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Farm Connections in Brooklin



Grade three students from across Durham Region had a moo-ving experience, visiting Luther Vipond Memorial Arena last week to learn about agriculture and where our food comes from! See more photos on page 3.



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Whitby

See page 5 for the Term in Review Wrap Up!

Rhonda Mulcahy
Regional and Town Councillor
mulcahyr@whitby.ca
905-706-0482



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Less than half the picture: The power of an ice cream bar



By Richard Bercuson

“Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” - Lord Acton

Imagine Premier Doug Ford lounging on the couch, shoeless feet on a cushy ottoman, a napkin across his chest. He’s feasting on his admitted go-to treat, a Chapman’s Yukon ice cream bar. One enjoys such treats when

one is in a good mood.

He has every reason to be. Riding a wave of three consecutive majority governments, he’s garnered more seats (76, 83, 80 in 2018, 2022, 2025 respectively) than any Ontario Premier since Mike Harris in 1995. Only David Peterson’s 95 seats in 1987 have surpassed Ford’s total. Evidently Ontarians liked his messaging - as well as not caring so much for some of the hapless alternatives.

Here’s the problem. He’s getting tipsy with power. There’s a growing list of ill-advised ideas and manoeuvres, possibly powered by said treats, that shout he’s dictatorially driving home legislation. Why? It’s called a majority. To wit the Brooklin High School prom fiasco last fall. When the principal ran roughshod over

parents and students, Ford’s Education Minister said he would step in. Isn’t that why there’s a school board with well paid superintendents and directors to deal with such matters?

Now comes the governance of regions, in our case Durham. The plan is to replace the region’s chair, currently John Henry, with a government appointee. As he well knows, Ford is able to pass such legislation with a snap of the fingers. How such an appointed official would be better versed to deal with regional and municipal issues is doubtful. We cannot ignore as well the obvious political influence of the appointee who will fall into the job by virtue of a connection to a political party and its leader.

Toronto Star columnist Martin Regg Cohn recently reminded us that it was Ford who, upon taking power in 2018, halved the number of Toronto city councillors. “Now the premier wants to appoint his

own unelected regional chairs to impose his will, from on high, upon democratically elected councillors at the local level,” he wrote.

“This is no bureaucratic shakeup,” Cohn continued. “It’s an anti-democratic shakedown, forcing elected mayors across the GTA, Golden Horseshoe and cottage country to toe the Ford line...Why does Ford flex and endlessly overreach? Because he can — enabled by his cabinet, empowered by his voters, exempted from any guardrails. Municipal democracy matters. It is the level of government closest to voters, which means it shouldn’t be treated like a nuisance or an afterthought.”

While the notion of a slippery slope is based mostly on exaggeration and speculation, I can’t help feel that we peons aren’t deemed trustworthy or intelligent enough to choose our local political representatives. What’s next?

Lord Acton also said this: “The danger is not that a particular class is unfit to govern. Every class is unfit to govern.”

Including those who want their treats and will eat them, too.

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Next Issue: Friday, May 1, 2026

Deadline: Friday, April 24, 2026

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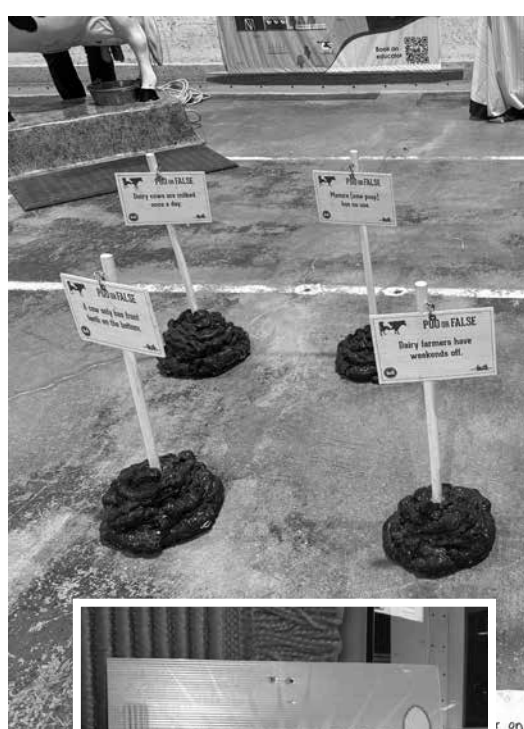
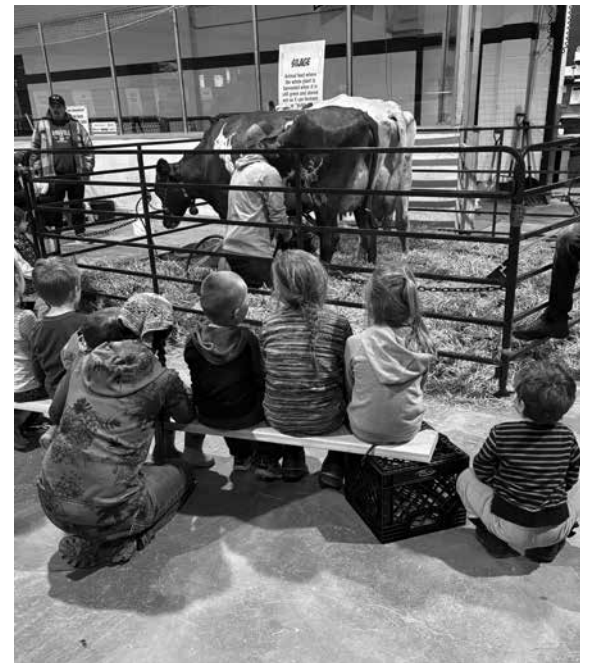


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From Farm Connections Open House Last Week in Brooklin



NOTICE OF PESTICIDE USE

Between May and September 2026, the Regional Municipality of Durham and the Ontario Ministry of Transportation will be conducting larviciding programs, under the authority of Durham Region's Medical Officer of Health, to control larval mosquitoes in order to prevent the development of vectors of West Nile virus.

