

Zorranow

COMMUNITY EVENTS & SERVICES MAGAZINE

Winter 2024



Purple Bench project
builds awareness about
domestic violence

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Message from the Mayor

It's hard to believe, but we are half way through this term of Council. Zorra continues to experience growth pressure in our

own communities and the effects of growth in neighbouring communities.

Did you know that the Ontario government gives Oxford County growth numbers every year that they are required to accommodate? This means that the growth is to some extent out of our control. Not entirely, and I wrote in my November blog about a motion I made at Oxford Council suggesting that we push back on the growth, and the cost in services and your tax dollars of that growth.

We need to grow in a way that is sustainable for our communities. For Zorra we need to manage that growth to promote and support the agricultural sector, attract, retain and expand business investments to diversify the tax base and increase local employment, facilitate expanded housing diversity and supply to promote attainability, and adopt policies to

promote densification in our urban settlements and protect agricultural land and green spaces. Council must continue to prioritize a vibrant, prosperous, engaged, and environmentally conscious community.

Ideas don't divide us. We divide ourselves. People have different opinions. But they're the same good neighbours and friends. They're the same person you went to the fair with, the same person that helped you with a breakdown, the same person whose kids play hockey with your kids. Council in a small community is neighbours discussing the community we all want. We agree, we disagree, we do it respecting each other. Let's not divide ourselves. Let's be neighbours and friends discussing the community we want.

Let's prioritize a vibrant, prosperous, engaged, and environmentally conscious community. Together.

Marcus Ryan
 Mayor, Zorra Township (and Warden, Oxford County)
 email: mryan@zorra.ca
 Phone: 1.519.425.2338

Zorra Now Magazine is published electronically and paper copies are available at all Township Facilities. If you have any questions or comments or would like to advertise in the magazine, please contact:



Karen Martin, *Director of Corporate & Protective Services*
 Township of Zorra
 163 Brock Street, PO Box 189
 Thamesford, ON N0M 2M0
 Ph. 519-485-2490 ext. 7228 Toll Free 1-888-699-3868
kmartin@zorra.ca www.zorra.ca

Township Holiday Closures

The Municipal Office will close at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 24, 2024 and will reopen on Thursday, January 2, 2025 at 8:00 a.m. In case of an emergency requiring Township staff, please call 519-485-2490 and leave a message at extension 7225. Messages will be monitored daily and forwarded to a contact person.

The Thamesford District Recreation Centre and the Embro-Zorra Community Centre will close at 3:00 p.m. on December 24, 2024, and will reopen on December 27, 2024. Both facilities will also close at 3:00 p.m. on December 31, 2024, and will reopen on January 2, 2025.

Happy Holidays from the Township of Zorra!

BATTERY RECYCLING

The Township of Zorra has a free program for the recycling of household batteries through Raw Materials Company Inc. (RMC). The program is being offered at three locations throughout the Township:

- Township of Zorra Municipal Office - 163 Brock Street, PO Box 189, Thamesford, ON N0M 2M0 – phone 519-485-2490 ext. 7221
- Thamesford Community Centre, 85 Middleton Street, Thamesford, ON N0M 2M0 – phone 519-485-2490 ext. 7245
- Embro Zorra Community Centre, 355644 35th Line, Embro, ON N0J 1J0 – phone 519-485-2490 ext. 7251

Please feel free to drop off your batteries at any of the above locations.

Since the start of this program in September 2012, the Township of Zorra has collected and returned 3,424 lbs of batteries to Raw Materials Company for Recycling.

HOLIDAY COLLECTION GARBAGE AND RECYCLING

WILL YOUR COLLECTION DAY CHANGE?
 Residences and businesses in Blandford-Blenheim, East Zorra-Tavistock, Ingersoll, Norwich, South-West Oxford, Zorra and parts of Tillsonburg (North of Concession, West of Broadway) will have regularly scheduled collection during the holidays.

TOWN OF TILLSONBURG

ORIGINAL DAY	NEW DAY
Wednesday, Dec. 25	Saturday, Dec. 28
Wednesday, Jan. 1	Saturday, Jan. 4

Remember to have all garbage bags and recycling bins to the curb by 7:00 a.m. on your collection day. When severe weather hits this winter, collection may be delayed or cancelled. Monitor local news, visit www.wasteline.ca or download the wasteline app to receive service alerts.

LOCATED IN WOODSTOCK?
 Please visit www.cityofwoodstock.ca for adjusted dates over the holidays.

DON'T LET YOUR HOLIDAYS GO TO WASTE

1. Remove all tape, plastic film, twist ties and other decorative objects before recycling cardboard.
2. Flatten and bundle cardboard boxes no larger than 75 x 75 x 20 centimetres.
3. Recycle wrapping paper, except foil-based paper.
4. Remove all ribbons and bows. Save and reuse for next year where possible.
5. Bulky Styrofoam can be dropped off at the Oxford County Waste Management Facility, Tillsonburg Transfer Station and Woodstock EnviroDepot.

HOLIDAY HOURS WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITY
 Monday – Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
 Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**CLOSED: Wednesday, December 25, 2024
 Thursday, December 26, 2024
 Wednesday, January 1, 2025**

2025 TIPPING FEES:
 Please refer to the Fees and Charges By-law for 2025 pricing details at oxfordcounty.ca.

Public Works Department

REDUCED LOAD SEASON - February 15 - April 30

An early reminder to all drivers of heavy trucks and equipment that the reduced load season takes effect for the period of February 15 to April 30 inclusive each year. In accordance with By-law 21-03, signs will be posted on applicable Township roadways.

HALF LOAD SEASON RATIONALE

- Minimize long term damage to infrastructure
 - Problems caused when roads are soft often require major repairs
 - Prevent additional damage to culverts and bridges
 - Heavy loads do damage to road sub-base that is difficult to detect
 - Changes in the size of agricultural equipment i.e. large liquid manure trailers
 - Multiple aggregate producers in Township
 - Infrastructure repair costs borne directly or indirectly by residents
- All of the above lead to safety issues during Half Load Season.

Thinking about doing an interior renovation this winter?

Examples of projects that require a building permit:

- Interior alterations for non-residential units
- Interior alterations for residential units if a bedroom is created that will require an egress and smoke detector/carbon monoxide detectors, a garage is converted to a living space etc.
- Finishing an unfinished basement and adding/removing plumbing fixtures and insulation.
- Installation of solid fuel appliances (i.e. woodstoves and fireplaces)
- Plumbing systems, heating, ventilation
- Any structural changes or repairs (i.e. moving a structural wall)

For a more detailed list of projects that require a building permit and projects that do not require a building permit, please visit the Building Department webpage at www.zorra.ca or contact us at 519-485-2490

Project Finished?

If your project is complete, please book a final or occupancy inspection on Cloudpermit. It is important that final inspections and occupancy inspections are completed so that your permit can be closed. You may be subject to a fee if your permit is not closed.

911 Addressing

As per the Township of Zorra's Sign By-Law 72-19, it is the responsibility of property owners to maintain 911 signs. Property owners are required to have 911 signs visible so they can be easily identified by emergency responders.

Need a 911 Sign?

Signs can be ordered through the Building Department.

Fill out the 911 Sign request form online found on the Township's website: forms.zorra.ca/911-Sign-Request-Form

Construction Drains

- Construction drains are initiated by a petition that is filed by the landowner, county or even the Public Works Department of a municipality.
- Council will either accept or reject the petition.
- If Council accepts the petition, Council will then appoint an Engineer to do a study and a report.
- Drainage meetings will be arranged and notification will be mailed to the landowners within the watershed.
- It is very important that any notifications that a landowner receives from the Township is fully understood by the landowner.
- It is essential for all landowners to understand all the deadlines, appeal dates and the financial implications of the drainage work.

Type	Cost
First 911 Sign / Post / Installation	No Charge
Replacement Sign / Post / Installation	Property owners will be charged a replacement fee. Refer to the Township's Fee By-Law for current pricing

For more information about 911 and civic address visibility, please read Zorra By-Law 72-19 or phone the office.

Any building or drainage questions should be addressed to
Mike Hughes, Chief Building Official/Drainage Superintendent
519-485-2490 ext 7224 or mhughes@zorra.ca

NOTICE TO RESIDENTS...

