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# The Paris Independent

Saturday, February 22, 2025

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### In Community



Ringette  
Teams invade  
Paris!

Pages 19-21

Meet the Provincial Election  
Candidates. See Pages 5-9

# NORTH CHAMPIONS!



The Paris High School Girls Hockey Team won the Athletic Association of Brant, Haldimand & Norfolk Counties North Championship title during a Wednesday morning game against Assumption. The Panthers will now face two teams from AAHBN South before they can claim the overall title. Paris has recorded a perfect 9-0 season to date. See story on page 17-18.

Photo by George Le Gresley

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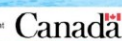
# SATURDAYS in Paris

Every Saturday 1 PM - 4 PM  
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# COMMUNITY DIRECTORY

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 Police Department: 888-310-1122  
 Fire Department: 519-442-4500  
 Willet Hospital: 519-442-2251

**County of Brant Office:** 519-442-6324  
**Paris Public Library:** 519-442-2433

## Paris Councillors & Mayor :

Mayor - David Bailey 226-387-2490  
 Ward 2 - Steve Howes 519-442-4955  
 Ward 2 - Lukas Oakley 226-216-3037  
 Ward 3 - John Bell 519-209-2277  
 Ward 3 - John Peirce 519-442-7134  
 Administration & Bylaw: 519-442-7268

**Paris Customer Service Office** 66 Grand River St.  
 N. 519-442-7268  
 Open Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

## **Main Services include:**

- Accounts Receivable invoice payments
- Blue Boxes and Composters (pre-arrange pick up of composter)

- Brant Transit punch cards purchase and pick up
- Building Permits may be submitted and Building staff consulted
- Calendar pick up (free)
- Commissioner of Oath is by appointment only
- Dog license and tag
- Dog Park membership and key
- Parking ticket payment
- Property Tax payments and inquiries
- Public Works permits may be submitted
- Use the computer to meet with a virtual Planner to ask questions.
- Water testing sample bottles may be picked up. Drop off water testing samples on the last Wednesday of the month before 2 pm at the Burford Customer Service Office

## **Brant Sports Complex & Other Facility Booking**

519-442-1944- Open Monday - Sunday, 8:30 am - 8:00 pm.

## **Main services include:**

- Dog Park membership and key
- Dog license and tag
- Tennis Court membership and key
- Camp registration and recreation program registration

Articles, Events & Story ideas, please submit by email to:

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**LOCAL NEWS  
MATTERS**

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## STATEMENT

We are an independently owned organization made up of likeminded volunteers from within our community with the main purpose of providing Paris and area with a trustworthy and reliable source of local news. Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of everything we publish, we regret any errors that may occur. We limit our liability to that of printing a retraction upon notification of such errors in the next available publication. Our mail and Email addresses are listed below:

Published Weekly on Saturday

7 ANN STREET, PARIS, ON, CANADA N3L 1A1  
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# COMMUNITY EVENTS

**TOMORROW! PARIS SKETCHERS MONTHLY SKETCHULE!** – Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at Janice’s House, 20 Burwell Street, Paris. Janice is an enthusiastic member of Paris Sketchers. Come out and practice your artistic ability with group of like-minded individuals. Participants of all skill levels are welcome!

**TOMORROW! PRICELESS ART AUCTION** – February 23, 6:30 pm to 9 pm at Wincey Mills, Paris. Hosted by The Rotary Satellite Club of Paris. Tickets available [here](#). See details on pages 12-13.

**BRANT MEN OF SONG** – Weekly rehearsals on Tuesdays at 7 pm. Remaining February date is February 25<sup>th</sup>. Rehearsals are held at First Baptist Church located at 70 West ST in Brantford. New members are always welcome to attend and learn more about our activities.

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS MONTHLY MEETING** – Tuesday, February 25 at Sacred Heart Parish Hall in Paris starting at 7:30 pm.

**Paris CHOCOLATE & WINE FEST**

WINE SAMPLING | FOOD TRUCKS | ALL THINGS CHOCOLATE

FEB 22 10AM-4PM  
FEB 23 11AM-3PM  
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WORKSHOPS + ACTIVITIES | GIVEAWAYS | 90+ VENDORS & ARTISANS

**DOWNTOWN PARIS**

**FEB 22 Mystery Sip Scavenger Hunt**  
1 PM to 4 PM

**SATURDAYS IN PARIS**

Gather clues & ingredients to sip the mystery drink!

This is a scavenger hunt in downtown Paris, for all ages, but especially for kids to enjoy, no registration or tickets required, just join us between 1 PM and 4 PM (you must start by 3:30 PM) at the first Scavenger spot.

The Mystery Sip Scavenger Hunt will kick off at El Thrift (21 William St, the pink store) you must answer a riddle or a question, and if you're successful you'll receive a cup for your Mystery Sip AND the next location on the Scavenger Hunt! The other locations and Mystery Sip elements will be revealed as you solve the clues, discover the Scavenger Hunt spots across downtown Paris and at the final stop you will enjoy your mystery sip reward – indoors – munch on treats provided and read books from our local library.

And – before, during or after your Scavenger Hunt – visit The Paris Wincey Mills Co for a mystery marshmallow arts & crafts activity and take a pic in the Hot Cocoa Selfie station, both provided by forest + folk

HAMILTON HALTON BRANT  
FRONTIER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
AGENCY FOR SOUTHERN ONTARIO  
Canada

**DOWNTOWN PARIS**

**FEB 22 Grand Mac & Cheese Competition**  
1 PM to 4 PM

**SATURDAYS IN PARIS**

The battle for the Best Mac & Cheese begins!

Order, taste and rate Mac & Cheese centric dishes in delicious downtown Paris, each participating restaurant will give you a ballot for voting and rating your cheesy experience, try one or try them all. These bites will range from classic Mac & Cheese to cheesy concoctions with Mac & Cheese influence, who will be the head cheese? Their fate lies in your hands and taste buds!

Participating Restaurants: TBA

Join forest + folk in The Paris Wincey Mills for a wacky Mac & Cheese inspired craft, get crafty and cheesy at the same time!

HAMILTON HALTON BRANT  
FRONTIER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
AGENCY FOR SOUTHERN ONTARIO  
Canada

**COUNTY OF BRANT Public Library**

**Winter at Pemberley:  
A Jane Austen Celebration**

**CAINSVILLE COMMUNITY CENTRE | FEBRUARY 28 | 7:00 PM**

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**CELEBRATING BRANT COUNTY AGRICULTURE** – Join us at the BCFA Banquet on **Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup>** at 6 pm at the Paris Fairgrounds. The guest speaker Dan Needles! Tickets are \$40/person and can be purchased from BCFA Directors or email at [bcfabanquet@gmail.com](mailto:bcfabanquet@gmail.com)

**DREAMING OF SPRING** – Presented by the Brant County Singers on **Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>** at 3 pm at Sydenham-Heritage United Church Auditorium at 120 Sydenham St, Brantford. Join us for our Charity Concert, free will donation with proceeds going to Brant County Guiding.

**PARIS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY MEETING** - on Wednesday, **March 5<sup>th</sup>** at the Paris Fairgrounds. The meeting will start at 7 pm with a social time. Our guest speaker is Paul Oliver, Attracting Wild Birds to Your Backyard Garden, owner of Urban Nature Stores.

**BRANT 4-H RALLY NIGHT** – Sign up for 2025

Spring/Summer Clubs, learn more about club offerings and how to get involved! Many clubs of interest are being offered, always with the 4H Motto 'Learn to Do by Doig.' **Wednesday, March 5** at 7 pm at the Paris Fairgrounds.

**SPAGHETTI SUPPER** – Etonia United Church, 101 #2 Highway, Etonia on **Wednesday, March 5** from 5 pm to 6:30 pm. Adults, \$20; Children (12 and under) \$5; Preschoolers are free. Includes meat and meatless sauce, meatballs, dessert, refreshments. Takeout available, wheelchair accessible facility.

**EMPOWERED FINANCES** - presented in partnership with Muslim Women of Brant, a non-profit organization formed with the aim of helping others in the community. Join Mahvesh Sheikh, Investment and Wealth Advisor at RBC Wealth Management, to help build your financial acumen and set yourself up for success! **Wednesday, March 5** at 6:30 pm at the Paris Library Branch, 12 William St.

⚡ **BRANCH 90 PARIS** ⚡  
PRESENTS

**2nd Annual  
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10 Team Format.  
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1:00-4:00  
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and Branch 29  
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# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Provincial Election – Meet the Candidates

By **Cassandra Turnbull**

Ontario residents are heading to the polls on February 27<sup>th</sup> to elect the 44<sup>th</sup> Provincial Parliament. The Provincial candidates squared off in a televised debate on February 17<sup>th</sup> discussing key issues including affordability, education, crime and safety, the environment, energy, healthcare, housing, municipalities, taxes, transportation and the US tariffs.

How does this all translate locally, and who are your local candidates? The Paris Independent queried the Brantford-Brant candidates (representing the Paris area), and this is what they had to say when it comes to tackling important matters surrounding tariffs, amalgamation and local concerns.



**Harvey Bischof,  
New Democratic Party**

Harvey Bischof has identified healthcare and affordability as two of the biggest issues facing Ontarians, and Brant residents, right

now. With more than 25,000 people in Brantford-Brant without a family doctor, Bischof said his party is committed to hiring more doctors and other healthcare professionals, so people have reliable access to primary care.

Adding to concerns around primary care, Bischof said, “We need someone to fight to get a desperately needed hospital built. Given years to do so, neither the Liberals nor PCs have gotten the job done.”

Affordable living is another major concern among area residents and Bischof said he’s highlighted that housing has become unaffordable for too many people.