The pellet and/or briquette formulation of the larvicide methoprene (Altosid - Registration No. 21809 and No. 27694 under the *Pest Control Products Act, Canada*), or the water-soluble pouch formulation of the larvicide *Bacillus sphaericus* (VectoLex WSP - Registration No. 28009 under the *Pest Control Products Act, Canada*), will be placed into catch basins of storm drains in areas across the Regional Municipality of Durham.

The granular formulation of the larvicide *Bacillus thuringiensis subspecies israelensis* (VectoBac 200G - Registration No. 18158 under the *Pest Control Products Act, Canada*) will be placed in temporary pools of standing water, ditches, and storm water retention ponds in areas throughout the Regional Municipality of Durham.

The granular formulation of the larvicide VectoBac 200G and/or the granular formulation of the larvicide *Bacillus sphaericus* (VectoLex CG - Registration No. 28008 under the *Pest Control Products Act, Canada*) might also be placed in sewage lagoons in areas across the Regional Municipality of Durham.

All larvicides will be applied by Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks licensed applicators or trained technicians.

For more information on the locations and dates of treatment on:

Regional and Municipal property - contact
Durham Region Health Department at 1-800-841-2729

Ontario Ministry of Transportation property - contact
Ontario Ministry of Transportation at 1-416-235-5462
(collect calls accepted)

For additional information about
West Nile virus, visit durham.ca/WestNile



How Councillors Will Be Elected in October

Last May, Whitby council voted to change how we elect regional councillors in 2026, choosing to do it by ward versus the previous at-large method. Ajax, Pickering, Oshawa, and Clarington had already gone this route in which voters elect a ward and a regional councillor for each ward.

First brought up in 2019, a motion at Whitby council to go to the at-ward system was defeated when then Mayor Don Mitchell broke the tie, voting against it, this after town staff prepared a report on the proposal. The May, 2025, vote was also a 4-4 tie with Mayor Elizabeth Roy casting the deciding vote to go ahead with the new system.

At the time, she said, "As Whitby continues to grow, electing regional councillors by ward is a significant step in strengthening local representation. This approach aligns us with many other GTA municipalities and ensures each ward has a

dedicated voice at Regional Council."

What this means is that those running for regional councillor in a ward will only campaign in that ward. Having both a ward and regional councillor means that not only will a particular ward be represented at town council but will also have a seat on the broader Durham Region council to address issues pertinent to just that ward.

In 2022, Whitby voters elected its four regional councillors from a list of eight candidates. Rhonda Mulcahy, Chris Leahy, Steve Yamada, and Maleeha Shahid garnered the most votes (in that order).

Whitby has four wards. Now voters in a ward will be able to elect only one ward and one regional councillor in addition to mayor and the respective school trustees. (See *Nomination Information on page 8*).

Region-wide Compost Giveaways from April 25 to May 30

To thank residents for their participation in leaf and yard waste collection programs, Durham Region is once again partnering with local municipalities to provide free compost at special events across the region.



When and where:

Saturday, April 25 from 8 a.m. to noon (rain or shine)

- Ajax Operations Centre, 800 Salem Road North, Ajax
- Lakeview Park (parking lot) Kluane Avenue, Oshawa

Saturday, May 2 from 8 a.m. to noon (rain or shine)

- Whitby Operations Centre, 333 McKinney Drive, Whitby
- Rick MacLeish Memorial Community Centre (parking lot), 91 Elliot Street, Cannington

Saturday, May 9 from 8 a.m. to noon

- Clarington Operations Depot 42, 178 Darlington-Clarke Townline Road, Bowmanville (south of Highway 2)

Saturday, May 23 from 8 a.m. to noon

- Don Beer Arena (parking lot), 940 Dillingham Road, Pickering
- Scugog Community Recreation Centre (parking lot), 1655 Reach Street, Port Perry

Saturday, May 30 from 8 a.m.

to noon

- Uxbridge Arena & Recreation Centre (parking lot), 291 Brock Street West, Uxbridge

Why: In appreciation of a continued community-wide commitment to the Region's leaf and yard waste collection programs, residents are invited to our complimentary compost giveaways.

Note: These are self-serve events. Residents must bring a shovel and containers to carry their compost. Quantities are first-come, first-served and limited to four reusable

containers of compost per vehicle.

Green bins and backyard composters will **not** be available for sale or exchange at these events. Purchase new Green Bins, kitchen containers or backyard composters or exchange broken Green Bins and kitchen containers online with free home delivery. Visit durham.ca/NewBins for more information.

Let's make a big impact together! Residents are encouraged to bring a non-perishable food item to be donated to a local food bank (please check that boxes and cans are not damaged, opened or expired).

For more information, including tips for preparing to attend a compost event, please visit durham.ca/WasteEvents or download the **Durham Region Waste App**.