WINTER ROADWAY MAINTENANCE ON TOWNSHIP OF ZORRA ROADS

The winter level of service to be delivered is prescribed in the Minimum Maintenance Standards – Ontario Regulation 239/02 regarding snow and ice control. The Minimum Maintenance Standards are a regulation of the Municipal Act, 2001. Service will be delivered during the following hours:

Monday to Friday - 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with additional hours as determined by weather conditions
Saturday, Sunday, holidays - as determined by weather conditions.

Any roads questions should be addressed to

Steve Oliver, Director of Public Services 519-485-2490 ext. 7227 or soliver@zorra.ca

Building Department

2024 Ontario Building Code

Ontario has released a new Building Code to reduce regulatory burdens for the construction industry while increasing the safety and quality of buildings. The 2024 Ontario Building Code comes into effect on January 1, 2025. There is a three-month grace period until March 31, 2025 for specific designs that are already underway. For more information, please visit www.ontario.ca/page/2024-ontario-building-code or reach out to the Zorra Building Department.

Building Permit Fees

Building permit fees will increase on January 1, 2025. As per Section 7(6) of the Building Code Act a public meeting was held at the November 6, 2024 Council meeting. Council approved the recommended fee changes effective January 1, 2025. For more information on the report submitted by staff and the specific fee increases, please read Report 2024-110. You can find the most up-to-date Building By-Law at zorra.ca/our-township/by-laws-and-policies/

Building Permit Applications

For instructions on how to apply for a building or septic permit, please visit the Building & Drainage section on the Township website. All applications should be submitted through Cloudpermit at www.cloudpermit.com. First time users will be required to register an account. For questions related to Cloudpermit, please contact Nicole van Breda at 519-485-2490 ext. 7231 or nvanbreda@zorra.ca.

Keep up to date on news and events in Zorra Township

www.zorra.ca



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Township of Zorra



Follow us on Twitter!
@ZorraTwp



Follow us on Instagram!
@ZorraTwp



Winter Fire Safety Tips

Heating, cooking, decorations and candles all contribute to an increased risk of fire in your home during the holiday season and winter months. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), home fires occur more in the winter than in any other season. As the snowflakes start to fall and the temperatures drop, it's important that you follow our winter fire safety tips and take the proper steps to make sure your family and home are protected from fire hazards.



PLAY IT SAFE IN THE KITCHEN

Cooking is the leading cause of home fires and home injuries, so it's important to know what you can do to help keep your friends and family safe while entertaining during the holidays and winter season. The primary cause of fires in the kitchen is unattended stovetops and ovens. If you are simmering, baking or roasting food, check it regularly, remain in the kitchen and use a timer for reminders. When cooking for longer periods of time, don't forget to use the exhaust fan or vent above your stove to help prevent carbon monoxide (CO) from collecting inside your home.



BE CAUTIOUS OF SPACE HEATERS

December, January and February are the peak months for heating fires, and space heaters account for many of our home heating fires, according to the NFPA. Space heaters should be placed a minimum of three feet away from anything flammable, such as upholstered furniture, tapestries, mattresses or bedding, and must be turned off when you leave the room or go to sleep to help prevent a fire. In addition, never store clothing on or around the unit, and never cover the cord or put anything on top of it. Also have a three-foot kid-free zone around space heaters.



DECORATE WITH CARE

As decorations come in and out of storage during the winter months, they also come with potential fire hazards. Nearly two-thirds of fires involving decorative lights are due to electrical failures or malfunctions. An important winter fire safety tip is to check light strings for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections, and throw out damaged sets. Also, avoid plugging too many lights into an outlet; overloaded circuits can overheat and cause an electrical fire. In addition, place any festive holiday decorations no closer than three feet from open flames, lamps and other sources of heat.



Winter Carbon Monoxide Safety Tips

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is an invisible, odorless, colorless, and tasteless gas. Common sources of carbon monoxide include any fuel burning devices, such as your stove, furnace or water heater. As outside temperatures drop during the winter months, things start to heat up indoors. Winter is a peak time for carbon monoxide poisoning as more people start to utilize their fuel burning devices. Learn how to help protect your home and family from an emergency this winter with our simple carbon monoxide safety tips.



NEVER USE GENERATORS INDOORS

In the event of a power outage, never use a generator indoors. Place the generator a safe distance from the home, at least 10-15 feet.



INSPECT YOUR FUEL BURNING DEVICES

Furnaces and other fuel-burning appliances can produce carbon monoxide if they are not working properly or maintained. Make sure to have your devices inspected regularly by professionals to help protect your home and family.



CLEAN OUR YOUR FIREPLACE FLUE

Make sure to clean out or have your fireplace's flue inspected before you light a fire. This will help prevent the flue from becoming clogged and prevent carbon monoxide from being trapped in your home.



USE KITCHEN VENTS ANYTIME THE STOVE IS IN USE

The kitchen stove is among the most frequent sources of carbon monoxide in the home. To help eliminate danger of overexposure, always run exhaust fans when cooking, especially during the holidays and winter season when stoves are left on for longer periods of time. Also, open a nearby window periodically when cooking to allow fresh air to circulate, and never use your stove to heat your home.



INSTALL AND TEST YOUR CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

Your first line of defense against a CO emergency is early detection. Make sure to install CO alarms on every level of the home and in every bedroom. It is important to regularly test your detectors and replace them every 5 to 7 years. Keep your home and family safe this winter season by following these 5 simple carbon monoxide safety tips.

Please contact the Manager of Emergency Services/Fire Chief, Joshua Doyle at 519-425-2301 or at fire@zorra.ca if you have any questions.

Please contact the Manager of Emergency Services/Fire Chief, Joshua Doyle at 519-425-2301 or at jdoyle@zorra.ca if you have any questions.



72-Hour Kit Emergency Ready

STORE YOUR KIT IN A SPOT THAT CAN BE GRABBED IN A HURRY

- Important papers-passports, copies of birth certificate, drivers license
- Copy of emergency contact list
- Copy of emergency family plan
- Mobile phone (solar charge or spare battery back)
- Extra keys and cash
- Flashlight, radio, batteries and spares
- Whistle
- Playing cards
- First aid kit
- Medications/prescriptions
- Candles and matches/lighter
- Manual can opener
- Toilet paper, hand sanitizer and personal hygiene items
- Non-perishable food (canned fruit vegetables and meat)
- Bottled water - 6L per person
- Clothing and shoes
- Blankets or sleeping bag
- Necessities for babies and pets



Please contact the Manager of Emergency Services/Fire Chief, Joshua Doyle at 519-425-2301 or at jdoyle@zorra.ca if you have any questions.

By-Law Enforcement Department

WINTER PARKING

Please be advised that the winter parking restrictions will be enforced starting November 15, 2024 and remain in place until March 31, 2025.

Parking is not permitted on any road or street from 1:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. 7 days a week during this period. Any vehicle owner found in violation of this by-law could be fined or have their vehicle removed/towed at owners' expense. The fine for this violation is set at \$50.

RECREATION VEHICLES

Notice to all RV/boat owners. The Zoning By-law allows front yard driveway storage of RVs and boats from May 1 – October 31. After October 31, front driveway storage of these vehicles shall be removed and stored elsewhere. The vehicles may be stored on your side lot or rear lot provided that they meet the 5ft setback.

LEAVES AND SNOW:

Did you know that it is a By-law infraction to push your leaves and snow onto the roadway or neighbouring properties? Depositing your leaves on the road or private property is considered dumping and may result in a significant fine of \$700. Also depositing snow or ice onto public or private property carries a fine of \$200 and up to \$700! If you wish to review the Clean and Clear By-law it can be found on our website at www.zorra.ca

Dave Robertson,
By-law Enforcement Officer
226-374-6795
[drobertson@zorra.ca](mailto:d Robertson@zorra.ca)

ZORRA HUNTING REGULATIONS

Sunday Gun Hunting in the Township of Zorra is prohibited. For further information visit the Ministry of Natural Resources website: www.mnr.gov.on.ca In accordance with Township By-law #43-09, Municipal licenses are not required for hunting rabbit and pheasant in the Township of Zorra.



