A 60-minute documentary film investigation titled *The Shot: Sean Hartman's Story* follows Dan's journey to find answers.

Through interviews, medical records, and firsthand accounts, the film explores themes of accountability, public health decision-making, and a father's resolve to see justice.

Film director and producer Dean Rainey first became aware of possible vaccination side effects when one of his friends had a severe reaction to a vaccine and, as a result, became seriously ill and disabled. Several years later, his friend is still suffering the effects of the illness.

"One of my friends was having adverse effects, and he wasn't speaking publicly about the vaccine, but from my research, it seemed like it was connected," Rainey explained. "My friend is now paralysed and in long-term care. My interest in this is talk-

ing about it. Vaccine injuries aren't anything new, they've been around as long as we've had vaccines. But we're not even allowed to dialogue about it. People may think my films are anti-vax, but they're not anti-vax, they're just looking at what has happened to individuals. The government acknowledges that there are vaccine injuries, that's why there is a vaccine injury support program."

As a filmmaker, Rainey usually makes television commercials and related video productions. Through his friend, the idea of making a documentary on a possible connection between a vaccine and illness seemed to make sense.

He began working on a documentary about the subject, but he hit a wall of silence when he tried to interview medical professionals about the vaccine.

Several doctors, off the record, admitted they had seen adverse side effects from the vaccine.

Rainey managed to locate other people who suffered from post-vaccine trauma.

Several people at screenings of his film mentioned Sean. Through a series of events, he connected with Dan Hartman and decided to tell his story.

The Shot: Sean Hartman's Story is being shown in theatres across Canada and the US, creating both awareness and controversy.

The film will be shown locally in Alliston in Rotary Hall at the Gibson Cultural Centre on Sunday, May 24, with a 2 p.m. screening.

You can book tickets by visiting www.supportsean.ca, or by showing up on screening day; however, seating is limited, so book in advance to secure a seat.

Statement supporting local manufacturing

Continued from Page 3

- Support business retention and expansion within the manufacturing sector
 - Strengthen relationships between industry, municipal government, and regional partners
 - Advocate for practical, market-aligned policies that reflect the realities facing manufacturers today
 - Promote workforce development and long-term economic resilience
 - Position our community to attract future investment across both traditional and emerging automotive technologies
- "Manufacturing continues to be a cornerstone of our local economy, supporting thousands of jobs and driving growth across the

region. As industry conditions evolve, we remain committed to ensuring New Tecumseth is a competitive and supportive environment for investment," reads Mayor Norcross's statement.

"On May 21, the Town of New Tecumseth, alongside the Simcoe Auto Mayors, will come together at Town Hall to jointly call on the federal government for targeted amendments to federal automotive policies. At that time, we will also be unveiling a new initiative aimed at supporting and strengthening Canada's automotive strategy."

"We remain confident in the strength of our manufacturing sector and the resilience of our local economy, and we will continue to work with our partners at every level to support its long-term success," the statement concluded.

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MAY 17 SUNDAY, MAY 24, 2026

GIBSON CULTURAL CENTRE
ROTARY HALL
63 TUPPER ST W. ALLISTON, ON

VIP 1:30PM • GA 2:30PM • FILM 3:00PM • Q&A 4:00PM

Details & Tickets: SupportSean.ca

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JASON LAVIGNE

DEAN RAINEY

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Autism Heroes Road Trip passes through New Tecumseth

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Autism Heroes Road Trip arrived in Adjala-Tosorontio and Alliston on Tuesday, May 5, escorted by supporters, police, and fire trucks.

Adam McEachern, an Alliston resident and York Region police officer with two neurodiverse children, Caleb and Jenssen, is cycling and running from Windsor to Ottawa to raise funds for Kerry's Place Autism Services in Toronto.

The journey that began on April 30 will cover almost 1000 kilometres, with the plan to arrive in Ottawa on May 17, ending at the city's Terry Fox statue.

McEachern is running between 20 and 25 kilometres and cycling 35 to 55 kilometres each day.

Since 2020, McEachern has completed three 24-hour events and one 12-hour endurance event, raising around \$100,000 for Kerry's Place, Autism Ontario, and Special Olympics Ontario.

The Road Trip made a stop at the Adjala-Tosorontio Administration Centre on Tues-

day, May 5, then continued on to the New Tecumseth Administration Centre in Alliston.

The stop in Alliston gave McEachern the opportunity to sleep in his own bed for one night rather than the motor home that had been accompanying him on his journey.

In the evening, a special fundraising spaghetti dinner – Carbboost 2026 – was hosted by the Kiwanis Club of South Simcoe.

"I don't like biking and I don't like running," McEachern joked about his journey and the physical endurance required. "This is the fifth event. I've done four other extreme fitness events. This whole thing started several years ago from a conversation I had with Caleb. Caleb had been shown a video about Terry Fox, and he became fascinated with him and his journey. He couldn't understand why he would do something so hard, when other people wouldn't do it. I told him sometimes you have to do hard things, and things are bigger than yourself."

Running and cycling long distances require a lot of determination and physical preparedness.

"I've been training my whole life,"



AUTISM HEROES – The Autism Heroes Road Trip arrived at the New Tecumseth Administration Centre in Alliston on Tuesday, May 5, and was greeted by local dignitaries and supporters. Local resident Adam McEachern is cycling and running from Windsor to Ottawa to raise funds for Kerry's Place Autism Services in Toronto. The ride first stopped at the Adjala-Tosorontio administration centre before continuing on to Alliston. **BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO**

McEachern said. "For this event, I trained two to three hours every day, doing between 40 and 60 kilometres of cardio a day plus regular training. Starting in Windsor, we had a route where we could hit as many towns as we could. I start the day off with some biking, around 20 to 30 kilometres, then put on the shoes and run for ten kilometres, then back

to the bike. It depends on the road and the weather."

A group of supporters were at the Adjala-Tosorontio administration to greet McEachern when he arrived.

Another group was waiting in Alliston when he arrived to congratulate and support him in his effort.

Stevenson Memorial Hospital celebrates 30 years of Midwifery Program

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Stevenson Memorial Hospital is celebrating a 30-year partnership with the Alliston Midwives – Caring Hands Midwifery Services.

The anniversary coincided with International Day of the Midwife on May 5.