2022-2026 Term Wrap Up - "Your Plan in Action"

Whitby's population is now about 140,000. By 2031, that number is expected to reach 190,000.

Having a clear plan has been vital which is why council adopted Whitby's first Community Strategic Plan in decades. The plan is transparent, with regular updates, and is accessible at Whitby.ca/CommunityPlan.

More than 3,000 residents shared their priorities which included:

- community safety
- economic growth
- healthcare close to home
- addressing homelessness
- food insecurity

Their input shaped 62 action items. Today, 100 per cent of those items are either complete or underway and we're on track to deliver all of them by the end of this Council term.

Business

In 2025, Whitby welcomed 105 new businesses, bringing our total to more than 4,000, including the new Mazda Canada's New Parts Distribution Centre and SoftMoc National Headquarters. As well, Toromont Cat is opening a large new facility in Brooklin that will offer equipment sales, rentals, parts and service.

North American Steel received a \$3.5-million investment from FedDev Ontario to add more production space to its existing facility.



Business Concierge Program

In 2025, we had 11 investment leads requesting over 100,000 square feet of space. This year, we've already received three more requests for a similar space. We also relaunched the Business Retention and Expansion program.

Other noteworthy economic development initiatives include:

- Sector-specific roundtables hosted by the Town
- Local Business Week events and the annual Whitby Job Fair
- Mayor's Tariff Task Force

In 2025, Council supported the

reinvestment of \$62 million in Elexicon dividends to help power new housing, employment lands, the future hospital, and the Fieldgate Sports Complex.

Whitby's Economic Development team is reporting strong investment interest from sectors like advanced manufacturing, logistics, warehousing, and energy in Brooklin and Ashburn employment areas, where available site sizes are up to 200 acres.

A new feasibility study and marketing strategy are being undertaken for a hotel conference centre especially with the new Fieldgate Sports Complex opening soon.

Finances

Property tax increases over the four years (from 2023) were: 5.8%, 4.4%, 3.9% and 3.4%.

For the 2026 budget:

- No new staff hires
- \$2 million in savings found by staff
- The introduction of new revenue tools
- A Core Services Review

Tourism

Whitby's Tourism Strategy, approved in 2022, includes:

- A tourism Instagram account has grown to 6,000 followers
- More than 90,000 residents and visitors attending over 75 events in 2025

The Home Sweet Home Festival drew an incredible 40,000 people to Downtown Whitby last July and was recognized as Ontario's Best New Event. It will return this July 25.

The new Municipal Accommodation Tax - a four per cent levy on hotel and motel stays - generated over \$600,000 in its first full year, providing a valuable new revenue source for tourism initiatives without impacting property taxes.

Waterfront

The seasonal Town Brewery pop-up at the pumphouse has drawn thousands of residents and visitors to the waterfront.

Converting the historic Rowe House into a restaurant, bakery and culinary hub, which is expected to create 50 new jobs.

The Corbett Creek boardwalk and bridge are completed.

We can now look forward to an accessible dock for kayaks and paddleboards at the new Visitor's Centre. The Whitby Marina Design Study is underway, which will guide long-term improvements.

Downtowns

Brooklin's seasonal gathering space on Roebuck Street has been a huge success and was further enhanced in 2025.

In downtown Whitby, work continues on a study to redesign Brock Street from Highway 401 to the CP Railway Bridge.

A new Downtown Whitby Action Plan will be presented to Council this year. More placemaking enhancements are planned for both downtowns, including tear-off tourism maps.

Advocacy

- Removal of Hwy 407 tolls in Durham
- The need for a dedicated mental health emergency room
- Traffic signals at Hwy. 7 and Hwy. 412 and a Hwy. 12 interchange at Rossland Road
- Enhanced public transit routes
- The need for provincial action and funding to address Ontario's homelessness, mental health and addictions crisis

A new hospital to Whitby and the planning grant from the province. Next steps include the transfer of land.

Another key advocacy piece is the need for a new provincial-municipal funding model in Ontario. - Council recently asked the province to address the \$4 billion dollar annual shortfall caused by municipalities funding provincial responsibilities through property taxes. (Municipalities shoulder \$1.5 billion in social housing) costs downloaded from the province. We're asking the province to share housing-related revenues with municipalities.

Secured over \$21 million in grants, including funding to expand Columbus Road and upgrade Whitby's 55+ Centre. That funding will create more housing and more types of housing. Eg. Creating an inventory of Town-owned lands to support housing development

HOUSING

- Donating land to Habitat for Humanity GTA to bring 46 affordable family homes to Downtown Whitby
- Integrating federal pre-approved housing designs to make it faster to



get permits

Expanding tools for residential development and streamlining approval processes. There's been a 219% increase in online permit use.

Making it easier for property owners to add units to existing homes, eg. basement apartments and in-law suites. This creates more diverse and attainable housing options for families to help reduce urban sprawl.

To encourage uptake, the Town is offering financial incentives through the end of 2026, including reimbursement of Town fees.