Animal Control

LOW-COST PET SERVICES AT THE STRATFORD PERTH HUMANE SOCIETY

Did you know that Zorra Township pet owners can access a variety of services at the Stratford Perth Humane Society? They include:

- Weekly low-cost microchip appointments
- Monthly rabies vaccination and microchip appointments
- Low-cost spay neuter clinic for cats (no income or geography restrictions)
- TNR services for community cats/barn cats
- And more!

Check out kwsphumane.ca for more information or to register today!

LOST OR FOUND A PET?

Please contact our Animal Services provider, the Stratford Perth Humane Society, ASAP and file a lost/found report. Also check out the stray pets in care page to see if your pet is currently at the shelter (pets will show for the first five days from intake, so please always call). Call 519-273-6600.

Tax Department

PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

Tax Department Property assessment for the 2025 taxation year will continue to be based on the January 1, 2016 valuation date and will remain the same as 2024 unless there has been a change to the property. The Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) is responsible for accurately assessing and classifying all properties in Ontario in accordance with the Assessment Act and Regulations established by the Ontario Government. If you feel that your property assessment is not a reasonable reflection of your property's value and/or classification, you can ask MPAC for a review. This review is free of charge. Visit MPAC's AboutMyProperty at www.mpac.ca if you have inquiries and to learn more about how your property was assessed, see the information MPAC has on file and compare it to others in your neighbourhood. The Township is responsible to collect taxes on behalf of the County of Oxford and the school boards within our municipal jurisdiction. The Township also collects taxes on behalf of our policing and conservation authority partners. Property taxes are calculated based on the property's assessed value using the established tax rate for the property's classification.



DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN NOW CHOOSE TO RECEIVE YOUR PROPERTY TAX BILL BY EMAIL?

By signing up for e-Billing you will receive your property tax in a PDF format, to the email address of your choice, rather than a copy through the mail. The bill is considered delivered if the e-Bill is not returned as an undeliverable email. Visit our forms page at www.zorra.ca to sign up online. There is a fee to have a tax statement or duplicate copy of your bill printed or emailed to you.

DID YOU KNOW THAT WE OFFER 3 PRE-AUTHORIZED PAYMENT PLAN OPTIONS FOR THE PAYMENT OF PROPERTY TAXES?

Now is the perfect time to enrol in this free service! Payment options include: 4 instalments with payments being withdrawn on the regular instalment due dates for the amounts indicated on your tax bill; 10 instalments with payments being withdrawn from your account on the last business day of the month from January to October; or 12 instalments with payments being withdrawn from your account on the last business day of the month from January to December. Please visit the Forms page at www.zorra.ca and complete a Pre-Authorized Payment Application form if you are interested. Remember that if, for any reason, you wish to be removed from this payment plan, or if your banking information changes, you must notify the tax office in writing at least thirty (30) days before the next pre-authorized payment is due. If you are currently enrolled in the pre-authorized payment plan, you DO NOT have to re-apply each year.

PROPERTY TAXES ARE BILLED TWICE EACH CALENDAR YEAR

An interim tax bill and a final tax bill. The interim tax bill will be mailed the first week of February 2025 and will contain 2 instalments, with the first instalment being due on February 28th and the second instalment being due on May 30th. The interim tax bill is calculated at 50% of the previous year's total taxes billed on the property. The final tax bill will be mailed in July 2025 and will contain 2 instalments, with the first instalment being due on August 29th and the second instalment being due on October 31st. The final tax bill amount is determined following Council's adoption of the Township's budget, the passage of the tax rating by-law for 2025, notification from the County of Oxford of the county tax rates for 2025 and notification from the Province of Ontario of the education tax rates for 2025. The final tax bill reflects the total taxes assessed on the property for the year less the amount already charged on the interim tax bill.

WHAT IS A SUPPLEMENTARY TAX BILL/NOTICE?

A supplementary tax notice is a tax bill issued by the Township which reflects any additions, improvements or changes in classification that have been made to your property as determined by MPAC. For example, owners of newly constructed homes will receive a supplementary tax notice pertaining to the assessed value of their house effective from their occupancy date. Owners may receive multiple bills for more than one tax year. Supplementary tax bills can also be issued for omissions of assessment. The supplementary tax notice is in addition to what may have been previously billed on the property. This tax notice does not include payments already made to your tax account or future instalments that have been previously billed and are still outstanding. Prior to receiving a supplementary tax bill, you should have already received a Notice of Assessment from MPAC indicating the reason for your supplementary/omitted tax bill(s). If you feel that your supplementary/omitted assessment is incorrect, a Request for Reconsideration (RFR) process is available. Please refer to the Notice of Assessment sent by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) for the deadline to file an RFR. Please contact MPAC at 1-866-296-6722 or visit www.MPAC.ca for more details.

WE ACCEPT PAYMENTS USING INTERNET OR TELEPHONE BANKING.

Remember to use your 15-digit property roll number indicated on your tax bill to register. To setup your property taxes as a bill payment through your online banking, go to "add a bill" and search for "Zorra". Select Zorra Township Tax and enter the Roll Number from your tax bill as your account number. Use your roll number starting after the 3227 and eliminating any dashes. If you own multiple properties, please set up a separate bill for each property. Please ensure that you have allowed at least 3 business days for the payment to reach our office to avoid being charged penalty/interest. Penalty charges of 1.25% will be added to instalments not paid and received by the due date. Interest charges of 1.25% are applied on the first day of each month until the balance is paid. Failure to receive a tax bill or arrears notice does not exempt the taxpayer from late payment charges.

Happy Holidays and all the best in 2025!

Nicole Bowery, Tax Collector 519-485-2490 x 7222 nbowery@zorrra.ca

REFER A FRIEND! PROMOTION

Refer a friend to Quadro and BOTH receive a:

\$50.00

Quadro Bill Credit!
Receive up to \$500.00 in bill credits for your referrals
*Some Restrictions Apply

WWW.QUADRO.NET
1-800-265-4983

ZORRA MULTI-USE COURTS COMMITTEE



Holiday Smile Cookie Campaign

The Zorra Multi-Use Committee (ZMCC) is SO close to their goal!

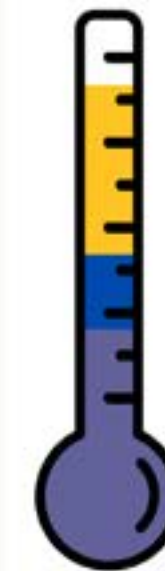
Thank you to everyone who has supported this project through the committee's events this Fall including: the Community Holiday Market, Fall Pickleball Tournament and the Tim Horton's Holiday Smile Cookie Campaign.

It's not too late to donate! We hope to tender this project in 2025, and are seeking businesses that can contribute services and/or materials to support the construction.

Please contact a committee member or scaldwell@zorra.ca if you are interested in supporting this project.

For updates on the project, follow ZORRA MULTI-USE COURTS COMMITTEE on Facebook.

ZORRA MULTI-USE COURTS \$300,000 GOAL



- ✓ The Township has committed \$79,950 to the project*
- ✓ The Thamesford Lions Club has donated \$50,000
- ✓ The community has donated \$148,970.95

\$278,920.95
RAISED TO DATE
(as of November 7, 2024)



Community Holiday Market



November Pickleball Tournament

Recreation Department

FREE HOLIDAY PUBLIC SKATING



THAMESFORD DISTRICT RECREATION CENTRE

SUNDAY DECEMBER 22	MONDAY DECEMBER 23	TUESDAY DECEMBER 24	WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 25	THURSDAY DECEMBER 26	FRIDAY DECEMBER 27
2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORED BY THAMESFORD LAWN BOWLING CLUB 	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORED BY THAMESFORD MINOR BASEBALL ASSOCIATION 	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORED BY COOPER'S CUSTOM EXTERIOR INC. 	FACILITY CLOSED	FACILITY CLOSED	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORED BY THAMESFORD TROJANS
SUNDAY DECEMBER 29	MONDAY DECEMBER 30	TUESDAY DECEMBER 31	WEDNESDAY JANUARY 1	THURSDAY JANUARY 2	FRIDAY JANUARY 3
2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORED BY THAMESFORD LAWN BOWLING CLUB 	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORED BY COOPER'S CUSTOM EXTERIOR INC. 	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORED BY QUADRO 	FACILITY CLOSED	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORSHIP AVAILABLE 	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORSHIP AVAILABLE