Members of the original midwifery team, as well as clients and families, SMH midwifery staff, SMH leadership, hospital partners and local dignitaries gathered at the hospital on May 4 to celebrate the special milestone.

In 1994, the province passed legislation establishing midwifery services, and a small, dedicated team of midwives founded Caring Hands Midwifery Services in Alliston.

A partnership with the hospital was created two years later, and the first birth at SMH by a midwife occurred on September 26, 1996.

The New Tecumseth community has welcomed and supported midwifery services, with approximately half of the births at the hospital delivered by the midwifery team.

The SMH midwifery team has now grown to eight midwives on staff.

Over the 30 years of the program's existence, close to 5,000 births have been delivered by the midwifery team at SMH.

"Our integrated midwifery-hospital part-

nership is unique and such a valued service for our community," said SMH Vice President of Clinical Services Marnie Lightfoot, who also works as Chief Nursing Executive. "This partnership brings together midwives, nurses and obstetricians and offers a collaborative model, working together to provide the best care experience for birthing parents and their families. Our obstetrics staff and professional staff are privileged to work alongside such a caring team, and I look forward to seeing this partnership continue to thrive."

In 2024, the partnership was enhanced through the Midwifery Integration in New Tecumseth (MINT) Program.

The MINT program is a postpartum program that provides support to families upon the birth of their infant, including breastfeeding support, newborn care, and mental health services.

The program is located in the hospital's Obstetrics Clinic.

"We are proud to partner with Stevenson Memorial Hospital, working alongside such a professional and supportive team," said Holly Ryans, Lead Midwife at SMH. "Providing this services is important to our growing community, and it's a privilege to do so with a team that shares our philosophy of safe, high quality labour and delivery services close to home."



MILESTONE CELEBRATION – Stevenson Memorial Hospital (SMH) is celebrating a 30-year partnership with the Caring Hands Midwifery Services. The celebration coincided with International Day of the Midwife on May 5. Caring Hands Midwifery Services midwives, hospital staff, clients and dignitaries gathered at the hospital on Monday, May 4, to celebrate the anniversary. Steve Cassar, representing Simcoe-Grey MPP Brian Saunderson, presents a certificate of recognition to Holly Ryans, lead midwife at SMH and members of Caring Hands Midwifery Services. **BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO**

Midwives perform their duties both in hospitals and during home births. Women and families choosing to have a home birth have increased over the years, but most still choose to be at the hospital.

"Provincially, it is between 15 and 20 per cent," Ms. Ryans explained. "Here in Alliston, it's closer to ten per cent because they

like to come to this small, personalized care type of hospital. There are people who are better candidates than others for a home birth. If there are any risk factors, we do recommend a hospital delivery."

For more information about the SMH Midwifery program, visit online at stevensonhospital.ca/midwife-clinic.

BRIAN SAUNDERSON
MPP - Simcoe-Grey

Alliston Constituency Office
180 Parsons Road, Unit 28
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*Together, let's make every day,
a better day, in Simcoe-Grey!*



Walk for Suicide Awareness supports prevention

As many suicides are not made public or, in some cases, not even acknowledged, you may be surprised to learn the real number of suicides in Ontario alone each year.

Suicide claims more than 720,000 lives each year, according to the World Health Organization. It is among the leading causes of death globally, and one of the most significant causes of mortality among young people.

The Simcoe County Suicide Awareness Council is a volunteer, grass-roots community group united around suicide awareness, prevention, and education.

The council also offers a 10-week grief peer support program for adults who have lost loved ones to suicide.

The Simcoe County Suicide Awareness Council will be hosting its 14th annual Walk of Hope and Life Promotion in Barrie on Sat-

urday, May 23.

Registration will begin at 3 p.m., with the walk taking place between 3:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Starting at Meridian Place (30 Simcoe St., Barrie), the walk will proceed down to and along the waterfront.

There will be an opening ceremony prior to the walk with guest speakers, smudging, entertainment, and reflection.

The walk is taking place in remembrance of those who have been loved and lost to suicide, to raise awareness of suicide in the community, and to support those who are struggling.

There is no fee to register as a walker, but participants are asked to either seek pledges online or bring a donation to the event.

Donations can be made online at www.Hopeequalslife.ca.



Must-have features when outfitting an outdoor living space

Outdoor living spaces are wildly popular. A 2024 poll of more than 1,000 homeowners conducted by Thumbtack found that 29 percent of respondents intended to spend as much as \$5,000 improving their outdoor spaces in the coming months.

THERE'S MUCH TO GAIN from upgrading outdoor living spaces. In addition to the improved functionality and additional usage residents get to enjoy when upgrading these spaces, such projects can help to improve resale value. In fact, a 2021 survey of real estate agents conducted by HomeLight found that a new patio provided an average return on investment of 109 percent.

There's much to gain in both the short- and long-term when upgrading an outdoor living space. The following are a handful of must-have features to make such spaces an even better addition to a home's existing layout and landscape.

Multi-functionality

The home renovation experts at This Old House note versatility in an outdoor living space can set a stage for relaxation, entertaining and family activities. Outdoor living spaces tend to be most useful when they're multifunctional, providing a space where residents can relax on weekend mornings and

evenings throughout the week while also offering the potential to entertain crowds during backyard barbecue season. Homeowners can keep this in mind and prioritize multifunctionality when designing outdoor living spaces.

Seamless connectivity with interior designs

Though outdoor living areas were long viewed as areas wholly separate from home interiors, that traditional outlook has changed in recent years. In a 2024 survey conducted by Fixr, 78 percent of industry experts noted a coherent indoor-outdoor design was the most popular outdoor living space trend that year. This design choice suggests an outdoor living space is an extension of the home as opposed to a wholly separate area.

Comfortable seating

The days of stackable plastic lawn chairs are largely a thing of the past. Modern outdoor living spaces offer comfortable, all-weather seating where residents and guests can gather to relax and engage

in conversation. Accent tables to place drinks and other items is another nice touch that can add to the comfort-first feel of an outdoor space. Modular furniture merits homeowners' consideration, as such furnishings can be customized and rearranged for each gathering and might prove easier to store for homeowners who will be taking the seating in over the winter.