Between 2023 and 2025, additional dwelling units accounted for about 40% of annual new unit growth,



New facility

Fieldgate Sports Complex opening in mid-2026, including:

- Durham's largest swimming pool
 - A twin pad area
 - A multipurpose gymnasium
 - Flexible programming space.
- Outdoor amenities will include:
- Lit sports fields
 - Pickleball, basketball and tennis courts
 - A playground
 - And a skate park and pump park

Also New and Coming:

- New Fire Station #6 in West Whitby
- A fire training tower
- A paramedic station on Dundas Street
- The Whitby Health Centre, Canada's largest multi-disciplinary clinic.
- The opening of the Station No. 3 condos in Downtown Whitby
- The Wellings of Whitby retirement community
- Council approved construction of a new animal services and bylaw services building

Proven Leadership + Real Results



Rhonda Mulcahy
Regional and Town Councillor
mulcahyr@whitby.ca
905-706-0482



Ashburn Resident Advocates to Change Bill 9 Requirement

What You Need To Know This Week In Whitby



Ride Smart in Whitby

As the weather gets warmer, e-bikes and e-scooters are a fun way to get around—but it's important to follow the rules and ride safely.

NEW in Whitby:

- Must be 16+ to ride
- Riders 16-17 must wear a helmet
- No riding on sidewalks

whitby.ca/Micromobility

Interim Tax Billing for 2026 Due on April 30

The second installment of the Interim Tax Billing for 2026 is due on April 30. You have the option to sign up for e-billing for property taxes and receive all future tax bills via email. You can also request property tax statements online. If you have any inquiries regarding tax payments, please contact Tax at 905-430-4300 or service@whitby.ca. Visit whitby.ca/Tax



Seasonal Yard Waste Collection is Back

Getting your garden ready for spring? Place your yard waste in Kraft paper bags or reusable open-top containers weighing no more than 44 pounds and place them out on your regular garbage collection day. Acceptable items include hedge trimmings, leaves, pine needles, garden waste, fallen fruit from trees, weeds and branches. The Town can not pick up grass clippings, lawn aeration plugs, rocks, sod, soil, clay, or tree stumps. Use the Whitby Waste Buddy app to learn how to dispose of different types of yard waste or check your collection schedule at whitby.ca/Waste

P: 905-430-4300
E: info@whitby.ca

whitby.ca



Editor's Note: What follows is the text of the delegation made by Ashburn resident Ron Stevens to Whitby's Committee of the Whole council meeting on April 13, 2026, regarding a requested change to Ontario's Bill 9 about the voting requirement to remove an elected official. The province wants a unanimous council vote (excluding the one being investigated), a near impossible threshold to achieve.

Mr. Stevens was the only person to delegate on this issue. Regional councillor Rhonda Mulcahy presented a motion to accept his proposal.

At its recent meeting, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) at which Councillor Mulcahy is the Durham representative, had requested a two-thirds vote, as Mr. Stevens does here.

Whitby council voted unanimously in favour of the motion.

* * *

Good evening Mayor & members of council. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this very important motion.

My name is Ron Stevens & I am a resident of Whitby. I am here to speak in support of this motion before you regarding the municipal accountability act, 2025 – commonly referred to as Bill 9.

First, I want to acknowledge that the intent of Bill 9 is positive. Strengthening accountability for elected officials is something municipalities across Ontario, including Whitby, have been asking for. However, there is a serious concern with how the legislation is currently written.

Bill 9 requires a "unanimous" vote of council to remove a councillor, even after a finding of serious misconduct by an integrity commissioner. In practice, this creates an extremely high threshold, one that is impossible to achieve.

Under the Municipal Act, most council decisions are made by a simple

continued on page 7

April is Presbyopia Awareness Month

What Is Presbyopia?

Presbyopia is a condition that is part of the natural aging process, where the lens of the eye becomes less flexible, and the eye muscles lose some of their strength. This causes the lens to have trouble focusing on nearby objects.

Presbyopia happens to everyone

Although it begins at different times for everyone, it commonly starts in mid to late forties, and tends to stabilize by mid sixties.

There are many options!

Lined bifocals and readers are not the only option for correcting presbyopia. There are different progressive lens options that suit your needs, such as everyday, computer, or task specific progressives. If you don't like glasses, there are multifocal contact lens options, too!

Don't Ignore the Symptoms!

Common symptoms of the early stages of presbyopia include blurry vision at near, eye strain, and headaches. We can help you find the best options to help you see your best! Call to book an appointment: 905-655-6200

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continued from page 6

majority or a two-thirds vote. Unanimous votes are extremely rare, particularly on complex or controversial matters. This means that even in cases of serious misconduct, a single vote against removal could prevent council from acting. In other words, the legislation creates removal power that most likely will not be useable in practice.

This concern has already been raised by the AMO, as well as governance experts across the province. i.e. Principles Integrity, Ontario Ombudsman, City of Toronto, Mayor of Pickering and numerous MPPs.

The motion before you does not oppose the legislation. Instead, it respectfully asks the province to make a practical adjustment, to replace the "unanimous" requirement with a two-thirds majority. A two-thirds vote would still require strong consensus, while ensuring that councils can act when necessary.

Removal of an elected official is very serious, and the threshold should absolutely be very high. But in Ontario, even the most serious municipal decisions are not unanimous. A 2/3rds vote still

requires strong consensus while ensuring the tool can actually be used.

A 2/3rds vote still keeps the threshold extremely high, and removal would only occur after a formal integrity commissioner finding. A 2/3rds vote balances fairness with the need for councils to act in serious cases.

Whitby has experienced situations where Integrity Commissioner findings have led to sanctions, but where the current system has limited tools to address repeated or serious misconduct issues.

This motion is an opportunity for Whitby Council to contribute constructively to improving legislation, not just for this municipality, but for all municipalities in Ontario.