EMBRO-ZORRA COMMUNITY CENTRE

SUNDAY DECEMBER 22	MONDAY DECEMBER 23	TUESDAY DECEMBER 24	WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 25	THURSDAY DECEMBER 26	FRIDAY DECEMBER 27
2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORED BY JENNIFER WEEB YOUR OXFORD CONNECTION THE REALTY FIRM INC. 	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORED BY JMCC LIMITED 	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORSHIP AVAILABLE 	FACILITY CLOSED	FACILITY CLOSED	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORSHIP AVAILABLE
SUNDAY DECEMBER 29	MONDAY DECEMBER 30	TUESDAY DECEMBER 31	WEDNESDAY JANUARY 1	THURSDAY JANUARY 2	FRIDAY JANUARY 3
2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORED BY JMCC LIMITED 	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORSHIP AVAILABLE 	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORED BY EMBRO MINOR BASEBALL ASSOCIATION 	FACILITY CLOSED	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORSHIP AVAILABLE 	2:00PM-3:00PM PUBLIC SKATING SPONSORSHIP AVAILABLE

SHINNY

December 22 (Embro only), 23, 24 (Thamesford only), 27, 29 (Embro only), 30, 31, January 2 & 3

1:00pm-2:00pm

\$5.00 individual/\$12.00 family

WINTER DROP-IN PROGRAMS & CLASSES

2024/2025

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
Embros-Zorra Community Centre	SHINNY 1:00PM-2:00PM PUBLIC SKATING 2:00PM-3:00PM	PICKLEBALL 9:00AM-12:00PM YOGA 7:00PM-8:00PM	ADULT SKATE 9:30AM-10:30AM PARENT & TOT SKATE 10:30AM-11:30AM ADULT PICKLEBALL 6:00PM-9:00PM	PICKLEBALL 9:00AM-12:00PM	YOGA 9:30AM-10:30AM PARENT & TOT YOGA 10:30AM-11:30AM PICKLEBALL 6:00PM-9:00PM
Thamesford District Community Centre	PUBLIC SKATING 2:00PM-3:00PM	ADULT PICKLEBALL 6:00PM-9:00PM *EXCLUDING THE 1ST MONDAY OF THE MONTH	PICKLEBALL 8:00AM-11:00AM YOGA 7:00PM-8:00PM (BEATY ROOM @THAMESFORD LIBRARY)	CARPET BOWLING 9:00AM-12:00PM YOGA 9:30AM-10:30AM (BEATY ROOM)	PICKLEBALL 8:00AM-11:00AM ADULT SKATE 9:30AM-10:30AM PARENT & TOT SKATE 10:30AM-11:30AM

*EXCLUDING HOLIDAYS

Pickleball
All are welcome to join in our drop-in pickleball program! Pickleball is a game that combines elements of tennis, basketball and ping-pong. Beginners welcome. Equipment provided.

Carpet Bowling
An indoor variation of Lawn Bowling, which can be enjoyed by all ages and abilities. Drop-in and test your skills.

Public Skating
Skating is a skill you can enjoy for a lifetime. All ages and skill levels are welcome.

Parent & Tot Skate
This special skating time is for parents and tots to have fun on the ice together. Strollers permitted.

Adult Skate
A great way to get your exercise in and meet new people.

Shinny
Non-competitive 'pick-up' hockey for all ages and abilities. Players will play respectfully with small nets and no goalies. Skates, helmet, gloves and stick required.

Yoga
These classes are run by certified instructors who will tailor each session to your unique needs and fitness level. All abilities welcome! Starting January 6.

Parent & Tot Yoga
Our certified instructors will lead you and your tot through a thoughtful yoga class. Enjoy quality bonding time while exploring the benefits of yoga. All abilities welcome! Starting January 9.

www.zorra.ca/calendar

New 2025 Recreation Fees		
Public Skating	Infants & Toddlers (3 & under)	Free
	Youth (4-17)	\$3.50
	Adult (18-59)	\$5.00
	Senior (60+)	\$3.50
Shinny	Family	\$10.00
	Youth (4-17)	\$5.00
	Adult (18-59)	\$7.00
Drop-in Program (Pickleball, Carpet Bowling)	Senior (60+)	\$5.00
	Family	\$14.00
	Youth (4-17)	\$3.50
	Adult (18-59)	\$5.00
Classes	Senior (60+)	\$3.50
	Youth (4-17)	\$4.25
	Adult (18-59)	\$6.00
	Senior (60+)	\$4.25

SERVICE ANIMALS ONLY

Beginning January 1, 2025, animals will be prohibited in Township facilities, with the exception of service animals. See policy 200-27 "Animals in Facilities" for further details



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TOWNSHIP OF ZORRA

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MARCH 10-14, 2025

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New Recreation Fees

On October 16, 2024, Zorra Council approved an update to Fees By-law 11-09, introducing changes to recreation and facility rental rates, effective January 1, 2025.

Zorra Township's rental rates and drop-in programs have remained largely unchanged in recent years. To ensure that our fees remain affordable while adequately covering operating costs, we conducted a thorough review of our Recreation Fees & Charges. This review has led to several updates aimed at better aligning our rates with those of comparable municipalities. Revenue generated from these fees will be reinvested to purchase new equipment and maintain our facilities, enhancing your overall experience.

The updated 2025 Fees By-law is available on our website.

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CAMP & POOL STAFF FOR SUMMER 2025

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Email athompson@zorrra.ca for more information



PARKS STAFF SEASONALLY REMOVE SOME CANS AND RELOCATE OTHERS FROM PARK INTERIORS TO HIGH-TRAFFIC AREAS FOR EASIER ACCESS DURING WINTER WALKS AND DOG STROLLS. THIS ALSO ENSURES STAFF CAN SERVICE THE CANS SAFELY. ONCE THE SNOW THAWS AND SPORTS RESUME, THE CANS ARE RETURNED TO THE FIELDS FOR USE BY RESIDENTS.

GARBAGE IS COLLECTED ONCE A WEEK.

IF YOU SEE A FULL GARBAGE CAN, PLEASE LET US KNOW!

FACILITIES@ZORRA.CA



2024 LOCAL GOVERNMENT WEEK

Local Government Week was developed to celebrate the key role that Ontario local governments play in helping to define the character, priorities, amenities, and physical make-up of communities. The activities that take place for this week are used to educate students on the importance and operation of municipal government, engage youth in the community, and create an interest in community leadership, while putting a face to local government staff and elected officials.

The Township of Zorra hosted Local Government Activities on November 13 and 14. The Township invited Zorra schools to the new Township office building to take part in an office tour and complete a budgeting activity. Over 140 students from Zorra's three schools (A.J. Baker Public School, Zorra Highland Park Public School, and Thamesford Public School) attended!

Students were given a list of potential Zorra projects (including a new firetruck, a new daycare facility, replacing or updating a park, replacing or fixing a bridge, or adding bike lanes and sidewalks in Zorra) and a budget of \$1,500,000 to allocate towards their desired projects. The students were then asked to present and defend their choices to Zorra staff and Council members.



Students from A.J. Baker Public School presenting their budget presentations to Zorra Council/staff and Deputy Mayor Grigg taking students on a tour of the new Zorra municipal office building.

It was clear that the classes put a lot of hard work and effort into preparing their budgets. The students were ready to answer tough questions about why they included some projects in their budgets while they left out others. Many groups advocated for a new daycare facility in Zorra, as well as a new firetruck (one group went above and beyond and noted that Zorra needs an aerial fire truck - sounds like their parents are on our volunteer fire department!). Some groups also decided to use money from the budget to fund projects not included in the budget activity list, such as a wiffle ball field, an arcade, an indoor pool, and horses for the Township.

On behalf of Council and staff, we would like to thank all the students and teachers for participating in the Local Government Week activities. Thank you for doing your part!