Lighting

Of course, summer gatherings in outdoor living spaces have a tendency to continue past sundown. Proper lighting can ensure spaces are safely navigated when the sun goes down. Sufficient lighting also enhances the visual appeal of the space while facilitating conversation when natural light is no longer enough to illuminate a space.

There's no shortage of ways to create an awe-inspiring outdoor living space. Homeowners can start with some must-have features and then build on the spaces as they see fit.

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Spring is the perfect time to refresh your home and create a cleaner, healthier living space for the months ahead. A few simple cleaning habits can make a big difference in helping your home feel more comfortable and organized.

- Start from top to bottom. Dust ceiling fans, shelves and light fixtures first so dust can fall to the floor before vacuuming and mopping.
- Open windows whenever possible. Fresh air can help reduce indoor odors and make your home feel cleaner and brighter.
- Focus on high-touch surfaces. Frequently disinfect door handles, countertops, light switches and remote controls to help maintain a healthier environment.
- Don't forget hidden areas. Behind furniture, under beds and inside appliances are often overlooked during regular cleaning routines.

- Refresh fabrics throughout the home. Vacuum upholstered furniture, wash throw blankets and rotate mattresses to help eliminate dust and allergens.
- Use environmentally responsible products. Choosing Green Housekeeping products can help maintain a clean home while being mindful of the environment and the people living in it.

For homeowners looking to save time and enjoy a consistently clean home, professional cleaning services can help make spring cleaning easier and more effective.

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Choosing the right renovation company is an important decision for any homeowner. While many companies compete primarily on pricing, at The Flooring Mart Inc. we believe that professionalism, workmanship, transparency, and customer experience are what truly define a successful project.

Based in Bolton, Ontario, The Flooring Mart Inc. has built a strong reputation by consistently delivering high-quality flooring and renovation services to homeowners across the GTA. From engineered hardwood, vinyl, laminate, and tile installations to staircase refinishing, kitchens, bathrooms, painting, and complete interior renovations, our focus has always been on providing reliable service and long-lasting results.

What distinguishes our company is the level of care and attention we bring to every project. We understand that renovations are a significant investment, which is why we take the time to properly guide our customers through the process. Product selection is not simply about appearance; factors such as durability, subfloor preparation, moisture resistance, veneer thickness, installation methods, and long-term performance all play an important role in the overall success of the renovation. We ensure that our customers are informed and confident in the decisions they make for their homes.

Communication and project coordination are also key elements of our approach. Renovation projects often involve multiple stages and trades, and maintaining clear communication throughout the process helps create a smoother experience for everyone involved. From the initial consultation and quotation stage through to project completion, we aim to keep our customers informed, organized, and comfortable throughout the renovation journey.

At The Flooring Mart Inc., we also place a strong emphasis on workmanship and finishing details. Proper floor preparation, accurate installation techniques, staircase finishing, trim

work, and clean transitions are all essential to achieving a professional result. We believe that quality craftsmanship is what ultimately determines the appearance, durability, and value of the finished project.

Another advantage for homeowners is our ability to provide multiple renovation services under one roof. Rather than coordinating with several different contractors, customers can work with one experienced team for flooring, stairs, kitchens, bathrooms, painting, and related interior work. This helps simplify the renovation process while maintaining consistency throughout the project.

Most importantly, we believe in conducting business with honesty and professionalism. Our goal has never been simply to offer the lowest price in the market, but rather to provide fair pricing supported by quality materials, experienced workmanship, and dependable service. Over the years, much of our growth has come through referrals and repeat customers, which reflects the trust our clients place in our company.

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The Fireplace Stop

taking care of you every step of the way.

BY RILEY MURPHY



At The Fireplace Stop, a customer's experience is truly second to none.

Run by Andy Leonard, his family, and team, he says that their people are what make the store the comforting and welcoming space it is.

They'll take care of you every step of the way, whether it's picking out a product in their up-to-date showroom, right down to the recommendation on installation.

The Fireplace Stop will have everything covered, so all you have to worry about is enjoying.

Leonard prides himself on his businesses, bringing good people, high-quality products, and fair prices to the table.

"Everything, and a little bit more," he adds.

But don't just take their word for it, 90% of the jobs they do, the customer will phone back to thank them for their exceptional service, and quality team members.

The Fireplace Stop, founded by Leonard in 1987, opened its location at Highway 9 and 27 in Schomberg in 1990, where it stands to this day.

Now, Leonard and his family are coming full circle, as they have taken over the Fireplace and Leisure Centre in Seguin, Ontario, 1km from Parry Sound, where he grew up.

At The Fireplace Stop, not only does Leonard work with his three kids, but the team is like one big family, with many of its employees having been there for decades, the business is Canadian, family-owned and operated and always has been.

They bring their team to both locations, ensuring best treatment will never be a second thought.

At The Fireplace Stop, they understand the struggles you face every day and work hard to adapt to them. They know that you work hard too!

If you can't come in during their operating

hours, they invite you to make an appointment to visit, see their products, and meet their team in person.

Leonard makes sure his people are the best, in turn giving you the best experience possible.

His team knows exactly which product you'll need after hearing your concerns, and the exact technical aspects needed for the job.

They also receive frequent recertifications, ensuring their technique remains up to date.

"You're going to be taken care of the right way," says Leonard.

Continuing to advance their business by meeting their customers where they are, The Fireplace Stop is renovating their showroom with the newest products and introducing financing for all jobs.

Leonard believes that, like all high-ticket items in your life, you should be able to do the same

with your jobs through The Fireplace Stop.

Financing is done directly online, ensuring customers can keep their personal information private and making it quick and easy for consumers.

At The Fireplace Stop, they can do a wide variety of jobs, including those on properties with snowmobile or boat access only.

They sell and service top-brand-name fireplaces at both locations, and also offer hot tubs at their northern location.

At The Fireplace Stop, both staff and customers are treated like lifelong friends. Many actually are, as Leonard says he knows almost everyone who comes through his doors.

Leonard and his team encourage you to stop by their stores, and understand for yourself what makes them your neighbours' go-to business for decades.

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The basics of 3 popular siding materials



Few home renovation projects can change the look of a home as significantly as new siding. New siding can make a home look brand new, and a new color can dramatically change the perception of a home.