This is not about opposing the legislation; it is about making sure it works. I respectfully ask council to support this motion so municipalities have a tool they can realistically use.

A sincere thank you for your time and consideration.

* * *

More on Bill 9 on page 9.



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*Christensen et al. (2024). Evaluating Real-World Benefits of Hearing Aids With Deep Neural Network-Based Noise Reduction: An Ecological Momentary Assessment Study. American journal of audiology, 33(1), 242-253. **A comprehensive hearing assessment is provided to adults ages 19 and older at no cost. The results of this assessment will be communicated verbally to you. Depending on the province you're located in, an administrative fee may apply if a copy of an Audiological Report is requested. Child hearing tests are conducted at select locations for a fee, please contact us for more information. Offers not valid in Quebec. See clinic for details. Offer expires April 30, 2026.



Notice of Nomination for Office

Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (s.32)

Notice is hereby given to the Municipal Electors of the Town of Whitby

Nominations in the Town of Whitby will be accepted in-person or by an agent at the Office of the Town Clerk, 575 Rossland Road East, Whitby, between May 1, 2026 and August 20, 2026 during regular business hours and on Friday, August 21, 2026 (Nomination Day) between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. for the following elected offices for the Municipal Election to be held on **Monday, October 26, 2026**:

Offices for Election	Number to be Elected
Mayor	One to be elected by all electors in the Town of Whitby
Regional Councillor	One to be elected per Ward (Four total), by electors in their respective ward, in the Town of Whitby
Local/Ward Councillor	One to be elected per Ward (Four total), by electors in their respective ward, in the Town of Whitby
Trustee, Durham District School Board	Three to be elected by all English public school electors in the Town of Whitby
Trustee, Durham Catholic District School Board	Two to be elected by all English catholic school electors in the Town of Whitby
Conseiller(ere), Conseil scolaire Viamonde	One to be elected by all French public school electors in the Region of Durham, the Counties of Haliburton, Northumberland and Peterborough, and the Cities of Kawartha Lakes, Peterborough and Quinte West*
Conseiller(ere), Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir	One to be elected by all French catholic school electors in the Region of Durham, the Counties of Northumberland and Peterborough, and the Cities of Kawartha Lakes, Peterborough and Quinte West*

* Nominations will be received in Legislative Services, City of Oshawa, 50 Centre Street South, Oshawa, Ontario

Candidates

Please visit whitby.ca/VOTE for further information regarding the nomination process, including identification requirements and filing by agent, and to obtain the Form 1 – Nomination Paper, and Form 2 – Endorsement of Nomination. Candidates are encouraged to book an appointment to file their nomination to ensure timely service. The appointment booking tool is available at whitby.ca/VOTE on the Information for Candidates page.

No person who proposes to be a candidate may solicit or accept contributions for election purposes or incur campaign expenses until a nomination paper has been filed.

Third Party Advertisers

A third party advertisement is an advertisement in any broadcast, print, electronic or other medium that promotes, supports or opposes a candidate. Third party advertising is separate from any candidate's

campaign and must be done independently from a candidate. Third party advertising is a way for those outside of a candidate's campaign to express support of or opposition to candidates and to try to persuade voters to vote in a certain way.

Only those who have registered can incur expenses on third party advertising. An individual, corporation or trade union that meets the eligibility requirements may register as a third party advertiser with the Town Clerk between May 1, 2026 and October 23, 2026. Please visit whitby.ca/VOTE for further information regarding the registration process, including identification requirements and filing by an agent, and to obtain the Form 7 – Notice of Registration – Third Party.

For further information please contact the Office of the Town Clerk.

Dated this 17th Day of April, 2026.

Christopher Harris | Town Clerk



For more information email elections@whitby.ca, call 905-430-4300 or visit,

whitby.ca/VOTE



BROOKLIN'S HISTORY

By Jennifer Hudgins

The writer who chronicled Brooklin



Brooklin may have been an unexpected place to produce a literary sensation, but in 1916, David Burns became exactly that.

Burns, born in 1850, and laid to rest in Groveside Cemetery on August 12, 1922, remains one of Brooklin's most celebrated literary figures. Though he came to prominence later in life, his writing captured with remarkable clarity the humour, character, and daily life of the village.

Burns lived at 110 Baldwin Street, a house originally built in 1892 by businessman Fred Holliday and purchased by Burns

in 1910. From this modest home, he produced the work that would bring him widespread recognition. Before turning to writing, he had a varied and respected career. He was known as an expert stock judge and served as a representative of the provincial government, presiding over rural fairs. He also supervised shipments of government-owned livestock to destinations across the country. These experiences gave him a deep understanding of rural life and the people who shaped it.