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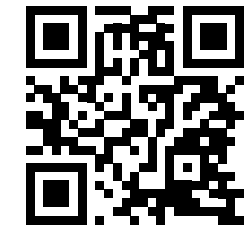
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Purple Bench project builds awareness about domestic violence

Township office bench unveiled on December 3rd

By Stew Slater

On Dec. 3 outside the Township of Zorra's new municipal offices in Thamesford, a purple park bench was unveiled as part of the nationwide Purple Bench initiative. The bench was donated by Woodstock's Maglin Site Furniture and the township agreed on Aug. 7, 2024 to support the project by maintaining the bench as part of its regular maintenance schedule.

"These benches serve as more than just seats," Domestic Abuse Services Oxford (DASO) executive director Diane Harris told Zorra Township Council when she sought support for the project on Aug. 7. "They feature plaques (also donated by Maglin Site) displaying emergency contact numbers for individuals experiencing domestic violence. They have been strategically placed in various locations to raise awareness and provide resources for those in need."

The Purple Bench memorial project started in Nova Scotia in 2015 but stems from the death on Oct. 19, 1990 of Barbara Baillie at the hands of her husband. Baillie's children created the Barb's Bench Project by placing a memorial bench in a park in Spryfield, Nova Scotia, and encouraging others across the country to do the same as a way of building awareness about and paying tribute to the victims of intimate partner violence.

In April 2024, the opposition New Democrats introduced Bill 173 in the Ontario Legislature, calling on the government to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic in the province. As an Opposition bill, the likelihood of the measure passing was low, but what became known as the Intimate Partner Violence Epidemic Act did achieve second reading.

Premier Doug Ford, however, has publicly stated that although he wants the province to have "zero tolerance" towards intimate partner violence the government is not prepared to declare an epidemic.

The call from the New Democrats, though, is not without justification. Declaring an epidemic was one of the recommendations from a 2022 coroner's inquest into the deaths of three women in Renfrew County in 2015. And in 2023 the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), of which Zorra Township is a member along with 92 others, declared that gender-based and intimate partner violence is an epidemic in Ontario "that requires urgent and coordinated government action."

Since the AMO declaration, family crisis service providers across the province – like DASO, which operates a 17-bed, nine-room emergency residence in Woodstock along with a crisis support line and outreach workers who can visit people in their home communities anywhere in Oxford – have visited their municipal councils calling on local politicians to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic within their jurisdictions. Many have done so.

In June and July 2023, representatives of DASO, the Domestic Abuse Resource Team, and Ingamo Homes (which operates 21 townhouses of second-stage transitional housing for those who have suffered from domestic abuse, and of which Harris is also executive director) brought a motion forward to the City of Woodstock and Oxford County Council. In both cases, it was unanimously approved.

Many residents of rural areas in Ontario, the delegation told Oxford County Council during its July 2023 presentation, "assume that violence is an urban issue that affects those of a specific socioeconomic status, ethnic origin, race, or age. This denial or lack of awareness becomes a significant obstacle to survivors in small towns with little resources due to the absence of other options."

"Rural women who do access services locally lack the anonymity and thus confidentiality that comes with living in an urban area," they added.

Harris, speaking recently in an interview, said bringing the Purple Bench Project to Oxford (eight benches in total will be installed across the county) will hopefully encourage people to think past those stereotypes about family violence in rural areas and change their perspective when they see signs of it in their communities.

"Things aren't the way they used to be," she said. "This is no longer something that gets hidden away. I think people have come to recognize that these people who are dying are somebody's mother, or sister, or daughter."

Harris says over 60 women were killed by their intimate partners in the province in the past year. She described these deaths as "senseless" and "preventable." And she hopes the Purple Bench Project can play a small role in that prevention.

Having the benches in the communities, she hopes, will help people recognize that the things they're seeing in either their own lives or in the lives of their friends or neighbours aren't healthy, could lead to more serious consequences, and should be addressed. Using a smartphone to scan the QR code on the bench will lead to information about where and how to seek help.

According to DASO, publicly available data indicates that in 2021, there were 1,624 occurrences of domestic violence in Oxford County, including 339 instances in which charges were laid for intimate partner violence. There were 959 calls to the DASO crisis line, the agency provided safe shelter to 129 women and children, and 82 women were offered counselling for victims of sexual assault.

Harris explained the agency also provides programming for those who are the aggressors in incidences of intimate partner violence. And she adds that an ongoing initiative is to build the capacity within the county's workplaces to recognize when an employee or colleague may be experiencing domestic violence.

But DASO's representatives at the council meetings also stressed that Oxford County has one crisis centre, one long-term women's transitional program, and one part-time sexual violence counsellor for a population of 128,000 people. What this means is that many county residents in need of these services "are going without or are forced to travel to nearby urban centres such as London, Brantford or Waterloo."



Sophie Foster, DASO; Sofia Caldwell, Manager of Recreation and Facilities; Deputy Mayor Katie Grigg; Mayor Marcus Ryan; Diane Larder, Chief Administrative Officer

In 2023, they continued, "167 women who came to DASO in need of sanctuary to escape and survive abuse did NOT receive support." And Ingamo Homes "regularly has to turn people away due to capacity issues and has a waitlist of up to one year."

With those shortcomings in mind, Harris hopes the installation of the eight Purple Benches will also encourage Oxford County residents and decision-makers to keep the struggle against intimate partner violence in their minds, and hopefully advocate for increasing funding from all levels of government for the services assisting those in need.

At the first of the Oxford County bench unveilings on Nov. 20 at the Drumbo splashpad in cooperation with Blandford-Blenheim township, the DASO executive director said a woman approached her and said, "if this means even one person can get help and escape their situation, then it's a success."

"It was so encouraging to hear those words," Harris said, "because it helps us feel that we've got support in the rural communities for the work we're doing."

DASO's 24-hour crisis/help line can be reached at 519-539-4811 or toll-free at 1-800-265-1938. It's also available by texting 519-788-9993. For non-crisis inquiries at DASO, call 519-539-7488.

Township Contacts

Council



Mayor Marcus Ryan
Email: mryan@zorra.ca
Tel: 519-425-2338



Ward 1 Councillor
Kevin Stewart
Email: kstewart@zorra.ca
Tel: 519-808-7839



**Ward 2 Councillor/
Deputy Mayor**
Katie Grigg
Email: kgrigg@zorra.ca
Tel: 226-268-4495



Ward 3 Councillor
Paul Mitchell
Email: pmitchell@zorra.ca
Tel: 519-349-2271



Ward 4 Councillor
Crystal Finch
Email: cfinch@zorra.ca
Tel: 519-532-9037

Upcoming Council Meetings

Council meetings are held the first WEDNESDAY of the month at 9:30 a.m. and the third WEDNESDAY of the month at 6:00 p.m.

December 18, 6:00pm
January 15, 9:30am
February 5, 9:30am
February 19, 6:00pm

Employees

Building/Drainage Department
*Chief Building Official/
Drainage Superintendent* - Mike Hughes
Phone: 519-425-2306
Email: mhughes@zorra.ca

*Deputy Chief Building Official/
Building Inspector* - Mathew Paul
Phone: 519-425-2309
Email: mpaul@zorra.ca

Building Services Coordinator
Nicole van Breda
Phone: 519-425-2308
Email: nvanbreda@zorra.ca

Corporate Services
Chief Administrative Officer - Diane Larder
Phone: 519-425-2303
Email: dlarder@zorra.ca

*Director of Corporate and Protective
Services/Clerk* - Karen Martin
Phone: 519-425-2305
Email: kmartin@zorra.ca

Planner - Spencer McDonald
Phone: 519-539-0015 ext. 3205
Email: jsmcdonald@oxfordcounty.ca

By-law Enforcement Officer - Dave Robertson
Phone: 226-374-6795
Email: drobertson@zorra.ca

*Records Management Coordinator/
Executive Assistant* - Lisa Teeple
Phone: 519-425-2314
Email: lteeple@zorra.ca

*Corporate and Strategic
Initiatives Coordinator*
Jacob Sookraj
Phone: 519-425-2313
Email: jsookraj@zorra.ca

Legislative Coordinator/Deputy Clerk
Maggie McLaughlin
Phone: 519-485-5125
Email: mmclaughlin@zorra.ca

Customer Service Representative
Michelle McLellan
Phone: 519-425-2307
Email: mmclellan@zorra.ca

Finance Department
Manager of Finance - Kim Grogan
Phone: 519-425-2329
Email: kgrogan@zorra.ca