As homeowners begin to consider siding replacement projects, they might be surprised to learn their options in relation to materials are so numerous. Though it's great to have options, it also can be difficult to pick a material when there are so many products to choose from. Vinyl, fiber cement and wood are three popular siding materials, and understanding the characteristics of each can help homeowners make more informed decisions.

Vinyl

Vinyl siding has long been among the most popular siding materials. The National Association of Home Builders notes that popularity has declined in recent years, with the market share of vinyl siding dropping 5 percent over the last decade and nearly 13 percent over the last 20 years. Despite that declining popularity, vinyl remains a strong option for many homeowners due to its affordability and minimal maintenance requirements. Consumer Reports also notes that vinyl siding is impervious to insects and water, an attribute that's highly appealing to many homeowners.

Fiber cement

Consumer Reports notes that fiber cement siding blends cement, sand and cellulose. Many homeowners like fiber cement siding because of its aesthetic appeal, as it looks like real wood without the vulnerabilities associated with wood (see below). The home renovation experts at This Old House report that fiber cement siding has exceptional durability and offers great resistance to environmental factors like harsh weather, UV rays and moisture. Fiber cement siding also is a low-maintenance, insect-resistant option that won't warp or rot. Fiber cement siding is not easily installed, which contributes to a higher overall cost.

Wood

Siding materials don't get much more traditional than wood. It shouldn't surprise homeowners to learn that wood siding can warp or rot, and anything made from wood can be vulnerable to insects. However, well-maintained wood siding can be very durable and certain types are less vulnerable to rot than others. Local climate will affect which wood siding options are best for a given area. Many see wood siding as characteristic of a high-end home, making the somewhat higher price tag compared to vinyl siding easier to justify.

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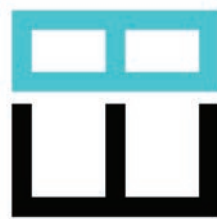
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FOCUS ON DECORATING – BENJAMIN MOORE HAS PROUDLY SERVED THE COMMUNITY WITH QUALITY PAINTS, STAINS, WALLPAPER AND WINDOW COVERINGS FOR NEARLY 30 YEARS.

The family-owned, independent premium paint store offers colour consultations, custom colour matching, jobsite delivery and expert advice on projects of any kind.

Business owner Ken Eppenberger said Focus on Decorating is built upon a long-standing customer-first philosophy passed down from his mother, who opened the store in 1997.

He attributes the company's long-standing success to its loyal customer base and word-of-mouth reputation within the community.

"We really want to express our thanks and appreciation to the customers who have stuck with us for the past 29 years that we've been here. That loyalty means everything to us," said Eppenberger, who has been involved with the family business since it opened and took over management about 15 years ago.

"A big part of what we do is build relationships. We still have customers today who my mother knew de-

acades ago, and they continue to come back because that sense of trust and rapport has carried through over time."

Beyond paint, Focus on Decorating carries Hunter Douglas Blinds, Alta Window Fashions, Maxxmar Window Fashions, Hickory Hardware products, wallpaper ordering through supplier books, and a wide selection of decorative home-finishing solutions.

Personalized service and product quality are what define Focus on Decorating, according to Eppenberger. "People who have tried our brand are generally impressed with the quality, the lasting finish, and the coverage they get compared to other products on the market," he said.

"Our staff is very knowledgeable, and when people come in with an issue or a problem, we take the time to work through it with them and try to resolve it properly, not just send them away with a quick answer."

Benjamin Moore products are known for their high solids content, which results in better coverage because there is a higher percentage of actual pigment-binding material in their paints rather than

solvent. This means fewer coats of paint are needed, improving durability and providing a thicker, longer-lasting finish.

What sets Focus on Decorating apart from other retailers is its independent-store atmosphere and its emphasis on greeting customers and providing immediate assistance with a personal touch.

Eppenberger said he has a small but highly dedicated team of seven employees who ensure customers walk out the door with everything they need.

"Most of our staff have five to seven years of experience here, so customers are dealing with people who really know the products," he said. "My philosophy is that it shouldn't matter who you're talking to — you should be getting the same answers and the same advice from everyone here."

Focus on Decorating is very active in the community, supporting service clubs and church groups throughout the year. The business recently donated paint to the Orangeville Curling Club for facility improvements and has donated gift cards to support its fundraising efforts through annual bonspiels.

"We try to assist where we can," Eppenberger said. Monthly specials are always available, and there is

pricing flexibility for whole-home projects. Staff work with customers to help manage project costs where possible.

Focus on Decorating is located at 88 First St., Orangeville, and is open seven days a week. Its hours of operation are from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sundays.

The weekday hours serve contractors by opening early at 7 a.m. and the general public by keeping it open until 7 p.m.

Eppenberger says he's always happy to help customers, no matter when they come through the door.

"The consumer coming in is never an inconvenience to us — they are the reason we are in business. If you lose sight of that, you lose what makes a small business work in the first place," Eppenberger explained.

"We try to go out of our way to provide a level of service where the customer doesn't have to figure everything out themselves. We guide them through it, we help them make decisions."

To learn more about Focus on Decorating, visit focusondecorating.ca or call (519) 942-8171 during regular business hours.

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Brisco Furniture & Appliance: Quality, Service, and Trust Since 1983

For more than four decades, Brisco Furniture & Appliance has been helping families across the region create comfortable, stylish homes with quality furniture, appliances, and exceptional customer service. Known for its friendly atmosphere and honest approach, the family-owned business has earned a loyal customer base throughout Alliston, Tottenham, Beeton, Angus, and Shelburne.

Originally established in 1983, the business has been operated by Ken and Heidi Brisco since 1998. Their philosophy is simple: treat customers the way they would like to be treated themselves. That commitment to fairness and service has helped the store build a strong reputation and long-standing community trust.

The showroom features a wide selection of furniture in both traditional and modern styles, including sofas, chairs, dining sets and accent pieces. Customers can also browse top-quality Canadian-made brands alongside trusted appliance names such as Whirlpool, Maytag, KitchenAid, and Frigidaire.

In 2012, the Briscos expanded by opening Brisco Mattress World, offering premium mattresses and bedroom furniture from brands including Serta, Simmons, Tempur-Pedic, and Sealy.

With free appliance and mattress delivery, expert installation, and old-item removal services, Brisco continues to provide customers with convenience, value, and personalized care close to home.