“We will get the government back in the business of building affordable housing,” he committed. “We will implement real rent controls to ensure renters have affordability and predictability in their rental costs. And we’ll end exclusionary zoning that prevents the building of duplexes and quadplexes that are needed to rapidly increase housing supply.”

Addressing the hot topic of American tariffs, Bischof said the Ontario NDP has a multi-pronged strategy to support businesses here in Brantford-Brant.

He outlined the key steps to that approach: form a Premier’s Task Force on the Economy to bring together industry, workers, and civil society to identify challenges and solutions; Work with trade-exposed industries to create new supply chains and find new export markets; build infrastructure to keep

Ontarians working; Support industries through the immediate economic shock of tariff imposition; Commit to a Team Canada approach with all levels of government and bring down interprovincial trade barriers; Pursue a Buy Ontario procurement strategy and work with the Federal Government to secure family incomes.

Another important election issue for Brant residents is the proposed amalgamation dispute that fired up earlier this year between Mayor Kevin Davis and Mayor David Bailey. Bischof recognized that amalgamation is a complex process that can only work with two willing partners and that’s clearly not the current circumstance, therefore it should be pursued, he said.

“In the future, Brant County and Brantford may decide there is value in some greater coordination of services, for example, but unless and until that is a mutual interest, this idea should be set aside.” Prior to entering politics, Bischof had a 31-year career in education as a classroom teacher and representative of education workers, which he said has led him to become an effective advocate who knows how to advance the interests of his constituents.

“I am running for a second time in a provincial election because after seven years of the Doug Ford government, life has only gotten harder for the people in Brantford-Brant.”

*Continued on page 6*

# COMMUNITY NEWS



## Ron Fox, Ontario Liberal Party

Ron Fox dove into the world of politics because like so many people, he's tired of watching the mismanagement of taxpayer dollars. "I'm tired of seeing the most vulnerable people in our community struggling to get by or being forgotten altogether. I'm tired of waiting for someone to fix our broken backed-up court system, and I'm frustrated that no one is doing anything to help Ontario farmers overcome the challenges they face," said Fox. As he's canvassed door-to-door, he's heard the top two issues residents face are declining healthcare and affordability.

"Ontario's public healthcare system should be the envy of the world. Instead, Doug Ford is dismantling it piece by piece to benefit for-profit health care companies," said Fox. "We need a new hospital here in Brantford-Brant and I'm going to fight like hell for that."

Fox noted that 12,127 people in this riding alone are without a family doctor. That's more concerning on a provincial level with 2.5 million Ontarians without access to family health care.

The liberals also plan to offer a bonus to patriotic nurses and doctors who want to return from the USA to Canada, to help solve our current health care crisis.

On the issue of affordability, Fox said the Liberal government will eliminate the 8% provincial component of the HST on hydro and home heating bills. "Currently Ontario families pay about \$2,600 a year. Taking the provincial part of the HST off hydro and home heating would save everybody about \$200 annually," he said, noting that wouldn't be a one-time reduction but ongoing savings year after year. To further address affordability, Fox said the Liberals are committed to helping the most vulnerable citizens by doubling ODSP benefits and indexing them to inflation and lowering the personal income tax rate for middle class families by 22% (from 9.15% to 7.15%).

As for fighting back against Tariffs, Fox said the Ontario Liberals have introduced an eight-point plan to address them. "Brantford-Brant is the fifth most vulnerable local economy in Canada to these tariff threats," said Fox. The Liberal plan includes a "Fight Tariffs Fund" allowing Ontario businesses to access lower-than-market interest rates to invest in their businesses and protect Canadian jobs.

"We're going to cut the small business tax rate in half, from 3.2% to 1.6%, giving small businesses more in their pockets to offset the impact of tariffs." He also noted the need for infrastructure spending focussed on projects that are most vital – hospitals, schools, roads and transit, creating more jobs.

Finally, the Liberal Government will work to eliminate interprovincial trade barriers to build a truly Team Canada approach to growing the Canadian economy.

Commenting on the local amalgamation topic, Fox said he's heard loud and clear from the people of Brant County that they do not want to amalgamate with Brantford. "An Ontario Liberal Government is going to treat municipal councils as the local leaders who know best. We'll never force amalgamation on municipalities. In the end it should come down to what the people want, and not something forced on them by the province."

Fox said removing provincial conditions and controls surrounding planning rules and how local taxes are raised would prevent the creation of competition and downloaded costs, enabling municipalities to work side-by-side on shared services. "I want to add, Bonnie Crombie and Ontario's Liberals have a plan to introduce the Better Communities fund. This will provide flexible, reliable and predictable funding for municipal infrastructure across the province and right here in Brantford-Brant."

This is Fox's first political run. He's lived in Brantford for over 30 years and has been a local business and community leader. He's a realtor with Royal LePage but has an extensive career as a franchisee, running two Tim Hortons locations for more than 20 years. "My years in business gave me a front-row seat to the needs of our community, and I have listened closely to what people were saying."

# COMMUNITY NEWS



**Karleigh Csordas –  
Green Party of Ontario**

There's a lot at stake in the upcoming provincial election but two fundamental concerns, says Karleigh Csordas, are healthcare and education.

"Both stem from lack of communication and listening to the public sector. These issues have been neglected for too long, and Brantford-Brant residents are feeling the impact," said Csordas.

The Green Party has plans to address 'hallway healthcare' and the rapid decline of the healthcare system by pushing for fair wages for healthcare workers, better working conditions for nurses, more residency spots for doctors and increased funding to keep hospitals and clinics fully staffed and operational, she shared.

Education is another starving sector that affects people's quality of life. "Families and educators are struggling with overcrowded classrooms, a lack of mental health supports, and deteriorating school

infrastructure."

To address those primary concerns, the Green Party is committed to restoring per-student funding, hiring more teachers and educational assistants, and ensuring schools receive the resources they need to support students, she said.

The threat of American tariffs is another matter that requires immediate action. "Brant County, as a hub for agriculture and manufacturing, is among the hardest-hit regions, and we cannot afford delays."

If elected, Csordas and the Green Party have a plan to launch the Protect Ontario Fund, which will provide direct support to businesses most affected by tariffs, helping them stay afloat and keep workers employed. She recognized that beyond immediate relief, there must be changes to public procurement rules and critical structural changes to strength Ontario's economy; that includes expanding interprovincial trade by removing barriers so we can do business and sell goods across Canada.

"The Green Party also supports investment tax credits to help businesses reinvest in operations and create jobs. By diversifying trade partnership and ensuring Ontario businesses can compete in both national and international markets, we can build a more resilient, self-sufficient economy."

Weighing in on the proposed amalgamation of Brantford and Brant

County, Csordas firmly states she is opposed to forced amalgamation because it is not the right solution to finding efficiencies and improved coordination.

"Instead of merging municipalities, we should focus on strengthening partnerships in areas where collaboration makes sense – shared infrastructure, joint projects, and coordinated services that respect the needs of both communities." She said she sees no reason why Brantford and Brant County can't work together and thrive as separate yet connected communities.

Karleigh has a background in customer success, small business and public healthcare and has a keen interest in leading initiatives to make Brantford-Brant a more sustainable, inclusive and connected community. She entered politics during the previous federal election as the Green Party of Canada candidate in Brantford-Brant. That experience opened her eyes to how much provincial decision impact our daily lives, so she ran in the last provincial election and that's why she is running again.

"I got into it (politics) because I believe we deserve better, and I'm tired of waiting for someone else to fix it. I chose the Green Party because it's the only party truly focused on people-first policies."

*Continued on page 8*

# COMMUNITY NEWS



## Joshua Carron, New Blue Ontario

Joshua Carron, the Brantford-Brant New Blue Ontario candidate, said he entered politics after seeing firsthand through his personal business and mentoring at-risk youth, how heavy-handed government policies hurt entrepreneurs and families. He aligned with New Blue Ontario to bring accountability, lower taxes and real change to the community. The party's top two objectives, he said, are to renew accountability and promoting meritocracy and providing tax relief to grow Ontario's economy.

"I've had lifelong Brant residents who have shared stories of municipal decisions that feel disconnected from their daily lives, like excessive spending on projects with little community benefit," said Carron. "As a province, we can enforce stricter audits and ensure municipal funds align with residents' priorities, reducing the need for endless property tax hikes." Addressing a plan to work in conjunction with the federal

government to combat tariffs imposed on Canadians, Carron said they will save Ontarians money by axing the carbon tax, among a number of other initiatives. "Cutting toxic DEI, WOKE and CRT initiatives, cancelling EV subsidies, lowering the administrative cost of education, cancelling and decommissioning wind turbines, and finally lowering HST by 3% (to 10%) will save Ontario much needed funds." By lowering the overall tax burdens Ontarians face, it will make doing business in the province easier and keep business in Canada, he added.

"We can't be so reliant on the US industry for export." Reducing our dependency on exports must be a multi-level approach and unilateral effort with neighbouring provinces. Carron believes we could thank President Donald Trump for pushing Canada in that direction.

"In Brant, we'd work with local businesses to identify tariff-related challenges and advocate for provincial programs that reduce red tape and provide immediate financial relief, ensuring our entrepreneurs can thrive despite federal shortcomings," Carron shared.

Focussing on Brant, Carron firmly believes amalgamation between the City and County is not an option. "These are two separate jurisdictions with distinct identities and communities and should remain so."

Carron worries what would follow. "Just ask any long-time residents of the City of Cambridge how they feel about amalgamation. What comes next? A second-tier regional municipality like Waterloo that Cambridge was absorbed into?" Carron reiterates the New Blue Party would support and work to maintain the local municipal government.