Tax Collector
Nicole Bowery
Phone 519-425-2304
Email: nbowery@zorra.ca

Financial Services Clerk - Jenna Gallman
Phone: 519-485-0784
Email: jgallman@zorra.ca

Public Works Department
Director of Public Services - Steve Oliver
Phone: 519-425-2302
Email: soliver@zorra.ca

*Zorra Maintenance Facility -
Construction & Fleet Supervisor*
Derek Collins
Phone: 519-485-2490 Ext. 7260
Email: dcollins@zorra.ca

Operations Supervisor - Josh McKay
Phone: 519-485-2490 ext. 7265
Email: jmckay@zorra.ca

Protective Services
Manager of Emergency Services/Fire Chief
Josh Doyle
Phone: 519-425-2301
Email: jdoyle@zorra.ca

Fire Prevention Officer
Email: fireprevention@zorra.ca

Embroid District Chief - Matthew Cockle
Email: fire@zorra.ca

Thamesford District Chief - Andy Martin
Email: fire@zorra.ca

Uniondale Deputy District Chief - Scott Matheson
Email: fire@zorra.ca

Recreation Department
Manager of Recreation and Facilities
Sofia Caldwell
Phone: 519-425-2311
Email: scaldwell@zorra.ca

Recreation and Facilities Supervisor
Jason McEachnie
Phone: 519-485-2490 Ext. 7244
Email: jmceachnie@zorra.ca

Recreation Programs & Services Coordinator
Ally Thompson
Phone: 519-425-2310
Email: athompson@zorra.ca

Facility Booking
Phone: 519-485-2490 Ext. 7223
Email: booking@zorra.ca

Recreation Facilities
Thamesford District Recreation Centre
Phone: 519-485-2490 Ext. 7245
Email: tdlrc@zorra.ca

Embroid Zorra Community Centre
Phone: 519-485-2490 Ext. 7251

Thamesford Area Swimming Pool
Phone: 519-485-2490 Ext. 7285

Community Contact Listing

Minor Sports

Embroid Minor Hockey Club www.embrohockey.com
Zorra Skating Club www.zorraskatingclub.ca
Embroid Minor Baseball Association
www.embroidminorbaseball.com

Embroid Minor Soccer Association www.embrosoccer.ca
Kintore Optimist Soccer League
www.leaguelineup.com/kintoresoccer

Thamesford Area Minor Hockey Association
www.tamha.net

Zorra Skating Club (Thamesford)
www.zorraskatingclub.ca

Thamesford Minor Baseball Association
www.thamesfordminorbaseball.ca

Thamesford Minor Soccer
www.leaguelineup.com/thamesfordsoccer

West Oxford Girls Hockey Assoc. www.wogha.ca

Other Organizations

Thamesford Jr. PJHL Hockey Club
www.thamesfordtrojans.pjhl.hockeytech.com

Thamesford NBC Hockey
www.tnhl.hockeyleaguestats.com

Embroid NBC Hockey www.embroidbc.ca
Thamesford Men's Slo-Pitch
www.thamesfordslopitch.com

Thamesford Beach Volleyball Club
www.thamesfordvolleyball.com

Schools (Elementary)

Zorra Highland Public School 519-475-4121
A.J. Baker Public School 519-283-1098

Thamesford Public School 519-285-2043
Roch Carrier French Immersion 519-537-7321

John Knox Christian School 519-539-1492

School Boards

Thames Valley District School Board 519-452-2000
1-888-224-3354

London District Catholic School Board 519-663-2088

Service Clubs & Community Groups

Embroid & Zorra Agricultural Society
Nicole Barnett 519-533-2208

Embroid Highland Games/
Zorra Caledonian Society 519-475-4451

Thamesford Lion's Club
Sheldon Wade, President 519-859-4348

Thamesford Scouts
Jackie Van Daele 519-283-6159

Kintore Optimist Club 519-283-6321
Harrington & Area Community Association
Michael Kukhta 905-599-2151
michael.kukhta@gmail.com

Harrington Grist Mill Restoration Project
Tim Van de Kemp 519-801-5810
timbetvdk@gmail.com

Oxford County 4-H oxford4-h@xplornet.com

Other

Alzheimers Society 519-421-2466
1-877-594-2368

Beachville District Museum 519-423-6497
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Ingersoll, Tillsonburg & Area
519-485-1801 or 519-842-9000
ingtburg@bigbrothersbigsisters.ca
www.sharethefun.org

Calithumpian Committee 519-535-9198
Canadian Blood Services 888-236-6283
Canadian Cancer Society 888-939-3333
Canadian Red Cross 519-539-0265
Children's Aid Society, Oxford County 519-539-6176
Crime Stoppers 800-222-TIPS
Cuckoos Nest Folk Music 519-473-2099

Embroid Pond Association
Brian McCowan, President 519-301-4893

Embroid West Zorra History Book
Helen Brenneman 519-535-4728

Embroid Library 519-475-4172
Fanshawe Pioneer Village 519-457-1296
Girl Guides - Thamesford 519-285-1126
Harrington Public Library 519-475-6909

Hardeman, Ernie, MPP. 519-537-5222
Horticultural Society (Ingersoll) 519-485-1808
Ingersoll Choral Society 519-902-4007
Ingersoll Creative Arts Centre 519-485-4691

Ingersoll Services for Seniors 519-485-3869
Ingersoll Theatre of Performing Arts 519-485-3070

Lawn Bowling Embroid 519-475-4729
MacKenzie, Dave MP 519-421-7608

North Embroid Cemetery
Darwin Cooper 519-475-4385

Ontario Early Years Programs 800-539-9800
OPP 800-265-7191
Oxford County Jr. Farmers 519-469-3281

Oxford County Federation of Agriculture 519-852-8856
Oxford District Women's Institute
Shelia Greason 519-349-2768

South West Community Care Access Centre 519-539-1284
info-woodstock@sw.ccac-ont.ca

Thamesford Block Parents 519-285-1126
Thamesford Business Association 519-285-3249
Thamesford Public Library 519-285-3219

Thamesford Snowmobile Club
Harold Hacon (trails) 519-461-0855
David Blight (President) 519-432-2729

Thistle Theatre - Box Office 519-475-4201
infothistletheatre@gmail.com

Tiny Paws Dog Rescue - Linda Collier www.tpdrc.ca
VON Oxford 519-539-1231
VON Sakura House 519-537-8515

Welcome Wagon 519-485-2990
Wienerfest - Linda Collier 519-285-5123
Women's Canadian Club 519-471-8924

Places of Worship

St. Andrew's United Church
924044 Road 92, Brooksdale, Ontario
519-475-6011

Chalmers United Church
842993 Road 84, Kintore, Ontario
519-283-6376

Crossroads Alliance Church
194552 19th Line, R.R. 3
Ingersoll, Ontario
519-485-4440

Knox Presbyterian Church
115 St. Andrews Street
Embroid, Ontario
519-475-4816

Knox Presbyterian Church
963727 Road 96, Harrington, Ontario
519-475-4011

Knox United Church
116 Kincardine Street, Embroid, Ontario
519-475-4060

Maple Grove Christian Retreat
194936 19th Line
Thamesford, Ontario
519-285-3334

St. John's Anglican Church
220 Dundas Street
Thamesford, Ontario
519-285-3218

Truth Community Church
154978 15th Line (Banner Rd.)
Thamesford, Ontario
519-285-2112
www.truthcommunitychurch.ca

Westminster United Church
115 George Street
Thamesford, Ontario
519-285-3212
www.makingconnections.com

East Missouri Union Church
519-349-2333



TROJANS NEWS

Hometown Hockey in Thamesford

YOUR Thamesford Trojans, BACK TO BACK defending Yeck Division Champions, are well on their way into the 2024-2025 season, our 49th year. The 22-23 & 23-24 champs are thankful for a solid fan base, and Friday night home games are the place to be at the Thamesford arena. We have partnered with the local Thamesford Lions Club who do a fantastic job keeping the canteen open and responsibly serving alcoholic beverages you can enjoy while watching the game.