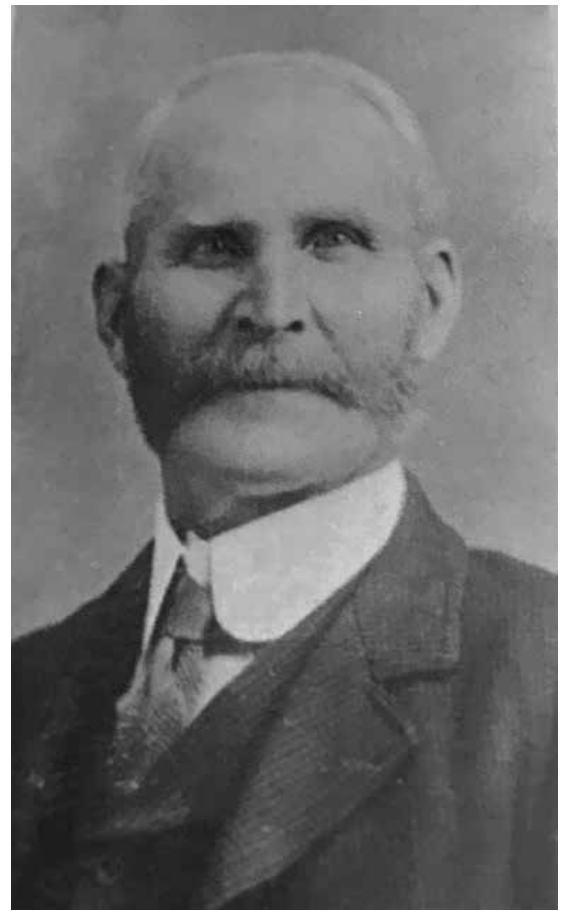
Impressive debut

His literary breakthrough came in December, 1916, with the publication of *Random Writings*. The response was immediate. *The Whitby Gazette and Chronicle* reported that no other book had created such a stir in Brooklin. It sold 200 copies almost overnight, an impressive achievement for a first-time author in a small community.

Much of his appeal lay in his distinctive voice. Burns possessed an extraordinary wit and an infectious sense of humour

that made his work both entertaining and relatable. In the preface to *Random Writings*, he wrote, "If the reading of these pages serves to provoke laughter, or a smile of amusement on the part of those who know me, my objective will have been accomplished." It was a goal he clearly achieved.

His success soon extended beyond Brooklin. Burns received national attention, including an order from Canada's eighth Prime Minister, Sir Robert Borden. He also formed a connection with author Lucy Maud Montgomery, best known for *Anne of Green Gables*. The two met while Burns was serving as a stock judge at a fair near Uxbridge, where Montgomery lived at the Leaskdale Manse. She later requested two copies of his book. Notably, her own collection of verse, *The Watchman & Other Poems*, was published the same year.



Local observations

His writing drew on a lifetime of observation. One of his best-known works, "Drama of Brooklin," vividly portrays the people and businesses of the village. In it, he referenced individuals such as John Medland, owner of Medland's Feed Store once on Campbell Street, Baldwin Street retailer William Ormiston, and John Dryden, farmer of Maple Shade Farm, now the Charles H. Best Diabetes Centre. Burns also used his writing for humanitarian purposes. During the First World War, he donated proceeds from his book to the Red Cross. Records show that between September and December, 1916, a total of \$598.95 was contributed to the local Red Cross to aid soldiers overseas.

In 1920, Burns published a second volume of *Random Writings*, revealing a more somber tone. Two years later, *The Toronto Globe* would remember him as the 'Poet of Ontario County.'

Though largely forgotten today, David Burns left behind a rich portrait of Brooklin's past, one well worth rediscovering.



AMO Comments on Bill 9

Through its president Robin Jones, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) has advocated for two amendments to the province's Bill 9 legislation (from amo.on.ca):

- AMO recommends that the removal from office vote be adjusted from unanimous to a

supermajority (a vote by at least 2/3 of Council). We recognize that a vote to remove an elected municipal official from office is fundamentally different than a regular council vote, but the current proposal sets too high of a threshold. Previously, AMO had advocated for the removal from office procedure to be in the hands of the judiciary.

However, in recognizing that the government is interested in leaving this decision to elected municipal officials, we believe that a council supermajority vote is more appropriate.

- AMO recommends that the legislation includes a progressive range of discipline options for integrity commissioners, aligned

with what was established under the Education Act in 2023. This would provide a standard list of penalties that could be applied apart from removal from office, including censure of a member, barring attendance at meetings, barring a member from sitting on committees, and barring a member from being chair or vice chair of committees.

Brooklin Family Matters: by Leanne Brown

The Jellycat Era



I thought we were done with stuffed animals, that they'd been packed away and emotionally retired along with bedtime stories and night lights. My daughter is a teenager. She has opinions, a social life, and a phone that's surgically attached to her hand.

Still, she asked for a Jellycat plush toy.

Not as a joke but with intention and research. Also with a focus I've rarely seen applied to her math homework.

At first, I laughed. Obviously, this was a trend. She saw it online and it'd disappear in a week. When it arrived, instead of fading into the background, it took up residence on her bed and appeared in different rooms. It's occasionally held, not in a childish way, like a habit she doesn't think about.

I made the mistake of suggesting a cheaper alternative. The look of disgust I got made it clear this was not about a stuffed animal. Rather it was about this stuffed animal, the Jellycat. Apparently, there's a big difference. There are specific ones, rare ones, and most confusing of all, "retired" ones. I'm unclear what career a plush bunny has had that leads to retirement. I assume it was successful.

There's also a quiet social layer to it all. Jellycats show up in photos and in curated bedrooms looking unlike mine ever were. They sit on neatly made beds next to candles no one is lighting and books no one is finishing. My daughter, who cannot find

her shoes most mornings, has arranged this plush like it belongs in a magazine.

Yet the part that surprises me is how normal it seems to her. She's not playing with it. It's just there, a quiet, consistent comfort. And I think I understand it more than I want to admit.

Being a teenage girl looks exhausting. Everything feels visible and seems to matter. If something small, soft, and harmless takes the edge off it, I can't argue with it. She could reach for worse things.