Carron political roots include working with Belinda Karahalio's office when she served as an Independent MPP, gaining valuable insight and experience in constituency work and advocacy. He's a founding board member of the New Blue Party of Ontario. IN the 2022 election, he helped recruit and support candidates across southwestern Ontario laying the groundwork for the party's growth.



## Incumbent Will Bouma, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario

Incumbent MPP Will Bouma was first elected to provincial parliament in June 2018.

*Continued on page 9*



# COMMUNITY NEWS

## *Meet Candidates Continued*

He's served in various capacities during this last term, most recently as Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation. He says serving the community is a gratifying experience.

"There's no more gratifying experience than to connect great people in our community with each other and see great solutions happen. I continue to stand by my first two promises: to leave things better than I found them and to treat people the way I'd like to be treated," said Bouma.

If re-elected, Bouma's first priority will be to protect the community from tariff threats. "The Premier has been doing incredible work leading the COF (Council of Federation composed of Canadian Premiers) and working with our Federal government. We will do whatever it takes to protect Ontarians and Ontario Businesses. That's why we are asking for a mandate now," he said.

"After that's it's back to work on the hospital and getting our new schools built," he said about the current renovations and repairs to the Brantford General Hospital as well as the three new elementary schools approved for Brant County. Two of the schools will be built in Paris; the location of the schools has not been disclosed.

Locally, Bouma addressed the amalgamation of Brantford and Brant County, making it clear there have been no amalgamation talks to date. He acknowledged that 'certain municipal leaders' are making strong statements but clarified his stance. "I am completely against forced amalgamation. But... our communities and municipal leaders MUST work together for the benefit of all," he said.

Bouma's been active within the Conservative party for about 10 years, although he declares he's considered himself Conservative his entire life. It was always his desire to be a small-town eye doctor and after opening his clinic, he fell more in love with the community.

"The opportunities to serve have come naturally. The fire service, the Brant Waterways Foundation and County Council. And now Provincial service."

## **County staff evaluating four-year water and wastewater rate plan**

**By Casandra Turnbull**

The County of Brant is examining its water and wastewater rate structure and has asked council to remove the April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025 expiry date on the current rates while they figure out what the new charges will look like for the next four years.

Staff, along with a consultant, is undertaking a comprehensive review of the rates as they work through significant funding implementations and increases to the Water and Wastewater capital program. The capital program is funded from rate supported reserves, such as the charges you pay on your monthly water bill, in addition to rate supported debt, development charge reserves, development charge funded debt, and federal & provincial grants. The capital program is experiencing significant funding challenges due to an explosion of residential growth and the need to replace aging parts of water and wastewater infrastructure.

How this will affect the average residential and commercial water charges remains to be seen. GrandBridge Energy bills water and wastewater, on behalf of the County of Brant. Monthly fixed charges help with the operation and maintenance of the municipal water and wastewater systems. The average residential home (with a 5/8" meter) pays \$45.34 in fixed water charges and \$19.41 in fixed wastewater charges, regardless of usage. Consumers are then charged per cubic meter that goes through the meter. You can find out more about your water and wastewater charges, as well as various meter sizes online [here](#), including a water bill calculator.

The current rate structure was set to expire at the end of April but is extended until staff can create drafts of the new four-year rate structure, engage the public through public consultation and present the new rates to council. Public engagement is targeted for April/May with council set to approve the new rates by June. The new rates are tentatively scheduled to effect July 1, 2025.

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Sam Roberts Band and Matt Mays to Headline Paris Drinks Fest 2025 Concert

*This year's concert returns to the Two Rivers Stadium at Syl Apps August 15-16th*

**By Tiffany Martin**

Paris Drinks Fest is just around the corner, and though we're currently buried under a few feet of snow with the temperature sitting at a brisk -27°C, we're already dreaming of sunny days, fewer layers, and raising a glass on a hot summer night at Paris Drinks Fest. Returning for another unforgettable weekend of craft beverages, incredible live music, and vibrant festival energy, this year's event takes over Two Rivers Stadium at Syl Apps Community Centre on August 15th and 16th, 2025.

### What you've been waiting for - The Music Lineup!

"Each year, we aim to elevate the Paris Drinks Fest experience, and 2025 is shaping up to be our best yet," says festival founder, Tim Des Isles. "We're thrilled to welcome Sam Roberts Band and Matt Mays to



The rain didn't stop crowds from showing up to last year's Paris Drinks Festival held at Twin Rivers Stadium (Syl Apps Community Centre). The concert will take place at the same location and this week the headliners were announced - Sam Roberts Band on Friday and Matt Mays on Saturday.

our stage, along with an incredible lineup of emerging and established artists. Combined with the finest food and drinks Ontario has to offer, it's going to be an unforgettable weekend!"

Kicking off the weekend, we've got a Canadian legend we all know and love—Sam Roberts Band—headlining Friday night. If you haven't seen them

live, you're in for a treat. Their shows are packed with raw energy, big anthems, and that unmistakable feel-good vibe. Joining them in Friday's lineup are Born in the Eighties, Trash Panda Brass, and Absolute Losers, making for a killer lineup that'll keep the party going all night.

*Continued on page 11*

### Calling on all Letters to the Editor! Be A Part of Our Premier Print Edition!

We want to publish your Letter to the Editor in our March 19<sup>th</sup> edition. Email [stories@theparisdependent.com](mailto:stories@theparisdependent.com). All letters must be signed by the writer and are subject to editing for length and clarity. Deadline for submission is March 1<sup>st</sup>.

If you're interested in advertising rates and availability, email [sales@theparisdependent.com](mailto:sales@theparisdependent.com) to book your space now! More information on advertising opportunities are available [here](#).

# COMMUNITY NEWS



Paris Independent correspondent Tiffany Martin, pictured with Sean and Collin from Farmleague Brewing during Tuesday's Paris Drinks Fest Launch Party at Paris Beer Co.

food vendors, this festival is a celebration of the best Ontario has to offer. You'll have the chance to sip on the finest craft beers, ciders, wines, and spirits made in and around our town including *Paris Beer Co* and *Farmleague Brewing* out of Cambridge—two local spots that are sure to be fan favorites. They've also introduced the debut of a special *Paris Drinks Fest Pilsner*, brewed in collaboration with *Paris Beer Co*. The limited-edition beer will feature the festival's lineup right on the can, and it'll be available for purchase at Paris Beer Co leading up to and during the festival. The cans will also be available in the VIP Tents at the festival. We were handed a can at the Launch Party to test, and it is such a fun addition to the hype this year!

## Support from the Community

Then, on Saturday night, the one and only *Matt Mays* will take the stage to close out the festival. As a huge fan of Matt (I've seen him perform more times than I can count, both as a solo artist and with his band), I can honestly say his live shows are an experience you don't want to miss. He's got that incredible East Coast charm and undeniable talent that makes him the perfect headliner for our town. He'll be joined that day by *The Wild High*, *Altameda*, *Shania Twink*, and *SHEBAD*, promising another day full of music that'll have you singing along with friends and neighbors.

It's incredible to see how Paris Drinks Fest has grown each year, and it's all thanks to the amazing support from the town of Paris. Sure, some might grumble about the sound or the crowds for a weekend—but think of it this way: that buzz in the air means people are out enjoying our parks, savoring local food and drink, and coming together for a great time. It's a celebration of everything that makes this town special, and we're here for it!

If you haven't experienced Paris Drinks Fest yet, now's the time to join the fun!

**Get Your Tickets Now!**

Paris Drinks Fest kicked off in 2018, hosted by Noisemaker Presents Inc, a Hamilton based concert and event promoter. While the festival was sidelined a few years because of the pandemic, 2025 marks its 6th anniversary—and if there's one thing to know, it's that tickets go fast! Tickets are now on sale at [parisdrinks.ca](https://parisdrinks.ca), with single-day tickets, weekend passes, and VIP options available, there's something for everyone. Be sure to check back soon as they start to announce the full list of drink and food vendors that will be joining!

Every year, I look forward to this event, and I can't wait to celebrate with all of you. Book off your weekend, grab some friends, and get ready for another incredible year of music, local brews, delicious bites, and great Paris vibes. See you there!

**Local Beer, Food, and More**

In addition to amazing tunes, what sets Paris Drinks Fest apart is its focus on all things local. From local breweries to



# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Satellite Rotary Club of Paris Preparing for Annual Priceless Auction

*Put away your wallet and open your calendar – bid with your time, not your money!*

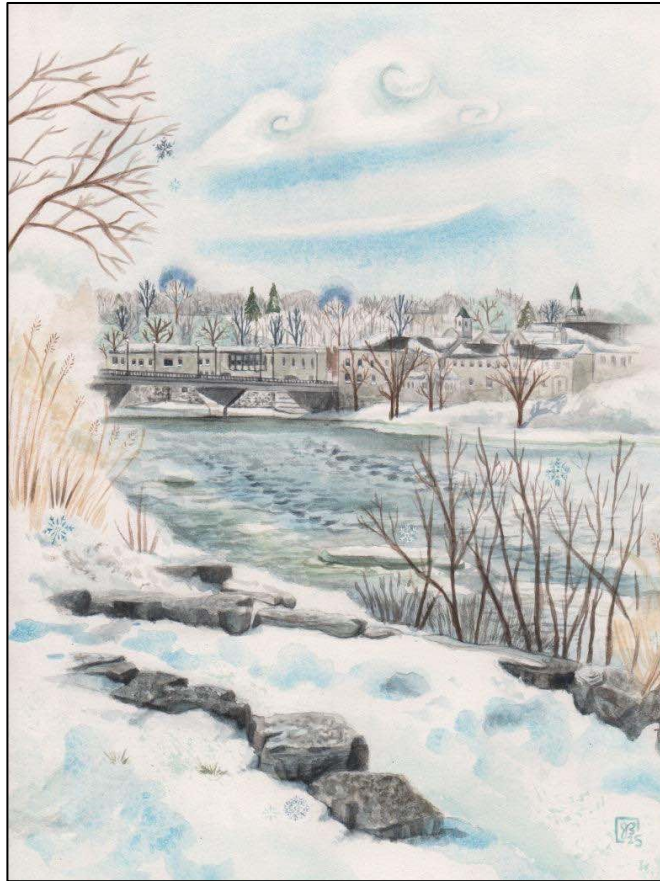
**By Daksh Siwas**

Imagine being at an auction and buying artwork, but instead of paying with actual money, you get to pay with time. Sounds interesting, right? This is what exactly is happening this month thanks to the Rotary Satellite Club of Paris.