For the 2024-2025 season, we have acquired the public address services of Alex Lecuyer in the booth tracking all the action and keeping the fans informed. This is a welcome addition to the landscape of our home games, as well as our flag bearers to open all our home games. Our flag bearers are local kids who play sports with any local registered organization- TAMHA, EMHA, St. Marys, Inferno, Dorchester, Southwest Oxford, Devilettes, Zorra skating and MORE! Our games are always officially started by the singing of O' Canada, and we are fortunate to have Miss Lyla Couch on the microphone duties.

None of this hometown fun would be possible without the support of our corporate sponsors. All of the sponsors are highlighted in our programs, and if you buy a program, you are eligible to win a free pizza! Please support local, and consider our sponsors when shopping for services in our area. One other source of revenue for the team is our game day "Merch." There are hoodies, t-shirts, toques, ballcaps, and fan jerseys available at the gate at our home games, or check us out on social media.

In keeping with the spirit of giving back to our awesome community, the Trojans are hosting a drive for the local food bank at our Dec. 13 home game vs. the North Middlesex Stars. Bring a non-perishable item to the gate and you are automatically entered to win a Trojan jersey, and some free admission passes. Minor hockey night this year is Fri. Dec. 20, vs. Aylmer. Free admission for youth hockey participants! New for this year, we are teaming up with Thamesford & Area Minor



Hockey for an elimination draw fundraising event, in which both organizations will benefit. The reverse raffle tickets are an excellent Christmas gift idea for those hard to buy for fans, grandparents, and hockey lovers in your life. Tickets go on sale first week of December, and can be purchased at the gate, or by contacting a minor hockey parent or any member of the Trojans or TAMHA. Draw will be held at the Thamesford Arena Jan. 31, 2025 during our game vs. Lucan. Always a rocking good time when the Irish come to call.



At our home game on Fri. Nov. 8th, the Trojans were honored to have a ceremonial puck drop commemorating Remembrance Day. Our very own longtime Coach Dick Howard, a retired Canadian Military member, dropped the puck to open the game on our way to a 4-3 victory vs. Petrolia.



Thanks to our longtime fans who frequent all the home games, and if you haven't been, join your neighbors and friends at the

Thamesford Arena most Friday nights. Check out our website for the detailed schedule. While browsing our website: Thamesfordtrojans.pjhl.on.hockeytech.com, be sure to have a second look at some of the action from the amazing shots courtesy our very own Executive Member Doris Weir. We are lucky to have her capture many team and fan moments with her photography talents. Thank you for all that you do Doris! You can also check us out on social media.

Hope to see you at a game soon...you might have to pay for a whole seat, but you'll only need the edge.

Scott Barr
President
Thamesford Trojans Hockey Club

Zorra Heritage Committee 2025 Activities

A fathers' day event, as well as a project to discover and publicly share the political and other accomplishments of past Zorra citizens who gained prominence far beyond the township are tentative projects being considered by the Zorra Heritage Committee for 2025.

A committee of the Beachville District Historical Society, the group meets monthly to discuss, research, and share stories from of the township's rich heritage, or to take related field trips. Non-Zorra residents are always welcome. The next meeting is January 15, 7:00 p.m., at the Beachville District Museum.

The February 5th meeting, to be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Museum, will feature a brainstorming session to begin looking at former prominent Zorra citizens and the connecting history. Any readers with a suggestion are invited to join the meeting, or to call the Museum in advance at 519-423-6497 to share your information.

Happy Hills Resort
The Baker Family

923590 Road 92, RR#3
Embro, Ontario N0J 1J0

519.475.4471

www.happyhills.com
thebakers@happyhills.com

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We would love to hear from YOU!!!

If you have a story, pictures or ANYTHING that you would like to share about your community please contact Karen Martin at kmartin@zorra.ca or 519-485-2490 ext. 7228 to have it appear in an upcoming Zorra Now Edition.



Crystal Van Roekel
Economic Development Officer
crystal@ruraloxford.ca
519-639-0724

Rural Oxford
Economic Development



Ronda Stewart
Economic Development Director
ronda@ruraloxford.ca
519-619-6895

Supporting BUSINESS GROWTH

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- Referrals to professional service providers
- Connection to community partners
- Networking opportunities

ruraloxford.ca



SENIOR OF THE YEAR - DICK DUFTON



Council was honoured to present Dick Dufton with the 2024 Senior of the Year Award! Dick has been a volunteer with the Thamesford Lions Club for many years and has been involved in many Lions projects, including the river cleanup, Christmas parade, and park maintenance. You can also catch Dick helping out almost weekly with the Catch-the-Ace draw on Tuesday nights. He puts his services as a handyman to good use in the community, including helping with the erecting of the Harvey Beaty Memorial sign. Dick is an extremely valuable member of the community!

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR - NICOLE BARNETT

Congratulations to the 2024 Volunteer of the Year Award Winner Nicole Barnett! Nicole has volunteered with many groups including the 4-H Club, Embro Fair, Oxford County Federation of Agriculture, and Embro & Zorra Agricultural Society. Nicole truly enjoys investing her time in her community and helping others. She has spearheaded a car show at the Embro Fair, in memory of her son Nash, to help draw in more attendees, support her hometown fair, and to raise funds for various charities that matter to our community. Nicole, thank you for doing your part and making the community a better place!



Thank you to Doris Weir for attending the Council meeting and taking photos for our Senior and Volunteer of the Year awards.



Oxford 4-H Club

The Oxford County 4-H Association Awards Night was held Friday November 22nd at the Embro Zorra Community Centre, with Emcees Grace McKinlay, Grace Piper & Mackenzie Westwood with the North Oxford Dairy 4-H Club organizing the special event for the 4-H youth and volunteers to be recognized for their achievements. Photographer for the event was Marian Sterk.

The evening started with a catered dinner supplied by Village Catering Deli from Thamesford, ice cream from Shaw's Ice Cream and milk sponsored by Oxford Dairy Producers. Thank you to the George Thornton Bequest Fund making it a wonderful celebration of 4-H in Oxford County!!

The Oxford Cloverbuds 4-H Club returning members-- Danielle Langford, Hildie Langford, Henry McCoy, Maeve McGinnis, Isabel McKinlay, Leda McKinlay, Annabelle McLeod, Bodhi Sterk, Alaina Walker was presented their year plate; new Cloverbuds—Neville Deroo, Scarlett Green, Keira Harris, Natalie Harris, Alex Learn, Bennett Post, Olivia Socholotiuk, Leo Sterk, Addison Syvret, Jacob Van Roekel, Ruby Walker was presented their plaque.

The 1st year 4-H youth participants stood up and were welcomed & congratulated on their 1st year in the Oxford 4-H program.

4-H volunteers in Oxford received acknowledgement of their involvement in the 4-H program. First year volunteers—Megan Buckrell, Katie Deslippe, Rebecca Haley & Jackie King; Five years—James Atkinson, Deb Bailey and Kaitlin McKay; 10 years—Caorlyn Wilson and 15 years—Jayme Emerson, Amy Reinhart & Amanda Vandergaast. There were six Oxford 4-H volunteers recognized for their long-time involvement with the 4-H program. 20 years—John DeBruyn, Chris Hart, Marilyn Lichti & Rachel McKinlay; 35 years—Shonna Ward and 40 years—Dwight Hargreaves. Each received a gift chosen for them from Oxford 4-H and a milestone gift from 4-H Ontario.

The 4-H Ontario Outstanding New Volunteer Award sponsored by Gay Lea was presented by Steve Veldman & 4-H Ontario Staff, Melinda Scott to Jane Danen for Region 6. Jane received a framed print.

The Oxford 4-H Volunteer Tribute Award was presented by Christy Brekelmans to Linda Humphrey. Linda received a pen & pencil set in a wooden box. She will have a tree planted or bench placed in her community in 2025 in recognition of her award.

The 4-H Ontario Award of Achievement, sponsored by Gay Lea Foods Co-operative Ltd, was presented by Steve Veldman, Gay Lea Director, to Keeton Jones and Nathan Bean. The 4-H Ontario Award of Achievement is presented to youth who have completed 24 projects and five years in the 4-H program.



The Rotary Club of Tavistock Outstanding 4-H Youth Awards were presented by Chee Peng Tan to Lena Older & Daniel Richardson (Novice), Megan Ball & Henry Brekelmans (Junior) and Sarah Bean & Keenan Grieve (Intermediate). Each youth received a certificate and cheque.