Factors to consider before renovating a driveway

Materials

Driveways can be made from a variety of materials, even grass or soil. The following are some driveway materials homeowners may choose from:

- Gravel
- Chip seal
- Concrete
- Asphalt
- Rubber
- Exposed aggregate
- Pavers
- Permeable pavers
- Heated

Repair or replace

Nearly any size crack can be patched with concrete or cold-patch asphalt, or specialty materials, according to This Old House, an online home improvement resource. Repairing and resealing a driveway can help prolong its longevity. Plus, this is a more cost-effective option for homeowners on a budget who want to improve curb appeal and safety.

Large holes or unsightly damage may require a driveway replacement. This also will be the case if a homeowner hopes to expand the driveway. Replacing a driveway requires a time commitment. The existing driveway needs to be demolished and removed. The ground underneath typically is smoothed and tamped down. Substrate or wire mesh also may be installed. After the new material is laid, there may be a period of time for settling and curing, during which use of the driveway is prohibited.

DIY or professional?

While sealing and minor repairs generally can be handled by a homeowner who has researched the process, large repairs or driveway replacements should be left to professionals for the best results. Driveway slope needs to be considered for proper



rain runoff, and the professional will understand the thickness and preparatory steps necessary to ensure driveway durability. Installation of a heated driveway requires a specific skill set and this is a job best left to professional driveway contractors.

Driveway enhancements

The options do not end with the driveway material. There are other ways to boost aesthetics.

ILLUMINATION: Homeowners can install recessed LED lights into the driveway to define the edges and add aesthetic appeal.

STAMPED TEXTURE: Homeowners opting for the affordability of concrete can ask for a stamped design that mimics the look of stone or pavers.

GATES: One doesn't have to live in an exclusive community to have their property enhanced by gates. Gates can give a home a distinguished look.

EDGING: Driveways can be edged with another material to create definition between the driveway and lawn, or to provide the perfect spots to plant beds.

Driveway renovations can add curb appeal and improve the functionality of a home.



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Why Swaffield Septic Services stands out

For homeowners and businesses across Simcoe County, reliable septic service is not just a convenience — it's essential. That's why so many residents continue to trust Swaffield Septic Pumping Service for dependable, year-round septic solutions. With decades of experience and a reputation built on honest service, the company has become a go-to name for septic tank cleaning, holding tank pumping, and luxury washroom trailer rentals.

What sets Swaffield Septic apart is its commitment to customer care. Available 24 hours a day, the team understands that septic issues rarely happen at convenient times. Whether it's routine maintenance or an urgent service call, customers can count on fast response times, fair pricing, and knowledgeable technicians who get the job done right the first time.

The company's memorable slogan, "Everything Sucks but the Service," reflects its friendly, down-to-earth approach, which has earned it loyal clients throughout the region. Proper septic maintenance can extend a system's life for decades, and Swaffield Septic helps property owners protect their investment with professional, preventive care.

From residential homes to commercial properties, Swaffield Septic continues to deliver the reliable service Ontario customers depend on every day.



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The 411 on whole-house generators

Weather is unpredictable. Strong winds or storms can wreak havoc on power lines, resulting in outages that may last hours or even days.

People have come to rely on electricity, not only for comfort and safety, but to power just about every aspect of modern life. A power outage can be a minor disruption or downright dangerous, unless a whole-house generator can take over when needed.

WHAT IS A WHOLE-HOUSE GENERATOR?

A whole-house generator, also called a standby generator, is a permanently installed system that provides backup power to a home during a utility outage. The generator typically runs using a natural gas or propane connection.

Unlike a portable generator, a whole-house generator is installed outside on a concrete slab. It is wired to the home's electrical panel through an automatic transfer switch (ATS). This switch will continuously monitor the electrical grid's power and start automatically if an outage is detected. When the power comes back on, the ATS will shut off the generator and reconnect the home to the grid.

GENERATOR CONSIDERATIONS

NJR Home Services says there are some considerations when determining which generator best meets the needs of a household. It's important to identify where power will be needed in the home, whether it's a few essential pieces of equipment or the entire home. The more one wants to have



powered, the more costly the generator will be.

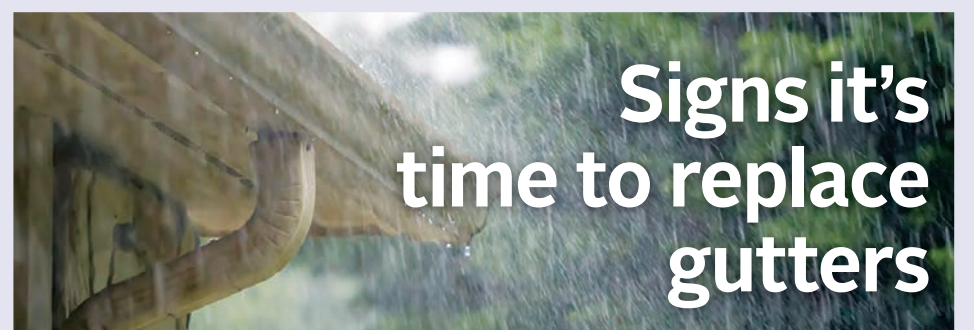
The location of the generator on the property must meet local zoning requirements, which vary from town to town. A permit likely will be required for the installation work.

Another consideration is gas meter sizing. A trained technician should schedule a pressure check to ensure that the gas supply to the home can handle the new generator.

WHAT IF THERE HASN'T BEEN AN OUTAGE?

Most units will test themselves periodically for a few minutes each week to recharge the batteries and keep the engine lubricated, which serves as a testament to the hands-off nature of these systems.

Whole-house generators offer peace of mind in an unpredictable world. When the power goes out, these generators seamlessly kick into action.



Signs it's time to replace gutters

A GUTTER REPLACEMENT might not inspire the same level of excitement as a room addition or an overhaul of an outdoor living space, but new gutters can help to prevent roof damage and make properties safer by ensuring rain water is directed away from walkways. Homeowners who suspect it might be time for a gutter replacement can look for these signs of fading gutters.