The Priceless auction, hosted by the Rotary Satellite Club of Paris, is back for the third year in a row, giving bidders the chance to bid in volunteer hours not cash. The best part is bidders can volunteer with any organization of their choice when fulfilling their volunteer requirement. The event will be held at Wincey Mills, Paris, on Feb 23. Both local independent artists and attendees willing to exchange volunteer hours are welcome to participate in this event and support the community. Live music and tasty appetizers make this a memorable evening.

“We had incredible feedback last year, and almost all of the art was acquired by the winning bidders, resulting in a significant number of community service hours,” said Dale Hall, a founding member of the Rotary Satellite Club of Paris. The auction has raised over 700 volunteer hours to date, and Hall believes it will grow more this year, with more participants and a diverse group of artists from the community taking part.

“I believe this event will continue to grow



This is just one of many pieces of art that will be up for auction at the Rotary Satellite Club of Paris' Priceless Art Auction on February 23. It's titled, "Paris Winter Walk," and was created by artist Janice Barber. How will you devote your time to claim this exquisite work of art? (valued at \$530).

because it's an affordable night out, supports local artists and gives back to the community in a single effort," Hall mentioned. The event starts at 6:30 p.m., and the tickets are available online for \$65.23. The price includes admission to the auction, appetizers by Paris Beer Co., and live music by Brandon Corke. The Taren White Gallery graciously sources the artwork by local artists for this auction, ensuring it truly remains a community initiative.

Holly Ounapuu is one of those contributing artists who has participated since it started. "As a local artist for many years, I know the Rotary Club plays an important role in our community, and this was a great opportunity to contribute," she shared.

*Continued on page 13*

# COMMUNITY NEWS

Dale Hall brought forth the idea of a Priceless Auction to fellow Rotary Club members. He once he attended a similar event in Niagara, and he thought it would be a good fit for Rotary Satellite Club of Paris. Connecting the community with local artists and raising community service hours really aligned with the Club's mission of giving back.

"Finding the right organizations that align with our mission is key," said Hall, adding the club is actively looking to expand its list of beneficiaries. The more connections the club makes within the community, the more they can give back. The Priceless Auction is sponsored by Millards Chartered Professional Accountants, ROI Group, and Cobblestone Medicine Rehab. Additional sponsorships are still available upon request at [parissatelliterotaryclub@gmail.com](mailto:parissatelliterotaryclub@gmail.com).



This is one of the pieces of artwork up for auction at tomorrow's event. Artist Lynn Macintyre created this piece titled, "Sun and Shadow in the Enchanted Forest"

## Paris Junction Hobbies victim to another break and enter

### Paris Independent Staff

Paris Junction Hobbies is putting the pieces back together after another break and enter over the long weekend.

At around 3:53 am on Saturday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, OPP officers responded to a break and enter call after the business owner received an alarm notification from the north end store.

The business owner reports there is significant damage to the storefront, including broken glass and bent security bars. Inside, multiple shelves were knocked over, and a large quantity of merchandise had been stolen, with losses estimated to exceed \$3,000.

Surveillance footage revealed that at approximately 3:36 a.m., a red pickup truck was used to gain entry by reversing into the front of the business. Three suspects, wearing hooded sweaters, gloves, and sunglasses to conceal their identities, exited the vehicle and loaded stolen items into the truck before fleeing the scene at 3:40 a.m.

Further investigation determined that the red pickup truck, bearing Ontario license plate BZ93765, had been reported stolen from Hamilton prior to the incident. The direction of travel after the break-in remains unknown.

The business owner expressed his sincere thank-you



to everyone who reached out in support following the incident. Among the chaos, the store reopened on Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>. This isn't the first time in recent years that the business has suffered a devastating set back following a break and enter.

The Brant County OPP is asking for the public's assistance. If you have any information related to this incident, witnessed suspicious activity in the area, or have surveillance footage that may assist investigators, please contact the Brant OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

If you wish to remain anonymous, you can call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or submit an online tip at [www.helpsolvecrime.com](http://www.helpsolvecrime.com). You may be eligible for a cash reward.

# LOCAL HISTORY

## History of Elections Ontario: A Journey Through Time



### *Paris Past*

by  
Chris Whelan

As Ontario gears up for its upcoming Provincial election on February 27, 2025, it's worth reflecting on the rich history that has woven the intricate fabric of the province's democratic process over the past century. The story of Elections Ontario dates back to the province's inception in 1867 when a fledgling Ontario held its inaugural election. At that time, only landholding men over the age of 21 could cast their votes, a far cry from the inclusive democracy we know today. Fast forward to 1875, a pivotal year that saw the introduction of the secret ballot in Ontario. This seemingly small change marked a giant leap forward in ensuring the sanctity and integrity of the electoral process, a principle that remains sacrosanct to this day. In 1917, the suffrage movement gained momentum as female British subjects over the age of 21 won the right to vote in Ontario. This historic milestone effectively doubled the province's electorate, ushering in a new era of inclusivity and representation. The appointment of Allan Dymond as the first Chief Election Officer in



New Democratic Party Leader Stephen Lewis admires an Indian bead necklace presented to his daughter, Ilana, 10, during a visit Saturday at the campaign headquarters of Mac Makarchuk, NDP

candidate for Brantford Riding in the provincial election. Looking on are Jim Schneider, left, NDP candidate in Brant-Oxford-Norfolk Riding, and Brant MP Derek Blackburn at rear.

1919 marked a turning point in the administration of fair and impartial elections in Ontario. His tenure laid the foundation for a tradition of electoral integrity that endures to this day. Over the decades, Elections Ontario continued to evolve and adapt to the changing needs of its electorate. From the introduction of door-to-door enumeration in 1933 to the establishment of the Permanent Register of Electors in 1998, the institution has consistently strived to uphold the core tenets of democracy. In 2018, a transformative moment arrived as e-Poll books and vote tabulators were introduced, revolutionizing the voting experience for

Ontarians. This marked the first significant change in how citizens exercised their democratic right in over a century, underscoring Elections Ontario's commitment to innovation and progress. As we stand on the cusp of another historic election, it's a testament to the enduring legacy of Elections Ontario. Through 28 general elections, 149 by-elections, and two referendums over the past 100 years, the institution has remained steadfast in its mission to uphold the principles of democracy, ensuring accessibility, transparency, and integrity in the electoral process for generations to come.

*Continued on page 15*

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# LOCAL HISTORY

In local political history, the year 1987 shines a spotlight on the remarkable journey of Mrs. Ann Wilson, a steadfast figure in municipal governance. For over a decade, Wilson dutifully served Paris as a councillor and reeve, demonstrating a profound commitment to public service. Her involvement extended beyond the confines of local politics, as she lent her expertise to various boards and committees, such as the John Noble Home, Children's Aid Society, day care advisory, and anti-vandalism initiatives.

However, a new chapter beckoned for Wilson as she set her sights on a grander stage—the provincial riding of Brant-Haldimand. Transitioning from her familiar terrain to the provincial arena, this seasoned Progressive Conservative luminary embarked on a political odyssey, seeking to represent her constituents with unwavering dedication and resolve. With a resume of experience under her belt, including roles as a council member and reeve in Paris, Wilson's foray into the provincial electoral landscape marked a significant milestone in her career. A devoted wife to Arthur and a nurturing mother to five children,

Wilson's passion for community welfare and governance remained steadfast as she embarked on her maiden provincial election campaign. As she navigated the



PC candidate Ann Wilson campaigns at home in Paris, visiting with Kim Stockdale (left), baby Mathew Stockdale, two-year-old Mark Stockdale and Eva Boyd. Howard Livick, Expositor Staff

intricate web of political dynamics, Wilson's legacy as a proactive leader and advocate for social causes continued to resonate, underscoring her unwavering commitment to public service and community betterment. Unfortunately, Ann came in third place losing the election to 25-year incumbent Robert Nixon.

## Paris Billiards Beat at Sharkey's in Brantford

By Scoop Stewart

**MVP:** The MVP was Oscar Emerson with a pure table run from break to eight ball, he was poetry in motion. His brother's Whitey, John and Paul would be proud.

**Winners:** Greig Graham and Jimmy Flood old South Enders that are now country boys we're victorious. These two showed world class graciousness by buying pizza for all the runners up. Nice job boys.

**Runners-Up:** The dream team of Andy Attlebery and Steve Kopp came up a short and lost their focus

when the Canada vs USA game started.

**Winners of the Losers:** We are going to have to rename this category as Chris Whelan won again with his partner Dickie Berg. Chris determination not to get shut out is admirable.

**Good Guy Award:** This award goes to Sharkey's owner Dan Culbert, along with his daughter Codi our great hostess with the mostess. All the Paris boys would like to wish our friend Dan all the best in his upcoming operation next week we

will be thinking of you Pal but being an old hockey player, we know you will kick butt.

**Quote of the Day:** "This is the most fun you can have without being arrested" Stones

**Shot of the Day:** Once again, the ever entertaining, Pat Fergus had the shot of the day, Pat took an easy corner shot, and the white ball ended up in the corner of the bar 90 feet away... Priceless.