The Your Neighbourhood Credit Union Outstanding Overall Senior 4-H Youth Award was presented by Steve McGregor, YNCU Woodstock Branch, to Amanda Witmer.

Oxford County Plowmen's Association Outstanding Senior Agricultural 4-H Youth Award was presented to Jackson Sim by Eric Howard. Jackson & Amanda each received a certificate and cheque.

Marian Sterk presented the Embro Fair 4-H High Points Award to Jade Dill with a 4-H logo glasses and wooden picture frame.

The Terry Richardson Award was presented to Lauren Ball by Shirley Richardson and grandson Daniel with a certificate and cheque.

The Oxford County Junior Farmers 4-H Scholarship was presented to Dakota Jones virtually by Elizabeth Bruce Oxford County Junior Farmer President with a certificate and cheque. Dakota is studying at Olds College in Alberta.

The Norman Dickout Memorial Judging Awards were presented by Sandra Alyea & Virginia Reilly, sisters of Norman Dickout, to Lena Older (Novice), Jasmine Steen (Junior), Jade Dill & Keenan Grieve (Intermediate & Overall) and Amber Warboys (Senior). Each youth received a marble trophy recognizing their achievement.

The Youth Leader Award, sponsored & presented by Kubota Canada Ltd Travis Grubb and Andrew Heida from D & S Downham Equipment Stratford was presented to Lauren Ball.

The Oxford County 4-H Project awards were presented to Megan Ball, Ryan Ball, Julia Brekelmans, Nicole Danen, Meryl Kouwenberg and Grace Piper for 36 projects completed (wooden cutting board). Megan Ball, Lexi Dill and Grace Piper received a glass clock for 42 projects completed. Lexi Dill and Amanda Witmer received a blanket for 48 projects completed. Lauren Ball & Lexi Dill received a framed certificate for completing 54 projects. Jade Dill received framed certificates for completing 132, 138 and 144 projects.



The Project of the Year award was presented to the Square Dance 4-H project by the Oxford Square Dance 4-H Club. Taylor Buckrell, Emma Pullen, Amber Warboys and Amanda Witmer received the Oxford County 4-H Youth Graduating Award. It was a framed collage picture of memorable experiences in their 4-H youth career.

The Longstanding Graduating Youth Award, sponsored & presented by Kubota Canada Ltd Travis Grubb and Andrew Heida from D & S Downham Equipment Stratford was



presented to Taylor Buckrell, Emma Pullen and Amber Warboys receiving a glass clock. And Amanda Witmer received a wooden pine mirror. 4-H Clubs spoke about their club activities for the past year throughout the evening. Grace Piper and Jade Dill made presentations of their experience at 4-H opportunities they attended in 2024.

The Oxford Beef 4-H Club organized the Food Drive with donations excepted at the Oxford 4-H Awards Night or by e-transfer to oxford4htreasurer@gmail.com to be distributed to Oxford County Food Banks.

Greetings from Township of Zorra Crystal Finch and 4-H Ontario Staff, Melinda Scott was given.

To wrap up the evening, auctioneer Greg Kuepfer did a live auction of items donated by the Oxford 4-H Clubs, like a quilt made by 4-H members, frozen meat package, a pig to be butchered, a framed 4-H Club Leader picture, decorative outdoor pine arrangement, games night package and many more items.

The emcees thanked everyone for making the event a great success. The Oxford County 4-H Association Annual meeting is January 29 at the Folden's Hall. There will be a learning opportunity for 4-H volunteers following the AGM. There is an Oxford 4-H Volunteer Appreciation Night January 10 at the Woodstock District Community Complex for the Oxford 4-H volunteers.

Oxford 4-H would like to thank their 2024 sponsors: George Thornton Bequest Fund, Oxford Agropro Ltd, Ayr Farmers Mutual, Township of South-West Oxford, Township of Zorra, ADM, Oxford County Plowmen's Association, Your Neighbourhood Credit Union, Oxford County Junior Farmers Association, Ontario Mutuals, Rotary Club of Tavistock, Bernice Dickout & Family and Richardson Family.



Oxford Historical Society AGM & Presentation:

Wednesday, January 29, 2025
at Woodstock Museum NHS.

If you are a current member come out and vote for the 2025 Executive.

Presenter will be will be Elaine Becker
To Be Continued: The Story of the Salvation Army in Woodstock

Her publication by the same name will be available for purchase, \$15.00 (taxes included).
Doors open at 6:30, meeting starts at 6:45pm.
This is a free event and open to all.

For more information visit www.oxhs.ca



Thamesford Lions Club

Thamesford Lions Community Events

On Monday, December 2nd, the Thamesford Lions Club had their annual Christmas dinner.

Following the dinner, Chevron awards were handed out to the members with long service to the Thamesford Lions Club. The four members pictured (along with others) received the following long service Chevron awards.



Dick Dufton
40 year Chevron



Jack Broadfoot & Dave Woods
50 year Chevron



Bill Kerr
55 year Chevron

Congratulations!



Join us at the Embro Town Hall for 10 days of imagination and creativity! Dramarama is our 2-week summer day camp for young people ages 7 to 14. Two sessions will be held in July 2025. A 2-week session at Dramarama is all about creativity and self-expression! Workshops in drama, dance, arts and crafts, and theatre production take place each morning while the afternoon is spent working in small groups to collectively create short plays.

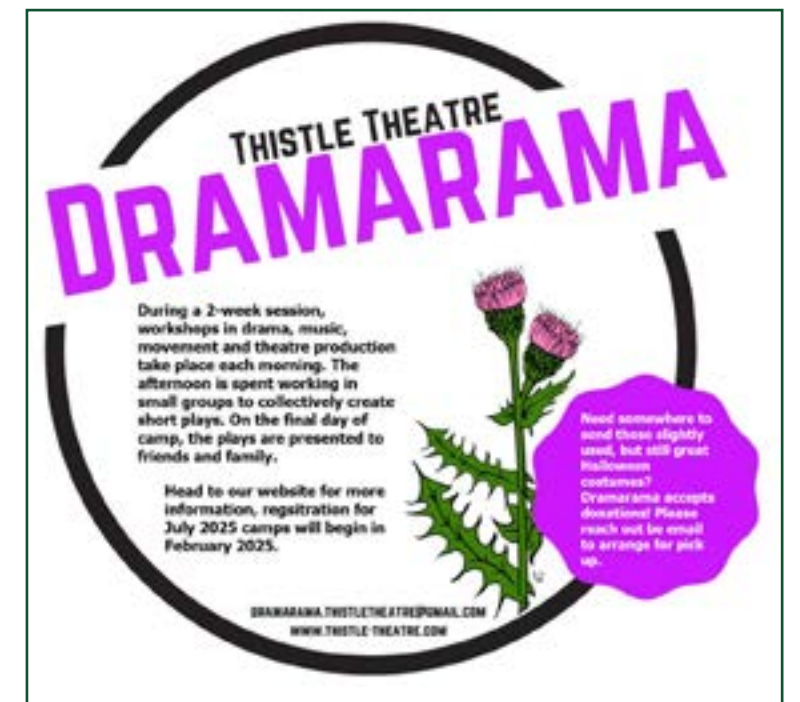
Registration will occur in February 2025 for our July 2025 camps. More details will be available on the Thistle Theatre website www.thistle-theatre.com

We greatly appreciate all the donated Halloween costumes and fun props we continue to receive from parents, friends and community members, they are put to great use! Should you have anything you'd like to donate to our program, have questions about becoming a counsellor, or registration, please email dramarama.thistletheatre@gmail.com



Our next production is **"E-Male"** by Joan Veldman. The show will be directed by Norm and Elaine Northmore. Producer is Doug Turvey. Auditions have been held and the cast is set. Show dates will be March 28 to 30th, April 3rd to 5th.

This home-grown comedy is filled with quirky characters, mistaken identities, and matchmaking, all set in your local diner, in the middle of a blizzard. Stay-tuned for more information coming soon, or check www.thistle-theatre.com for updates. Tickets will be available online or by calling the box office at (226) 785-3353. If you are interested in volunteering or being part of the crew, please reach out to infothistletheatre@gmail.com





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