It should also be noted that the dog has also developed a strong and inappropriate attachment to it. What I assumed was a harmless comfort item has, in his view, become the most valuable object in the house. There have been multiple incidents where I've had to coax it out of his mouth with treats, like a low-stakes hostage negotiation. I've rescued the slightly damp and otherwise intact bunny more than once while my daughter looked on in horror.

I did not expect this to be part of parenting a teenager.

Along the way, it stopped being strange and became part of the house. I may not fully understand why my teenage daughter loves her Jellycat, though I do recognize her wanting something steady in a phase of life that sometimes isn't.

Except now, it's no longer just one. Without any formal announcement or warning, it became two then three. And now? It's a collection.

Coming Soon: Durham Home Energy and EV Expo

Looking for quick and helpful ways to make your home more energy-efficient? Open to everyone in the community, Durham Region's free Home Energy and Electric Vehicle (EV) Expo offers a clear, fact-based look at electrification—covering heat pumps, home retrofits, solar options and more—while helping residents learn more about available rebates, grants and incentive programs.

Who: Hosted by the Region of Durham.

Where: Regional Headquarters, 605 Rossland Road East, in Whitby.

When: Saturday, May 2, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

What: This community-focused expo event is designed to help residents understand how to participate in the energy transition and save on household costs by shifting to electricity-powered homes and transportation.

Attendees will have the chance to connect with contractors, home energy advisors, solar installers and EV experts, hear first-hand from homeowners about costs, challenges and benefits, and get behind the wheel with EV test drives.

Learn more about taking the next steps toward a cleaner, more efficient future at durham.ca/HomeEnergyandEVExpo.

Community Care Durham Needs Volunteers

The WeConnect Mental Health & Wellness Program seeks volunteers to support its clients.

The focus of these groups addresses many areas, such as depression and anxiety, bipolar disorder, chronic pain, coping strategies, wellness practices, and social connection. This is a free service offered to those individuals 16 and older who are experiencing emotional or mental health challenges.

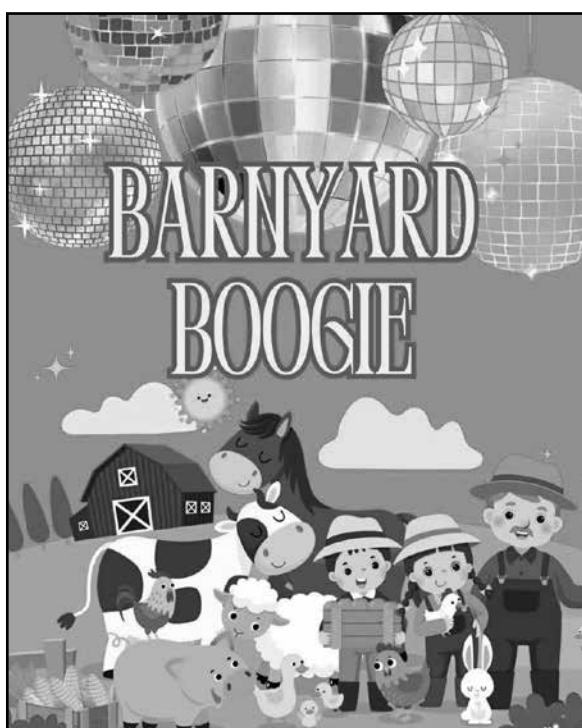
If you are a compassionate, empathetic, and patient person who enjoys helping others, this is the volunteer opportunity for you! Volunteers work together as a team to provide a safe, supportive environment where clients can have open discussions and receive emotional support and coping skills to maximize their quality of life. With the support of volunteers, WeConnect clients are empowered to learn, develop, and maintain skills that help them cope and navigate life's challenges.

The WeConnect Mental

Health & Wellness Program offers new volunteers a comprehensive training program, "Fundamentals of Mental Health and Group Facilitation." It equips volunteers with the essential skills and knowledge to become exceptional group facilitators. Volunteers are offered opportunities to build their skill sets and learn more about emotional support, group facilitation, and mental health.

The next round of training will take place starting on April 22 and will run for 9 weeks on Wednesday evenings from 6 pm to 9 pm. The training location is the Whitby office at 20 Sunray Street.

To learn more about WeConnect volunteering, please email the WeConnect Volunteer Coordinator at weconnect@communitycaredurham.on.ca or complete the WeConnect volunteer application on the website at www.communitycaredurham.on.ca.



Spring Fair Theme

The theme for the 2026 Spring Fair will be "Barnyard Boogie."

The annual parade will be on Sat., June 6, beginning at 10:30 am from Brooklin High School

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BTC Editor Publishes New Book

He calls it "an eclectic collection of murder, mayhem and humour."