This is Scoop Stewart signing off until next week, *always a pleasure!*

## SPORTS

# Paris Titans come from behind to win first game of playoffs with power play goal from Blake Kersey



The Titans didn't finish the Family Day weekend on a positive note, losing the last two games in their schedule. Ending their season in sixth place, they were on tap to play the third-place Woodstock Navy Vets. Going back to Mountie years, Woodstock and Paris traditionally have a great rivalry.

The series' first game began on Wednesday night at the Brant Sports Centre. The Titans committed three minor penalties in the first period, with Woodstock not being able to capitalize on those opportunities. The Navy Vets scored 5 minutes into the first period, and at 18:07, Ethan Arrojado scored, with assists awarded to Anthony Pede and Luke Guagliano. The period ended tied at one goal each.

The second period exposed how poor the Titan power play team was, having four one-man advantages, all netting zero goals and Woodstock scoring a shorthanded goal. The Navy Vets had three goals this period, taking a 4-1 lead.

Woodstock extended the lead to 5-1, short of the five-minute mark in

the third period. Then the unbelievable happened – a power play goal by Jonah Cochrane, assisted by Tyler Ward and Cole Kersey! Who knew this would be the beginning of something amazing? One minute later, Ethan Arrojado scores his second goal of the game, the assists went to Tyler Ward and Cole Kersey. Arrojado's goal shortened the Woodstock lead to two goals. There haven't been many big come-from-behind wins for the Titans this season, so could this be one of the biggest comebacks ever for the Paris side? Luke Guagliano says maybe, by scoring Paris' fourth goal of the game, Anthony Pede and Josh Schell assisting and tightening the score to 5-4!

Now with seven and a half minutes in the third period to tie the game, the crowd (and I mean a big crowd of loyal Woodstock fans) were concerned that their Navy Vets might not maintain their lead.

The game was tense and with just 38 seconds remaining, Burford's contribution to the Titans came through with the tying goal of the game, off the stick of Jack Kersey, with assists awarded to Arrojado and Blake Kersey. We might think, that this could be one of the greatest junior hockey comebacks in my time in Paris!

(Chris Whelan, please, no need to research Paris Junior hockey history!).

Just like Canada in Thursday's game, the Paris Titans have overtime and similar to Canada, an overtime win on an unassisted goal by Blake Kersey gave Paris the 1-0 lead in the best of five series.

Next up for the Titans was game 2 in Woodstock on Friday (details not available by press deadline), followed by a home game in Paris tonight. If you haven't come to see the Titans yet, take the chance and come down to the Brant Sports Complex for a 7:30 pm start and enjoy playoff hockey!

After tonight's game, games 4 and 5 are in Woodstock on February 25 and 28.

**GAME 1**

**FINAL**

**6-5**

**TITANS** **VETS**

**GOALS**

ETHAN ARROJADO (2)  
JONAH COCHRANE  
LUKE GUAGLIANO  
JACK KERSEY  
BLAKE KERSEY

**ASSISTS**

ANTHONY PEDE(2)  
LUKE GUAGLIANO  
TYLER WARD (2)  
COLE KERSEY  
JOSH SCHELL  
ETHAN ARROJADO  
BLAKE KERSEY






## SPORTS

# Paris Panthers claim AAHBN North Title in Girls High School Hockey playoffs



With a semi-final win last week, on Wednesday, the Panthers faced Assumption College for the AABHN North division championship at the Brant Sports Complex on February 19th.

In the net for the Panthers was Brooklyn Boer. The Panther's first three minutes of the first period looked nervous but they seemed to find their way to put pressure on the Assumption defense by cycling and dominating control of the puck. With 0:50 seconds left in the first period, Madi Burr scores to take a 1-0 lead. Naren Parker and goalie Brooklyn Boer assisted Madi's goal. In the second period, there was no doubt that Assumption would not be a pushover, as both sides were getting scoring chances. Naren Parker scores three and a half minutes into the second period to make the score 2-0. Assists went to Madi Burr and netminder Brooklyn Boer. With 6:44 remaining in the period, Assumption scores a power play goal to make the score 2-1. Assumption came out in the third period with one goal in mind: tie the game up and take the lead.

*Continued on page 18*



Paris goaltender Brooklyn Boer (above) provided steady goal tending in the 3-1 victory over the Assumption Lions. Boer even picked up two assists in the championship game. Below, an unknown player takes a shot against Assumption's defensive line.

Photos courtesy of Garth Chivers



# SPORTS

Reese Halliday ended the Lion's hope of a comeback when she scored with 5:48 left in the third period; Reese Halliday scored with assists awarded to Naren Parker and Sydney Kipp. The final score was Paris Panthers 3, Assumption Lions 1.

The Panthers' philosophy is always to win as a team and idea of stars of the game is a topic seldom heard, so I'll take the liberty of doing it for this game.

The third star goes to Brooklyn Boer for her steady goaltending and a goalie getting two assists. The second star is a tie going to Naren Parker (1 goal and two assists and Madi Burr 1 goal and one assist). The first star goes to the coaches and all the players on the team, as it continues to be the best hockey team in Paris.

The season is not over for the Panthers, as they will be vying for the league championship against the South division teams. The Panthers' next game will be **on February 28 at 2 PM** at the Gretzky Centre, where they will face Simcoe C.S.



There was a lot of excitement in the air at the Brant Sports Complex on Wednesday morning as the Paris Panthers Girls Hockey team won the A.A.H.B.N North trophy.

Photo courtesy of Garth Chivers

## Freezing for a Reason! Pre-Plunge events draw attention to 2025 Special Olympic Ontario Games

**MEDIA RELEASE** - As the countdown to the 2025 Special Olympics Ontario Games Polar Plunge continues, community members, athletes, and law enforcement officers are stepping up-and diving in-to show their support!

In the fourth Pre-Plunge, called Taking the Icy Challenge, leading up to the big event, the following brave participants took the leap into icy waters: Coach Jonathan McDermid, Athlete Donny Tobicoe, Athlete Michael Izzard and OPP Officer Andrew Werle. Not to be outdone, in the fifth Pre-Plunge event, titled Another Round of Freezing for a Reason, the latest plungers included: Devynn Banfil, Coach Garreth Morgan, Coach Jake Jones, Coach Fletcher Adam Athlete Jacob Potts, Athlete Chloe Santos (cheering on her fellow athletes!), OPP Officer Andrew Werle

The Polar Plunge returns on March 6th at 2 PM at the Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre in Brantford as part of the 2025 Special Olympics Ontario Games. This annual event is the largest fundraiser supporting the Games coming to

Brant County, Brantford and Six Nations, ensuring athletes have the resources and opportunities to compete at their best. The current goal for the fundraiser is set at \$50,000. You can pledge your support [here](#).



Photos courtesy of Ontario Provincial Police

# SPORTS

## Paris Thunder pride on full display at weekend tournament

### By Casandra Turnbull

The Paris Ringette Association wrapped up its annual tournament last weekend with nearly 60 teams visiting from across Ontario.

Not even the weather could deflate the excitement at the rinks as teams vied for the top title in age divisions ranging from Under 10 to Under 19.

Taking a moment to focus on the positive aspects of this tournament outside of the team sport and commandries it generated, it would be amiss not to recognize this was a great economic boost for the local community. As I drove through Starbucks to pick up a coffee on my way to an early Saturday morning game, even the employees working the drive thru were aware of the tournament, saying ‘oh yes, we heard it’s a pretty big deal,’ as I grabbed my essential caffeine to make it through the long day. Isn’t that one of the many reasons why small towns are the best? When something outside of

the ordinary takes place, everyone is talking about it.

From team dinners at local restaurants, to booked out hotels, there’s no arguing that Brant’s economy saw a boost last weekend. Since the tournament consisted of games at all County rinks – Paris, St. George and Burford, that economic boost was felt in all corners of the County. The best part, is many of these businesses graciously stepped up to offer door prizes or gift cards for various awards and prizes, and in some cases, these businesses support the local organization with annual sponsorships.

Getting back to the action on the ice, it was heart-warming to see teams filled with pride, sporting their organization’s sweaters and coats, as they cheered on one another. As the FUN3 (U10) team battled it out with Tillsonburg, the U12 team was in the stands chanting and supporting their younger counterparts. The younger teams took the opportunity to cheer

on the older teams, learning more about the sport as they rooted for Paris.

The association did an amazing job organizing the tournament and you can tell it’s not their first tournament. Everything ran like a well-oiled machine with lots of helping hands. The front lobby was full of raffles, games and chances to bring home a small prize, to the delight of all the players. It was refreshing to see players operating these tables and learning the value of volunteerism at a young age.

There was no shortage of Paris Thunder pride as players, parents, coaches and fans took photos at the decorated photo backdrop. It was a pleasure to be a part of such a fun filled weekend and an honour to wear the Paris Thunder sweater, proudly displaying our place with the host organization. Congratulations to all the participating teams for their excellence on the ice and sportsmanship off the ice.