CRACKS OR SPLITS: Cracks or splits at the seams of the gutters where two pieces connect is a telltale sign they need to be replaced. Cracks or splits are can slowly lead to separation of gutter pieces, which will lead to leaks. But not all cracks or splits are found at the seams. In fact, some homes feature seamless gutters, which also can crack or split. Regardless of where they're found, cracks or splits are a warning signs of fading gutters.

RUST: Rust is rarely a good sign whether you're looking at a vehicle or even garden tools. Rust also is a bad sign in relation to gutters. Gutters are painted, and not only for aesthetic purposes. Paint on gutter also serves to protect them from water. When paint begins to flake, gutters will begin to rust and may even produce noticeable rust flakes on the ground below. Rust on gutters and rust flakes beneath them are indicative of gutters that need to be replaced.

GUTTERS PULLING AWAY FROM THE HOME: Gutters that appear to be pulling away from the home is a sign that they need to be replaced. Gutters are fastened to a home during installation, which ensures they can withstand rain and water. Over time, those fasteners can wear down, ultimately leading to gutters that appear to be pulling away from the home. Though gutters can be refastened, eventually they will need to be replaced.

POOLING WATER: Pooling water in a gutter may just be a sign that gutters need to be cleaned. However, pooling water on the ground directly beneath gutters indicates they're not effectively directing water away from the home.

WATER DAMAGE INSIDE: A home's interior might not be the first place homeowners look when inspecting for damaged gutters, but a flooded basement or crawl space could indicate a gutter problem. Gutters and downspouts are designed to direct water away from a home when functioning properly. When that isn't happening, water can pool beneath the foundation, leading to pooling water and other water damage in basements and crawl spaces.

Gutter replacement projects may not be exciting, but new gutters can make a home safer and prolong the life of a roof and other features on a property.

The benefits of working with an interior DESIGNER

Homes are undoubtedly a point of pride for millions of homeowners, and that sense of fulfillment is even greater when interiors are up-to-date and welcoming.

Home trends come and go, and busy homeowners can be forgiven if they're not able to keep up with the latest interior design styles. That's the job of a skilled interior designer. Working with such professionals when redoing a home's interior can make all the difference and increase the already profound sense of pride many homeowners have in their homes.

- Interior designers can help narrow down the possibilities. A simple internet search prior to beginning a home renovation project will turn up millions of results. That can leave homeowners' heads spinning as they try to identify their own style and plan a project that coordinates with their preferences. Experienced interior designers can help homeowners identify their style and offer practical insight as they work with clients to choose elements to incorporate into spaces they aspire to renovate.

- Interior designers can ensure a room doesn't stick out like a sore thumb. Just because a design looks good on the internet does not mean it will work well in every home, particularly if only one room is being renovated. Interior designers recognize that and can steer homeowners in the direction of designs that will fit the larger theme of the home

while still offering a fresh look and feel.

- Interior designers can save homeowners money and headaches. Renovation projects can be pricey, and that price tag only goes up when mistakes are made. Interior designers advise clients on furnishings and other design components, and that advice can save homeowners money in the long run. Furnishings may be returnable, but such returns typically come with sizable fees. By directing clients toward furnishings and other components that fit the overall design scheme, interior designers are saving homeowners the cost and headaches associated with fixable yet expensive mistakes.

- Interior designs are up-to-date on the latest trends. Real estate and design trends come and go, and dated designs can adversely affect what homeowners recoup at resale. Homeowners who want to update their home interiors with the ultimate goal of selling their homes can work with experienced interior designers who know which trends are in and which are out. That knowledge can make it easier and more lucrative to sell a home.

Homes are a significant investment, and investing in the services of an experienced interior designer can ensure homeowners maximize the value of their homes.



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Dufferin Lawn Life brings eco-friendly lawn care to Orangeville for over five decades

By Sam Odrowski

Dufferin Lawn Life, Orangeville's longest-standing lawn-care company, has been keeping local green spaces healthy and weed-free for more than 50 years.

The company has built a strong reputation for its personalized, eco-friendly, organic-based lawn care programs. Dufferin Lawn Life improves overall lawn health, eliminates weeds, and monitors activity. The business also offers mosquito and tick control, crack-and-crevice treatments, complete lawn re-seeding, and treatments for trees, shrubs, and roots.

"We're local and we care. If someone has a concern, our experienced staff will get there within a day or two and address it," said Richard Reed, owner of Dufferin Lawn Life. "If there's anything they can't handle, they'll let me know, and I'll go see it for myself."

Dufferin Lawn Life takes a very environmentally friendly approach, using chelated

iron to kill weeds and biologicals to control insects.

The company takes a local approach to lawn care has led to long-term support since opening in 1973.

"I've got clients that are grandchildren of original clients and I've still got some clients that have been with us since the very beginning," Reed noted.

Dufferin Lawn Life proudly provides lawn care to roughly 15 per cent of all Orangeville households, and serves the surrounding area.

"We have specialized equipment to serve people living on large country lots, but the bulk of our business is in town," Reed explained.

Outside of Orangeville, Dufferin Lawn Life services Grand Valley, Amaranth, Mono, Shelburne, Alliston, Dundalk and everywhere in between.

While Dufferin Lawn Life deals with a large volume of customers, it remains community-based with a local focus. It is truly

a multi-generational family business, with Reed's grandson recently completing a co-op program at Dufferin Lawn Life through his high school, and he has become more involved.

Dufferin Lawn Life only uses the highest-quality products, primarily sourced from Canada, and has even developed some products in-house, including liquid aeration.

The business also grows its own grass seed in Western Canada and Portland, Oregon, producing hardy, drought-tolerant seeds.

Dufferin Lawn Life is a leader in the industry, with the University of Guelph and Landscape Ontario inviting Reed to speak at events.

The company supports the community where it can, sponsoring local sports teams and supporting charities.

Dufferin Lawn Life also runs Dufferin Christmas Tree Farm, where patrons can come and cut their own Christmas tree for the holiday season.

The company is currently accepting new clients.

Anyone looking to improve the appearance and health of their lawn can contact Dufferin Lawn Life by phone at 519-942-9333 or email info@dufferinlawnlife.com.

Learn more at the business's website: dufferinlawnlife.com.