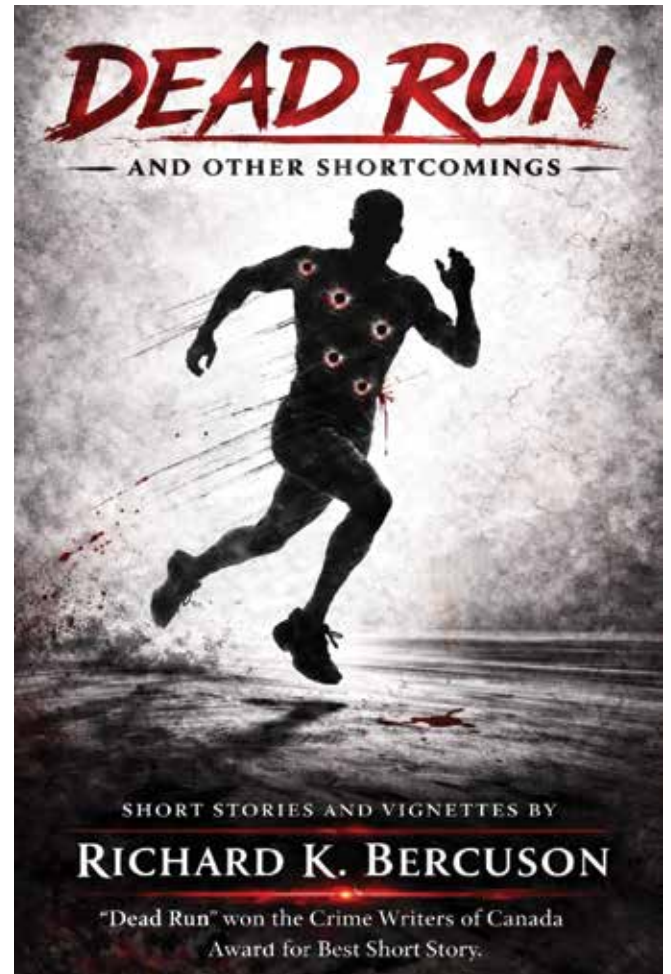
BTC editor Richard Bercuson's latest book, *Dead Run and other shortcomings*, is now available on **amazon.ca** as well as Kindle and Kobo in ebook formats.

The author of the novels *The Burden of Guilt* and *The Shadows of Doubt* gathered up a handful of previously published short stories, including one that captured

a national award, tossed in a few new stories and tied them together into a new volume. In it, you'll read about: a runner wondering how he wound up in an autopsy, a curiously motivated hangman, the oddest hockey player ever, two sisters dealing with grief amidst a startling discovery, a murder that needed a tape measure, a dog with a lousy

vocabulary, four characters linked by the same day and year and other curiosities.

A Brooklin book launch is slated for May.



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United Church Yard Sale
 Brooklin United Church (19 Cassels Rd. E.) will host a yard sale in the church hall on Saturday, May 2, 8 am - 2 pm.
All are welcome

MARKETING YOUR HOME FOR ALL IT IS WORTH!

ELIMINATING HST FOR NEW HOMES is A 'GAME CHANGER'

The decision by the provincial and federal governments to eliminate the 13 per cent harmonized sales tax (HST) on the purchase of new homes for all buyers is welcome news. The King Home Team: Royal Heritage Realty is already seeing the impact of the announcement, with increased sales of inventory homes and renewed interest in new construction homes.

Broadening this measure beyond first-time purchasers to include all buyers of new homes up to \$1.5 million – with a maximum rebate of \$130,000 – is a "practical step that recognizes the realities facing today's housing market," Central Lakes Association of Realtors® CEO Wendy Giroux tells us.

The rebate came into effect on April 1 and continues through March 31, 2027. For homes with a purchasing price between \$1.5 million and \$1.85 million, there will be a declining tax reduction from \$130,000 to the existing \$24,000 rebate amount.

The move is designed to jolt the housing construction market and boost affordability for families, the governments report. The rebate is for owner-occupied primary residences or residential rental properties. Purchase agreements must be signed before March 31, 2027. Construction must begin by December 31, 2028 and must be completed by December 31, 2031.

"This change has the potential to ease some of the financial barriers associated with purchasing newly constructed homes," Giroux says. "Lowering upfront costs can support buyer confidence and may help encourage new residential development, particularly in housing segments that are in short supply. Increasing the availability of 'missing middle' options such as townhomes and multiplexes will be important as communities continue to grow and evolve."

Toronto Regional Real Estate Board CEO John DiMichele says the announcement represents "an important step toward addressing housing affordability challenges...Housing affordability remains one of the defining economic and social challenges facing Ontario," he notes. "Across

the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and Simcoe County, young families, first-time buyers and middle-income earners are finding it increasingly difficult to achieve the dream of home ownership." Removing the tax burden will help lower the cost of new housing and improve the feasibility of bringing new projects to market, DiMichele adds.

Building Industry and Land Development Association President and CEO Dave Wilkes describes the new measure as a "game changer." With housing prices in the GTA already having moderated by 20 to 25 per cent since their peaks in 2022, this new measure presents a "tremendous buying opportunity," he adds.

"When the new sales tax relief is accounted for, homebuyers are looking at 33 to 38 per cent lower pricing for new homes versus the highs of 2022. This kind of pricing has not been seen in almost a decade." In addition, the lower pricing will increase purchasing power and improve mortgage qualification outcomes, allowing more buyers to enter the market and make their dream of homeownership a reality, Wilkes notes.

Affordability is influenced by a range of factors including borrowing costs, supply constraints and the rising expenses tied to development, CLAR explains. Over time, those costs have had a direct impact on home prices, limiting accessibility for many would-be buyers. Measures that help reduce those pressures are an important step toward improving overall market conditions. Most builders will include the rebates in their sticker price. By signing the rebate back to the builder at closing, the purchaser avoids paying the HST upfront and then waiting for a refund from the Canada Revenue Agency.

The King Home Team is excited about what this bold and decisive action means for new home buyers. Please contact us to learn more, including information about inventory homes that will allow you to become a new homeowner sooner!

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