

# Zorranow

COMMUNITY EVENTS & SERVICES MAGAZINE

Fall 2025



First-term councillor  
encourages others to  
consider entering a race

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Harrington  
Homecoming Centennial

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## Message from the Mayor

School is back and our children and all the vehicles that move them are on the roads. It's also #harvest2025 and all the ag vehicles are on the roads. All of these people are our neighbours, our friends. Our roads are busier than ever, school buses, farm equipment, cyclists, and pedestrians are all sharing the same space and they're all part of our community, please watch for them, so everyone gets home safely.

For Zorra Council, budget season is approaching. As, always, Zorra Council remains committed to building a vibrant, prosperous, engaged, and environmentally conscious community, guided by our strategic plan every step of the way. Zorra's financial situation is strong. We have retired several older expensive assets and replaced them with newer, less expensive ones. Our reserves are in good shape, and we have strong policies in place for the services that cost the most money like roads, recreation, and fire services. We just had our annual third party financial audit and it was positive. So, I'm expecting, as always, an intense budget debate about priorities, but ultimately a good budget.

You can follow those deliberations through agendas online (link in this Zorra Now) and

in person at council meetings, or online live and recorded on Youtube.

Happy back to school and #harvest2025 !

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:



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## DISCOVER YOUR OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY

**Oxford Reads:** This year's book is *Life in Two Worlds: A Coach's Journey from the Reserve to the NHL and Back* by Ted Nolan. Join us for our Oxford Reads Gala on Friday, November 7 at the Market Centre in Woodstock. Stay tuned to [www.oxfordreads.ca](http://www.oxfordreads.ca) for gala details and a full list of Oxford Reads programs.

**UPCOMING PROGRAMS**

**Organizing from start to finish**  
When: Wednesday, September 17 at 6:30 p.m.  
Where: Harrington Branch  
Adult program and space is limited. Please register.

**Ox on the Run at the Embro Fair**  
When: Sunday, September 14 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Where: Embro Fairgrounds

**The Worm Wrangler**  
When: Saturday, October 11 from 10:30-11:30 a.m.  
Where: Thamesford Branch  
Family program and space is limited. Please register.

**Truck or Treat**  
When: Saturday, October 25 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Where: Ingersoll Branch

**Cooking demonstration with Chef Jed Lau**  
When: Tuesday, November 18 at 6:00 p.m.  
Where: Thamesford Branch

When: Wednesday, November 19 at 6:00 p.m.  
Where: Harrington Branch  
Adult program and space is limited. Please register.

For up-to-date library information, hours and program details, call your local branch or visit [www.oclib.net](http://www.oclib.net).

**Oxford County Library**  
connect. discover. share. become.



# Public Works Department

## Share the Road

Farm operations are always extremely active in the fall with harvest season. Please pay special attention to the large equipment moving about on Zorra roads. Especially during this busy time of the year, we like everyone to share the road equally, be aware, and be courteous. We know farmers are extremely busy during harvest time and it is important to take that extra care regardless of which vehicle they are using.

## Brush, Leaf and Yard Waste Depot

Zorra has a Depot for brush, leaf, and yard waste. Located across the road from the Kintore Public Works Shop at 783045 Road 78, just east of Highway 19.

- **Acceptable materials include:** fruits and vegetables, garden hedge and tree trimmings, grass, leaves, Halloween pumpkins, house and garden plants, brush (no longer than 6ft). and Christmas trees.
- **Unacceptable materials include:** garbage, old fencing, plastic bags, hazardous waste, top soil, rocks, and stumps.

This depot is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There is no charge for this service.

## Construction Zone Sign Classification

In a Construction Zone, "Local Traffic Only" means you are accessing a property inside the section of road that is closed. It does NOT mean that you live in the area adjacent to the construction and the closed road is the shortest distance to your destination. It is a Highway Traffic Act Offence to misuse this privilege.

Steve Oliver,  
Director of Public Services  
519-425-2302 or  
soliver@zorra.ca

# Building Department

## Building Permit

A building permit is the written authorization which grants legal permission to begin demolition or construction of any structure, addition, or renovation. It is reviewed and issued when a complete application has been submitted and the plans comply with the Ontario Building Code, the Township of Zorra Zoning By-Law and other applicable laws and regulations.

## What Happens if I do NOT get a Building Permit?

Constructing or altering a structure without a building permit may result in numerous problems, including:

- Not confirming with the Ontario Building Code, Zorra Zoning By-Laws, or other applicable laws
- Putting yourself and others at risk
- Putting yourself at liability should an injury occur to someone while visiting your property as a result of a structure not confirming to the Ontario Building Code
- Extra costs to reconstruct, replace or remove the structure
- Increased permit fees and possible fines
- Insurance protection nullification
- Difficulty selling the property
- Complaints from neighbours

Unsure if you require a building permit for your project? Visit the Building section on the Township website for examples or contact the Building Department.

## Reminders

- Decks and/or pool decks that are 12 inches or more in height require a building permit. If you have had a deck built over the spring and summer months that is 12 inches in height or greater, please notify the Building Department as soon as possible. You will be required to apply for a permit and arrange an inspection(s).
- If you plan to replace an existing structure, you are required to apply for a building permit.
- If your project is complete, please book a final inspection on Cloudpermit. It is important that all required inspections are completed. You may be subject to a fee if your permit remains open.

## Building Permit Applications

To apply for a building or septic permit, please visit the Building & Drainage section of the Township website for full details and instructions.

All permit applications must be submitted online through Cloudpermit. First-time users will need to create an account before starting an application. Step-by-step instructions on how to register and use Cloudpermit are also available on our website to guide you through the process.