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SPORTS

NEW TECUMSETH TIMES



PEDAL TO THE METAL – Senior division athletes from regional high schools start their mountain bike race at the Albion Hills Conservation Area in Palgrave on May 8. Around 150 athletes from South Simcoe and Peel Region took part in the event. Mountain biking is held as a series of meets throughout the spring. (Right) Luke Tomini from Banting Memorial High School in Alliston heads for the finish line in his race. **BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO**

Minor softball association welcomes coaches for upcoming 2026 season

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Tottenham Beeton District Minor Softball Association officially kicked off preparations for the 2026 softball season with a coaches meeting held on Thursday, May 7, at the Tottenham Legion.

Around 60 coaches, volunteers, board members, and community partners gathered to review key information ahead of the upcoming season, helping ensure a positive experience for all athletes participating in the Trailblazers program.

The evening's agenda included discussion on league schedules, practice planning, equipment distribution, uniforms, and game operations.

Also discussed were opening weekend activities, year-end tournaments, coaching

expectations, player safety, and league policies.

Coaches received updated resources, including rules of play, score books, contact information and important season timelines.

The Association was pleased to welcome guest speakers from New Tec Baseball, along with Ryan Shea from South Simcoe Physiotherapy, who shared valuable insights with coaches as they prepare for the upcoming season.

Throughout the evening, division conveners and board members worked directly with coaches to review practice schedules, player communication expectations, code of conduct standards, umpire procedures, rain-out policies, and overall league operations.

With the opening weekend approaching in early June, excitement continues to build for another successful Trailblazers season.



PRE-SEASON START – The Tottenham Beeton District Minor Softball Association held a pre-season meeting for coaches, volunteers, and board members at the Tottenham Legion on Thursday, May 7. The meeting covered everything from league rules to player safety to prepare for the upcoming season. **BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO**

Fergus Whalers claim the 2026 Junior C Schmalz Cup after defeating Tavistock Braves

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Fergus Whalers are the 2026 Ontario provincial Junior C Schmalz Cup champions after winning the final series in five games over the Tavistock Braves.

It was a long season for the two final teams since the Provincial Junior Hockey League played its first games back at the beginning of September.

The Whalers had an outstanding year, going 34-8 for the regular season.

They went on to win 14 of 16 playoff

games before facing Tavistock in the final series.

Tavistock finished the regular season with a 21-10 record. They won 11 of their 16 playoff games.

The final series for the Schmalz Cup got underway in Tavistock on Sunday, May 2, with Game 1. Fergus won that game 2-1 in overtime.

The series was tied at one after the Braves won Game 2, 3-2, on Fergus' home ice on May 3. Game 2 also went into overtime to decide a winner.

The Whalers took a lead in the series with

a 7-4 win in Game 3.

It was a home ice win for the Whalers in Game 4, when they won 6-5 to lead the series 3-1 and put all the pressure on Tavistock to get back in the series.

In the final game, the Braves took an early lead on the only goal in the first period.

It was a tie game when Fergus scored at 58 seconds into the second period.

Tavistock again took a lead early in the second frame, but the Whalers scored two quick goals to take a 3-2 lead with one period remaining.

The Braves tied the game early in the

third period, and neither team could score to break the tie. The game went into overtime to decide the winner.

For the Whalers, a single goal could decide their entire season.

Fergus made good, scoring at nine minutes into the overtime period for the 4-3 win, and they earned the right to hoist the Schmalz Cup in victory.

This is the first time the Whalers have won the Schmalz Cup.

It is quite an achievement considering the Fergus team only joined the PJHL in the 2023/24 season.

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Cocaine, fentanyl, and firearm seized by Nottawasaga OPP

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Officers from the Nottawasaga Detachment Community Street Crime Unit, along with members of the Huronia West CSCU of the Ontario Provincial Police and the Barrie Tactical Unit, executed a warrant in Barrie, leading to multiple arrests and the seizure of firearms and drugs.

The warrant was executed on April 27 as a result of an ongoing drug trafficking investigation.

During the execution of the warrant, three individuals were located inside the residence and placed under arrest.

At the completion of the search, police had located and seized a Glock handgun with an extended magazine, 22 grams of cocaine, small amounts of fentanyl and methamphetamine, six MDMA pills, and a collapsible baton.

As a result of the investigation, the first accused, a 31-year-old, was charged with:

- Traffick in a schedule I substance - Cocaine
- Traffick in a schedule I substance - Other Drugs
- Possession of a schedule I substance for the purpose of Trafficking - Cocaine

· Possession of a schedule I substance for the purpose of Trafficking - Other Drugs

· Unauthorized possession of a prohibited or restricted firearm

· Unauthorized Possession of a prohibited device or ammunition

· Possession of a firearm obtained by crime, knowing its possession is unauthorized

· Careless storage of a firearm

· Possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose

· Possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose

· Possession of Prohibited device or ammunition for a dangerous person

· Fail to comply with Undertaking x2

The second accused, a 34-year-old, was charged with:

· Unauthorized possession of a prohibited or restricted firearm

· Possession of a prohibited device or ammunition

· Possession of a firearm obtained by crime knowing its possession is unauthorized

· Careless storage of a firearm

· Possession of a schedule I substance for the purpose of Trafficking - Cocaine



SEIZED ITEMS – When executing a search warrant on April 27, Nottawasagas OPP officers seized a Glock handgun with an extended magazine, 22 grams of cocaine, small amounts of fentanyl and methamphetamine, six MDMA pills, and a collapsible baton.

BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

· Possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose

· Possession of Prohibited device or ammunition for a dangerous person

The first accused was held for a bail hearing.

The second accused was released with a future court date at the Ontario Court of Justice in Bradford.

Nottawasaga OPP officers seize cocaine and methamphetamine in Essa Township

Nottawasaga Ontario Provincial Police's Community Street Crime Unit (CSCU), with assistance from the Collingwood and Huronia West CSCU's of OPP, have arrested one individual following a months-long drug trafficking investigation.

On May 7, officers executed a search warrant at a residence in Essa Township. One individual was taken into custody without incident.