## PARIS WOLFPACK

## SCOREBOARD Feb 14 – Feb 20



February 14–U11#3 win 9-1 against Port Dover

February 15–U9MD#2 loses 5-4 against Plattsville

February 15–U11LL#1 win 5-1 against Six Nations

February 15–U9LL#2 lose 13-2 against Waterford 2

February 15–U9LL#1 win 8-4 against Port Dover 2

February 18–U15LL#2 tie 2-2 against Ingersoll 2

February 18–U9LL#2 win 6-1 against Six Nations

February 18–U13LL#1 tie 3-3 against Waterford 2

February 20–U11LL#1 tie 2-2 against Six Nations

February 20–U11#2 win 3-2 against Simcoe 1

February 20–U15#2 lose 9-5 against Tillsonburg

February 20–U18#2 win 6-5 against U18LL#3

**Thank-you Paris Minor Hockey sponsors Paris Optimist Club, Kings Wood Products, Mike Yarek Dodge, Dairy Farmers of Ontario, No Frills, Canadian Tire, Brant Sports Excellence, Ayr Farmers Mutual Insurance Company, Cobblestone Medicine Rehab, Desjardins, Tremco, Adkins Financial Service, Foodland for all your support!**

# SPORTS

## U16A Ringette Team finishes qualifying tournament in 11<sup>th</sup> out of 21 teams across Ontario, narrowly missing out on provincials



The U16A Ringette Team finished the weekend tournament with two wins and two losses in round robin play. They played a hard-fought battle against Forest in the semi finals on Sunday morning but were not able to advance. This was the team's final qualifying tournament to try and secure a top 10 spot for provincials. Despite an outstanding season, the team finished 11<sup>th</sup> out of 21 teams across Ontario, just missing out on a spot in provincials. "I'm still really proud of this team and what they've been able to accomplish this season, a gold medal in St Marys, a silver medal in Burlington, making it to the semi finals in the Paris tournament, and defeating the second place team in league play," said head coach Courtney Boehmer.

Submitted photos



## BRANT BATTALION HOCKEY SCOREBOARD – Feb. 16 – Feb. 20



February 16–U11B Battalions win 8-3 against New Hamburg

February 18– U14A Battalions tie 1-1 against Dorchester

February 18– U12A Battalions lose 6-3 against New Hamburg

February 19– U15B Battalions lose 4-0 against South Oxford

February 19– U18B Battalions win 4-3 against South Oxford

February 20– U13A Battalions lose 4-1 against Mt Brydges

February 20–U13B Battalions lose 5-0 against East Elgin

February 20–U14A Battalions tie 2-2 against South Oxford

February 20–U16A Battalions lose 4-2 against Norfolk Knights

**Thank-you Brant Battalion sponsor Ayr Farmers Mutual Insurance Company & Stybek Roof for all your support!**

# SPORTS

## U10 players have a whole lot of FUN!



The FUN3 team had a lot of FUN last weekend, competing against some tough teams from as far away as Sault Ste. Marie. The players never gave up and continued to work together despite facing some stiff competition. A highlight of the weekend included the FUN Fest activities the team hosted on Saturday for the younger FUN2 teams. Everyone was eager to volunteer and help serve pancakes and snacks. The team resumes its regular season this weekend and is gearing up for a one-day tournament in Dorchester, as well as Provincials in London next month.

## History repeats itself at Paris Curling Club!

One of the hardest things to do in curling is to score a perfect 8-ender. It requires a lot of skill and a touch of luck to send all eight rocks into the house. In fact, odds of scoring an 8-ender are 120,000 to 1. It's not impossible, but it's not common... unless you are part of Team Tully – consisting of (left to right) Cassie Easton, Dan Tully, Ashley McCarthy and Linda Vivian, who picked up another 8-ender this past week, almost one year to the date of their previous 8-ender in Feb. 2024. There have only been 22 8-enders in the Paris Curling Club's 181-year history!

## U14 team demonstrates consistent teamwork during tournament



The Paris Thunder U14B team showcased their skills and teamwork during their host tournament over the Family Day weekend. The team, consisting of fourteen players between the ages of eleven and thirteen, engaged in three challenging games against opponents Tillsonburg Twisters, Sault Ice Hawks, and Markham Bears. Although they didn't place in the tournament, they consistently demonstrated the teamwork and skills they have developed and refined during the season. The team eagerly anticipates future opportunities and games as the season progresses.



# COMMUNITY NEWS

## ‘Not Your Average Saturday’ set to indulge and inspire women of all generations

### *Women’s Institute of Paris celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

**By Casandra Turnbull**

The Paris Women’s Institute is celebrating a decade of awesomeness and there’s no better way to mark the prosperous occasion than indulging in some relaxation infused with lots of inspiration.

In recognition of Women Inspiring Women WI’s 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the group is hosting ‘Not Your Average Saturday,’ designed for women of all ages to laugh, learn and get inspired. Taking place on Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 am to 3 pm at the Brantford Golf and Country Club, the one-day retreat will feature a variety of guest speakers focussing on women’s health related topics. Proceeds from ticket sales will be

directed to the Forensic Nursing Program.

“Our anniversary event will serve as a fundraiser for this important cause and bring awareness to the need for increased support in this specialized area of nursing,” said WIW WI member Laura Tousaw. Forensic nurses play a critical role in assisting and treating patients of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, neglect or other forms of intentional injury. They often collect evidence and give testimony that can be used in a court of law.

The WI mandate is to rally around issues that are important to women, so when the group recently learned of the importance of forensic nurses,

it was easy to determine the beneficiary of the one-day fundraiser.

Planning an event that speaks to women of all ages was quite easy, said Tousaw. “We believe WIW thrives partly because it is a multigenerational group. We learn so much from one another and find common ground with ease. Our event speakers reflect this common group, and we think learning more about aspects of physical and emotional health, in addition to a thorough dose of inspiration from our keynote speaker, will resonate deeply with a broad audience.”

*Continued on page 23*



# COMMUNITY NEWS

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Finalizing the guest speaker list was a collaborative effort among WIW members, Tousaw explained. Since members live, work and play within a diverse array of circles in Brant County, they leaned on those connections to curate the day.

“Our speakers were all quick to lend their enthusiasm, time and talents to help us celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary,” she said. Krystal Schouten, owner of Fitness Reset and specialist in fitness and pelvic floor health, will lead a session on women’s health and fitness in her energizing style. Focusing on pregnancy, postpartum, and beyond, Schouten strives to help women understand their bodies, improve their health, and regain their confidence. Kristin Toushan Blinkhorn will discuss the Forensic Nursing program at the Brantford General Hospital, diving into what is offered, who is

served, and the hopes and plans for the future of the program. Deb Loyd, local storyteller and inspirational speaker, will share Lighthearted Ways to Achieve a Happier Life. Deb’s entertaining approach will keep you engaged as you learn how to live with more joy and simplicity in our hectic world. Following lunch, the keynote speaker, Dr Christy Lane, will lead a fireside chat with WIW member Trish Benne. Lane will discuss her extensive experience navigating the world of science, tech, and venture capital as a woman and as a mom. She is an investor, founder, professor, and exercise scientist who currently resides in Calgary but was born and raised in Brantford. Her newest venture, Flora Fertility, was recently featured in Forbes magazine as they secured pre-seed funding for their startup in fertility insurance for

women.

Attendees will enjoy a light breakfast, all featured speakers, a mini market by specially curated local makers, a delicious plated lunch, and a gift bag of items carefully selected by WIW members. A cash bar will be open over the lunch session. “We want participants to feel welcome, celebrated, relaxed, well-fed and inspired! This day is about you enjoying a day out with your gal pals and investing in yourself,” said Tousaw.

Proceeds of this event will be directed to the Forensic Nursing program at Brantford General Hospital for ongoing program development and training. Click [here](#) to reserve your tickets today.

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## People urged to vaccinate as Measles cases rise in the region

**MEDIA RELEASE** - With measles cases on the rise across Ontario, including in the Grand Erie region, Grand Erie Public Health (GEPH) is urging families to ensure they are up to date with immunizations. Measles is highly contagious, spreading through the air when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes. Unvaccinated individuals or those who have never had measles before are at high risk of infection.

The majority of measles cases in Brantford-Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk have occurred in unvaccinated individuals, particularly young children. In Ontario, two doses of a measles-containing vaccine provide strong and lasting immunity. Full

vaccination is the most effective way to protect yourself, your family, and those in our community against measles and its complications. Typically, children receive their first dose at 12 months of age and a second between four and six years of age. However, due to the current measles outbreak situation, the recommendation(s) are:

- Early vaccination for infants: A first dose of measles-containing vaccine can be given as early as six months of age. Two additional doses are needed after their first birthday.

- Early second dose for young children: Children between one and four years old who have already received one dose should receive

their second dose as soon as possible, provided at least four weeks have passed since their first dose.

- Second doses for adults: adults born in and after 1970 with only one dose of measles-containing vaccine should receive a second dose. Individuals born before 1970 are generally considered immune due to past exposure. Anyone who is unsure of their vaccination status should contact their health care provider.

Individuals are encouraged to contact their primary care provider to arrange vaccination. You can click [here](#) to book your vaccination through the GEPH website.

## NEW BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

# SNAX Opens at Wincey Mills: Bringing Healthy, Delicious Dog Treats to Paris

## Paris Independent Staff

Exciting news for pet owners in Paris, Ontario! [SNAX](#), a brand dedicated to nourishing dogs with fresh, wholesome ingredients, is opening a new location at Wincey Mills, 31 Mechanic Street. While doors will officially open for the Grand Opening on March 1st, customers can start shopping in the store as early as Thursday, February 27th.

Founded by dog nutrition enthusiast Tiffany, SNAX is more than just a pet food brand—it's a passion project rooted in a deep commitment to canine health and longevity. The name SNAX comes from their Mini Aussie puppy, Snax, who has inspired this venture with his boundless energy and love for real, nutritious food. But the story behind SNAX began long before Snax was born. Tiffany has been involved in canine nutrition since 2006 when she lived in British Columbia and fed her first puppy Avalanche a raw diet. She has since spent years learning from top experts like Dr. Peter Dobias, Dr. Karen Becker, and Rodney Habib. Combining their insights with her own experience, she created SNAX as a way to help dogs thrive through real, fresh, and purposeful nutrition.