As a result of the search, officers seized:

- Approximately 32 grams of cocaine
- Approximately 17 grams of methamphetamine

• Various cutting agents

• \$2,830 in Canadian currency believed to be proceeds of crime

• Brass knuckles and a large knife

As a result of the investigation, Marc Skelton, 36, of Essa Township, has been charged with:

• Trafficking in a Schedule I substance - Cocaine

• Trafficking in a Schedule I substance - Methamphetamine

• Possession of a Schedule I substance for the purpose of trafficking - Cocaine

• Possession of a Schedule I substance for

the purpose of trafficking - Methamphetamine

• Unauthorized possession of a weapon

• Possession of property obtained by crime under \$5,000

• Fail to comply with an undertaking

The accused was held for a bail hearing. The listed charges have not been proven in court.

Anyone with information regarding illegal drug activity is encouraged to contact the Ontario Provincial Police at 1-888-310-1122. Should you wish to remain anonymous, you may contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS).



EVIDENCE TABLE – Nottawasaga OPP officers seized cocaine, meth, cutting agents, weapons and Canadian currency after executing a search warrant on May 7.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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County of Simcoe commemorates Paramedic Services Week

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The County of Simcoe is celebrating Paramedic Services Week from May 17 to 23, 2026, and honouring the dedicated professionals who deliver life-saving care and essential support to residents across the region.

This year, the Paramedic Chiefs of Canada's national theme, "Improving Outcomes,

Together," highlights the collective responsibility we all share in supporting the people behind the care.

Paramedic Services Week is an opportunity to recognize not only the critical work Paramedics perform every day, but also the systems and support that help them thrive.

Improving outcomes extends beyond medicine – it includes investing in training, facilities, resources and opportunities.

"Paramedics are there for us during some

of the most challenging moments in our lives," said Simcoe County Warden Basil Clarke.

"Their skill, compassion, and commitment make our communities safer and stronger. As we mark Paramedic Services Week, we honour our Paramedic Services professionals and say thank you for everything they do to care for our residents."

Formal celebrations begin on Tuesday, May 12, with the swearing in of this year's

honorary Paramedic for a Day contest winner, Ishani, a Grade 5 student from Oro-Medonte.

Ishani will receive a certificate, a first-aid bag, and a stethoscope, and will take part in a mock exercise and a photo opportunity with County of Simcoe paramedics.

Throughout Paramedic Services Week, paramedics will attend community events across the region to highlight the important work they do.

Continued from Page 4

Brock's Banter: Cellphone couples counselling

In a CBC report on Manitoba's progression on the file, they cite Premier Wab Kinew's concern with the "addiction to the infinite scroll" and its impact on anxiety, depression, and other mental health indicators, as a reason to move forward.

Manitoba's move comes as the Federal Government considers following Australia's lead in a country-wide ban on the same for users aged 16 and under. This development follows two non-binding motions passed at the Liberal Party of Canada's convention this past spring, which has caught the attention of party members in power – and amongst the opposition.

While some important questions have been raised over enforcement of keeping youth from finding ways around a ban, they have stressed the importance of making sure legislation is comprehensive and done right.

"The government's response to companies behind AI chatbots – tools that simulate human conversation – is being closely monitored in the wake of the Tumbler Ridge, B.C. mass shooting," the CBC reported last month. "Open AI decided against flagging concerning messages the shooter had exchanged with ChatGBT months earlier.

"[Minister of Canadian Culture and Identity Marc] Miller says a moratorium on social media and AI chatbots 'could be an important layer' as government looks to resurrect part of its online harms legislation, 'but has to be seen as that and not as an answer to everything.'

"The politics...of it are convenient, but the policy has to be right," said Miller.

But is an outright ban the right policy?

The devil will be in the details.

Early results from Australia seem promising, and Ontario Education Minister Paul Calandra said such measures are being explored in this Province as well – building upon their ban on cell phones in the classrooms issued in 2024.

"I think the evidence is becoming more and more clear that cellphone use in our schools – elementary and secondary schools – anywhere on site has become a problem," said Calandra via the CBC.

It certainly has become a problem, there's no arguing that. And, in the case of these AI chatbots, it's become far more than just a "problem," but is a ban really the next logical step?

To my mind, a blanket ban represents an opportunity that is in danger of being missed.

Is cellphone use in schools, in and of itself, the problem? Or, is the problem cellphone use that is unfettered and unguided?

While I am not an educator myself, it appears to me that a major issue at the heart of it all is lack of instruction and education on how to use these ubiquitous devices, and all the bells and whistles they and app-makers offer, to their best and safest advantage.

If used correctly, these devices have tremendous power to enhance the learning experience, point users in – and I can't stress this enough – the right direction to learn more and enhance their lessons, and explore new horizons.

But it takes a collective effort – of teachers, parents, caregivers, and guardians alike – to equip youth with all-important critical thinking skills to

suss out good resources from bad, and be able to separate the wheat from the chaff – or, in the parlance of Artificial Intelligence, the real from the "slop."

A ban would certainly have its bene-

fits, but, before it's put into place, all the good must be weighed with the bad – and an outright ban, to my mind, seems like a reactionary step that avoids the heavy lifting that could reap benefits.



OBITUARIES

FOREVER IN OUR *Hearts*

Bolton, Connie (née Kelly)

November 3, 1943 – May 9, 2026

Connie Bolton passed peacefully with her girls by her side at Matthews House Hospice, Alliston, at the age of 82. She was the beloved mother of Donna (Keith) and Bubby, cherished grandmother of Ashley (Chris) and Johnathan, and loving GG of Nicholas and Michael.

Connie is survived by her sister, Karen (Earl). She was predeceased by her husband, George Matthew Bolton, and her siblings Kathy, Anne, Judy, and Sheila "Dolly." She will be deeply missed by her nieces, nephews, extended family, and her chosen family.

Cremation has taken place. The family will receive friends at Rod Abrams Funeral Home, 1666 Tottenham Rd., Tottenham (905-936-3477), on Thursday, May 14, 2026, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., and on Friday, May 15, from 10:00 a.m. until the time of the memorial service at 11:00 a.m.

Donations in Connie's memory to Matthews House Hospice would be appreciated. Online condolences and memories may be shared with the family at www.RodAbramsFuneralHome.com



AND THE WINNER IS – Nicole Graf of Tottenham accepts the grand prize at this year's CRIC dance and draw at Orangeville Honda on May 8 — a 2026 Honda Civic. Joining her are friend Nicole Rossignol and children Jessie and Isaac. Congratulating her are Haley Langford, general sales manager at Orangeville Honda, and Dave Osborne, finance manager.

BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

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