"Seven years ago, we made the move to Paris, Ontario, and we absolutely love this town. I'm excited to revisit my old roots in the dog world and create a healthy community for dogs of Paris and beyond to thrive," says Tiffany. "SNAX is more than just treats—it's about giving pet owners the tools to provide their dogs with the best possible nutrition while making snack time fun, rewarding and easy for you."

## What You'll Find at SNAX in Wincey Mills:

- \* At SNAX, every product is crafted with purpose. The brand offers a variety of nutritious snacks, frozen treats, celebration cakes, and wholesome meal toppers—all made with human-grade ingredients.
- \* SNAX signature snacks – fresh, all-natural, and packed with goodness dehydrated meats, cookies and more
- \* Raw specialty meals like mutt-loaf and mutt-balls, meal toppers & supplements
- \* Bowls & Lick Mats – for slowing down those snack attacks and adding some enrichment to feeding time.

*Continued on page 25*



Founded by dog nutrition enthusiast Tiffany, SNAX is more than just a pet food brand—it's a passion project rooted in a deep commitment to canine health and longevity. SNAX is opening a new location at Wincey Mills, 31 Mechanic Street starting Thursday, February 27.



# COMMUNITY NEWS

\* Toys & Accessories – handpicked for fun and durability  
Vintage Dog Collectibles – Unique and nostalgic finds for dog lovers

SNAX takes pride in using locally sourced ingredients whenever possible, working closely with Ontario farmers, butchers, and food producers to ensure quality and freshness. "Supporting local never tasted so good, for dogs too," Tiffany adds. "We also recognize that some of the best ingredients, like New Zealand's green-lipped mussels or coconuts, come from other parts of the world. While we prioritize Canadian sourcing, we always choose trusted suppliers who align with our commitment to quality."

## Grand Opening Celebration – March 1st

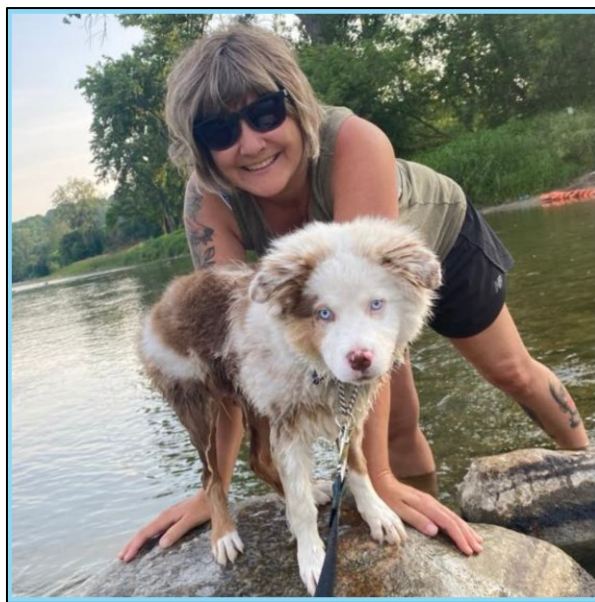
To celebrate its official opening at Wincey Mills, SNAX will be holding a Grand Opening Giveaway on Saturday, March 1st! Every purchase from February 27th through March 1st earns a ballot for a chance to win a basket of SNAX goodies, plus a few human treats to enjoy alongside your pup.

SNAX will be open every Thursday to Sunday inside Wincey Mills, making it easier than ever for dog owners to access premium, health-focused treats and pet products. Think of it as a farm stand for dogs. Whether you're

looking to improve your dog's diet, find the perfect toy, or grab a fun, vintage collectible, SNAX has something for every pup (and their human).

Follow SNAX online at [www.dogsnax.ca](http://www.dogsnax.ca) or order online for pick-up at their shop [www.farmmarket.ca/snax](http://www.farmmarket.ca/snax) and follow them on Instagram and Facebook @mydogsnax for updates, product highlights, and fun canine content.

Come sniff out the good stuff at Wincey Mills—because every bite counts!



Tiffany, pictured with Snax, the Mini Aussie who has inspired the SNAX business venture with his boundless energy and love for real, nutritious food!

## Suspect steals Audi A6 during test drive in Paris on Wednesday

The OPP are investigating the theft of an Audi A6, stolen during a test drive in Paris on Wednesday. Around 5:30 pm the suspect arrived at the seller's residence driving a light silver, newer model Hyundai 4-door Sedan with dark tinted windows. After inspecting the 2014 Audi A6, Ontario licence plate: DEBM 892, the suspect requested a test drive, but once behind the wheel, he immediately fled the scene. A second suspect, who remained inside the Hyundai, also left the area moments later. The suspect was last seen

fleeing westbound on Newbrook Street.

The suspect is described as male, 25-30 years old, 5'7", thin build with short black hair, brown eyes and hairy hands. He had a short, well-groomed black beard tapered to the neck and was wearing a black crewneck Tommy Hilfiger sweater and white runners.

The Brant County OPP reminds the public to exercise caution when meeting buyers or sellers for online transactions. To help ensure a safe exchange, the Brant County OPP

detachment (67 Bethel Rd, Paris) has Safe Trade Zones equipped with surveillance. These designated parking areas provide a secure, well-lit location for buy-and-sell transactions.

Additionally, residents can register their home security cameras with CAMSafe, a voluntary police program that helps officers identify security footage in an area where a crime has occurred. Visit [CAMSafe.ca](http://CAMSafe.ca) for more information.

## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Demand for County Recreation Programs Climbed in 2024

## **Paris Independent Staff**

*Summarized from the Recreation Services Program Summary*

The Administration and Operations Committee got a glimpse of the County's Recreation Services Program summary during a meeting held on February 18<sup>th</sup>. Here is a summary of some of the programs the county offered in 2024 and how they compared to the previous year (September 2022 to August 2023).

Overall, in 2024, the County of Brant saw a 4.6% increase in participation for registered recreation programs. An increase in registered Gymnastics and Ice Programs contributed to this overall increase. There was also a noticeable 22% increase in drop in programs, which the county notes is because of an ongoing demand to and transition from registered programs.

There continues to be an increased demand for summer camps in the County of Brant. A 13% increase in participation for summer camp compared to 2023; there was a 4.4% decrease in summer camp waitlists but that is due to the addition of new camps this year. Currently, the County of Brant is at capacity to expand summer camp programs within existing County of Brant

indoor facilities and County of Brant Schools that meet the space requirements for the program. Staff continue to seek partnerships and new locations to assist with the ongoing demand for summer camps, the report noted. Aquatic programs are more popular than ever. Overall usership at the Paris Community Pool in 2024 increased approximately 18.7% compared to 2023. The Paris pool programs are currently at capacity. There were 317 participants on the waitlist for swimming lessons, 231 participants on the waitlist for semi-private and private swimming lessons and 86 participants on the waitlist for registered group swimming lessons.

The largest area of growth seen in aquatics in 2024 was aquatic drop-in programming with an increase of 39%. The 2024 operating season offered programs such as Family Swim, Public Swim, Senior Swim, Fitness, Lane Swim, Camp Swim, Swim to Survive and Rentals. The County has offered After School Programs for over 20 years. This year there was a 15% decrease in registered children compared to the 2022/2023 year. For 2023/2024 school year there were 158 spots filled out of the 190 available. Senior programming is on the rise

with an overall increase of 227% in the last year due to demographic shifts, increased awareness of the benefits of active aging, and support for senior overall well-being. In 2023, the County of Brant received funds through the New Horizons for Seniors Program, launching the Seniors to Seniors: Healthy Aging Lecture Series, 2023-2024, through partnership with local groups and individuals such as: local artists, Museum, County of Brant Cemetery staff, County of Brant Library staff and Kindred Spirits. County of Brant has increased participation levels in senior indoor pickleball which operates 5 days a week, with a second location offering 2 days a week, and 2 additional intermediate programs for more skillful participants and round robin tournaments. In addition, social connection was a focus in 2024 to accommodate the requested need with monthly socials (i.e., Fill Your Cup), partnering with local retirement homes offering lunch and/or snack at no cost. In summary, 2024 was a successful year. Recreation Services staff continue to take a more of a community partnership type approach, working with new and existing community groups to support recreational activities, programs, and services.

# ENTERTAINMENT NEWS

## We're Off to See the Wizard... at the ForParisCentre, Starting Next Weekend!

*Playful Fox Productions ready to take audience to the magical land of Oz!*



Meghan Chambers as the Wicked Witch of the West and Karyn Monk as Glinda the Good Witch of the North during a rehearsal this past week.

*Content & Photos Submitted by Playful Fox Productions*

Playful Fox Productions is taking its audience over the rainbow to the magical land of Oz in their next production. Following an impressive 2024 season which saw PFP take over 9 different productions to local communities, culminating in a highly praised run of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' at the historic Sanderson Centre, Playful Fox will be bringing the timeless classic musical, 'The Wizard of Oz' to the #forParis Centre.

Known and celebrated the world over, this production is the official musical of the classic MGM movie starring Judy Garland featuring such beloved numbers as 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow', 'King of the Forest', and 'Ding Dong, The Witch is Dead'.

Mark Davies, who plays the iconic Wizard of Oz, says that,

'One of the best things about Playful Fox's production of The Wizard of Oz is that it is SO familiar! There are so many iconic characters, songs, lines...even though we all know the story, it's still an absolute pleasure to see it come to life in front of you. The show is just dripping with nostalgia, laughs and good old-fashioned fun. As actors, it is a thrill taking on a beloved character role and blending the classic delivery of the original film with our own personal flare, giving the audience something new and yet familiar at the same time'.

This will be Playful Fox Productions first musical of the year, but they will be back having already scheduled both the hilarious 'Shrek The Musical' in May/June and a return to Avonlea in the beloved Canadian classic 'Anne of Green Gables The Musical' at the Sanderson Centre.

But for Oz, director Malakai Fox (who is also stepping back into the role of The Cowardly Lion after playing the character over ten years ago) wanted to take a different approach to his usual ways.

'We've become somewhat known for presenting shows in really unique ways that sometimes detour from traditional storytelling. But after Charlie [and the Chocolate Factory], I needed to do a show that was precisely what everyone would be expecting. I didn't want to reinvent the wheel for Oz. It doesn't need to be. I wanted to direct something beloved and timeless. I wanted a show that didn't need to be reinterpreted beyond what is known and what is expected. Of course, that still gives me a lot to work with and explore, but the timelessness of the show and the plight of our heroine, Dorothy, is all we need to make this show magical.'

Fox comes just a few weeks from directing a remount of 'Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express', and for him, directing the wonderful cast and crew in the merry old land of Oz has been a refreshing change of pace not just because of its fun and colorful nature but for the sheer love people have for the piece.

'Oz', he says, 'has its own charm that has inspired millions of people.'

*Continued on page 28*

# ENTERTAINMENT NEWS

The recent success of the movie, ‘Wicked’, would not even be a concept if not for Frank L. Baum’s original world and specifically, the MGM movie adaptation. There is a reason it has withstood the test of time, and we have been blessed to have a cast and crew so committed to this. It is truly wonderful to have that – a group that loves this classic world as much as we do.’

Harmony Szolga plays several characters in the show and perhaps summarizes the Playful Fox Production the best.

‘While you might know the story.. there are so many unexpected twists and turns and humor to keep you laughing and on your toes! You’ll know you aren’t in Kansas anymore!’

Marissa Wilson, music director of the show, agrees and believes that is certainly the main appeal to see local theatre at every opportunity.

‘There’s no way to sugarcoat it. We are currently living in some very troubling times. There are those who long for simpler times or just want to feel like they did before a lot of this craziness began. Theatre can be that vessel. Plays can do that. Musicals can do that. Even for just a moment, they are able, through nostalgia, memory, or sheer emotion, to help us escape to a safe place for just a short while. During our production of The Wizard of Oz, that was our goal. To transport everyone, whether they be long time patrons of the theatre or first time patrons, and be that escape for a few hours. And whether you leave humming one of the songs for the next week or have a smile on your face the rest of the day, our audience will remember that there truly is no place like home.’

The Wizard of Oz is performed through permission from Concord Theatricals and will be performing February 28 to March 1<sup>st</sup> at the #forParis Centre in Paris, and the following weekend (March 7-9) at Fergus Grand Theatre. Tickets start at \$25 (plus taxes and fees)

And are available at <http://pfpoz.eventbrite.ca>

## Brant Residents invited to share their ideas and input on events in the County

**MEDIA RELEASE - County of Brant, ON** – The County of Brant is inviting residents to share their thoughts on community events that take place across the County. While the County does not organize a number of these events, it plays a key role in supporting them through approvals, promotion, and resources. Public feedback will help County staff better understand what residents enjoy about events in the County of Brant, what events could be improved, and how the County can better support and promote events.

“Community events make the County of Brant a great place to live, work, and visit,” said County of Brant Mayor David Bailey. “They bring people together, create lasting memories, and strengthen our local economy. That’s why we’re asking residents to share their thoughts on what’s working, what’s missing, and how we can better support events that take place in our communities.”

The County of Brant is home to a diverse range of events—from music and food festivals to cultural celebrations, sports tournaments, and community holiday gatherings. Some events are long-standing traditions, while others are just getting started. To ensure events continue to reflect the interests and needs of the community, the County is seeking input on event preferences, promotion, and opportunities for improvement.

“The County works closely with event organizers by providing resources, promotional support, and event approvals,” said County of Brant Special Events and Filming Coordinator, Olga Denisova. “This engagement will help us support and promote events that truly reflect our County’s interests.”

Residents can provide input in several ways:

- Complete the online survey at [EngageBrant.ca/Events](https://EngageBrant.ca/Events) by Friday, March 28, 2025.
- Printed surveys are available at all County of Brant Customer Service locations until Friday, March 28 at 4:30 p.m.
- Visit a pop-up event: Saturday, March 1 from 1 pm to 4 pm during Saturdays in Paris: A Day of Paris Walks held at Paris Wincey Mills Co; March 9th, 1:30 pm to 2:30 at a public skate in St. George; March 15<sup>th</sup> 1pm to 4pm during Saturdays in Paris: Photo Treasure Hunt held at Paris Wincey Mills Co. or March 16<sup>th</sup> 1 pm to 2 pm public skate in Burford.

# ASTROLOGY

**Aries:** March 21 - April 19 (Fire) – Right now, you're most productive when going inward. Retreat from the world and focus on recharging your energy. Your intuition is on fire, so trust your gut and pay attention to recurring signs (11:11!) or vivid dreams—they're likely dropping some important messages. Listen closely!

**Taurus:** April 20 - May 20 (Earth) – Your big-picture goals are finally coming into focus—now, it's time to dream even bigger! Let your intuition and creativity lead the way to exciting new possibilities. And don't keep your dreams to yourself—share them! The right people, connections, and community are out there, ready to help turn them into reality.

**Gemini:** May 21 - June 20 (Air) - Feeling like you're destined for more in your career? It's not just about the paycheck or the recognition—it's about living your soul's legacy. Get in touch with your purpose and start making moves that'll have you remembered for the right reasons. Trust your intuition—it's guiding you to that next level.

**Cancer:** June 21 - July 22 (Water) - Your empathy can light the way for others on their journeys. Don't be afraid to share your wisdom—it could make a real difference. The urge to break free from routine is strong, so go ahead and embrace a spontaneous adventure—whether it's a last-minute trip or deep soul exploration.

**Leo:** July 23 - August 22 (Fire) – Your psychic senses are on point, especially in relationships and finances—trust them! Now's the time to focus your energy on deep soul healing. Dive into shadow work, therapy, or anything that helps you tackle the fears holding you back from fully shining and being seen.

**Virgo:** August 23 - September 22 (Earth) – If your romantic or business relationship has been feeling a little blah lately, get ready to see things in a new light. Be open to sharing your dreams, desires, and even your fears. It's the perfect time for those real, heart-to-heart talks that bring you closer.

**Libra:** September 23 - October 22 (Air) – You might feel drawn to explore a new holistic or spiritual approach to your health—think energy healing, an upgraded supplement routine, or a more intuitive way of caring for your body. Listen to what your body needs, and make small, mindful adjustments to your wellness routine without second-guessing yourself.

**Scorpio:** October 23 - November 21 (Water) – Follow your heart and let your inner child take the wheel. Let loose, get playful, and ditch the rules—whether it's revisiting that old hobby you loved, throwing a solo dance party in your living room, or just letting your imagination run wild. If you're having fun, you're on track.

**Sagittarius:** November 22 - December 21 (Fire) – This is your cosmic permission to slow down and create a cozy space at home to connect with your inner world—whether that's with your favorite books, calming music, or a meditation corner. It's time to recharge your soul and give your emotions the care and attention they deserve.

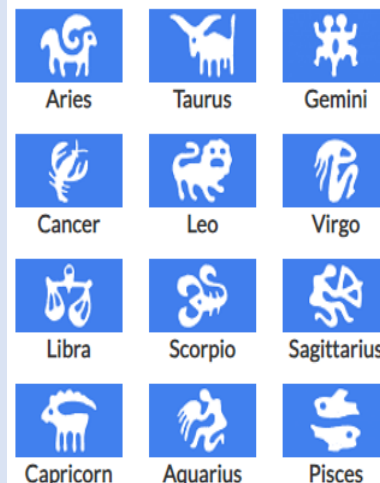
**Capricorn:** December 22 - January 19 (Earth) – Whether you're crafting the perfect Instagram caption or writing a heartfelt text, your communication is extra sensitive and expressive. Don't overthink it—let your soul guide you on what to say. You'll likely find yourself connecting on a deeper level or picking up on things you hadn't before.

**Aquarius:** January 20 - February 18 (Air) – Is your spending going toward things that don't truly align with your values? You know, those impulse buys that feel good for a hot minute but leave you wondering what you were thinking? Time to reset—only invest in what truly nourishes your soul and is kind to your bank account.

**Pisces:** February 19 - March 20 (Water) – You're radiating major magnetic vibes right now, with an aura that's extra open and approachable. People are naturally drawn to your dreamy energy, but you'll feel more at ease and confident letting your true self shine—whether in a crowd or one-on-one. Just remember to protect your energy.

## Horoscopes

### Your Weekly Horoscope





## Showtimes for Galaxy Cinemas Brantford For Saturday, February 22, 2025

### [Captain America: Brave New World](#)

Standard 12:30p.m. 1:00p.m. 3:30p.m.  
4:00p.m. 6:30p.m. 9:30p.m.  
3D 7:00p.m. 10:00p.m.

### [Paddington in Peru](#)

Standard 11:30a.m. 1:10p.m. 3:50p.m.  
6:40p.m. 9:20p.m.

### [The Monkey](#)

Standard 12:00p.m. 2:30p.m. 5:00p.m.  
7:30p.m. 9:55p.m.

### [Dog Man](#)

Standard 11:50a.m. 2:20p.m. 4:45p.m.  
7:10p.m. 9:40p.m.

### [Heart Eyes](#)

Standard 1:30p.m. 4:10p.m.  
6:50p.m. 9:45p.m.

### [Love Hurts](#)

Standard 7:20p.m. 9:50p.m.

### [Chhaava](#)

Standard 1:50p.m. 5:30p.m.  
9:10p.m.

### [Moana 2](#)

Standard 2:00p.m. 4:30p.m.

### [Flow](#)

Standard 11:40a.m.