## Drainage

### Legal Outlets

With the pressure of too much work and not enough time, there may be a temptation to take shortcuts. This is a reminder that the following are NOT legal outlets:

- **Roadside Ditches:** You can only use roadside ditches as an outlet if permission is granted by the road authority. If permission is granted, we recommend that you secure the permission in WRITING.
- **Private Ditches:** Private ditches are private infrastructure and unless permission is given, another property owner has no right to connect a newly installed tile drainage system to a private ditch that flows across a neighbouring property. Similar to using a roadside ditch as an outlet, if permission is given, make sure it is in WRITING. If work needs to be done on the neighbouring property, make sure all parties are clear on cost-sharing and also that all parties are clear on the extent of work and the potential disruption of land.

- **Municipal Drains:** Municipal drains have a defined watershed; the lands within that watershed have paid for the construction and management of that drain and only these lands have the right to connect to the municipal drain. If you are installing tile drainage on a property, it is possible that only a portion of that property has the legal right to connect into that drain. If you are not sure, check with the local drainage superintendent before undertaking the work. If there is a section of land that is outside the limits of the watershed, you must ask for permission to connect those lands to the drain.

- **Wetland or low area:** Sometimes it's tempting to outlet a tile drainage system into a wetland area, particularly if the wetland is located on your client's property. However, before doing so, you should examine the area to determine if the outletting of the tile drainage system could be any impact on other property owners. If there could be, don't do it without first acquiring permission.

If a property owner is unable to secure an outlet, that owner has the right to petition their municipality under the Drainage Act for an outlet. Although it takes longer to get the outlet using the Drainage Act, when it is done, you can have confidence that the tile drainage work you perform will not result in legal action. If you still decide to take shortcuts on legal outlets, remember that the courts consider the tile drainage contractor to be an expert. You may want to check out the liability risk of you and your business.

**Any building or drainage questions should be addressed to**

Mike Hughes, Chief Building Official/Drainage Superintendent  
519-425-2306 or mhughes@zorra.ca



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# Fire & Emergency Services Department

## Space Heaters

With the onset of colder weather, space heaters are often used as a source of heat. To keep yourself safe, here are some suggestions and tips for how to use a space heater.

If you look at the back or bottom of your space heater, you may see a sticker that says 1500 watts. With our homes and businesses commonly being connected to 120 volts, a space heater will use 12.5 amps when it is working its hardest. Your plug is probably connected to a 15-amp circuit breaker, which is more than 12.5, so that's okay, right?

Devices should not use more than 80% of the rated amperage of the circuit. This is because it is difficult to predict when other devices along the same circuit will activate. These activations can bump the total amperage to or above its rated safe load, causing slow repeated damage within the wiring. Over time this damage can become a fire hazard and the safety measures within the wiring fail.

For a 15-amp circuit, 12 amps is the largest safe single load. This would mean a safer space heater for your home or most businesses would be 1400w or less. A 1000w space heater would be safer still.

If you already have a 1500w space heater, please do not turn it up to max on a 120v 15-amp outlet.

Always buy space heaters that will turn off if they are tipped over.

Always plug a space heater directly into the wall.

Always turn space heaters off when they are not being watched.

Make sure your space heater is approved by a Standards Council of Canada accredited agency. ULC is one such agency.

Use space heaters on a flat surface, making sure they are away from combustible materials and do not create a trip hazard.

Inspect the space heaters for damage often.

Please understand how dangerous this common tool can be and treat space heaters with the respect they deserve.



*This extension cord caused a fire because it was connected to a space heater. Extension cords are not designed to take these heavy loads.*

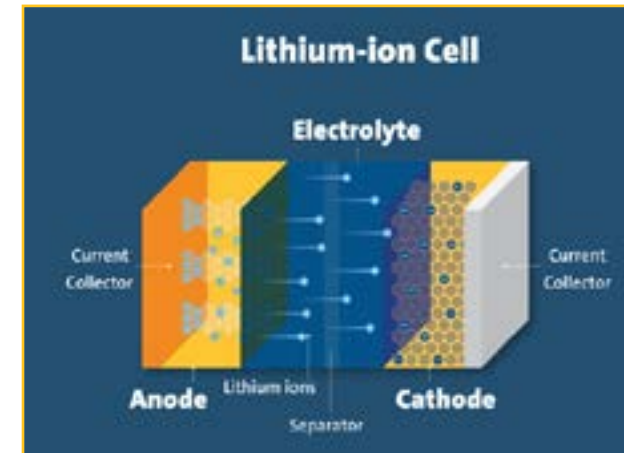
## Lets talk Lithium-ion Batteries. (LIBs)

### Just the facts:

- Zorra Fire Rescue may decide that the safest way to make a burning LIB, such as an EV vehicle safe is to let it burn completely. This is likely going to confuse bystanders when they see the fire department not putting out a fire. There are reasons why not putting out the fire can be the safest option. The dangers of putting out a LIB will be explained in this article.
- Lithium-ion Batteries (LIBs) are NOT a good place to look for bargains, "do it yourself", or trust a repair shop.

- Fire risks around LIBs are a significant portion of the reason the Township has stopped accepting used batteries for recycling. Many lithium ion battery recycle depots have had to close down because they had so many fires that they could not find insurance.
- WELL DESIGNED, LIBs that are PROPERLY BUILT in CLEAN ENVIRONMENTS have a one in a million failure rate. This is a very impressive figure, but there are so many LIBs present in our day-to-day life that the possibility of witnessing a LIB failure that causes a fire increases daily.

- Please do your part by only purchasing batteries and battery-operated items that are ULC approved, and which come from a reputable and established source.
  - o Unapproved devices are out there in the market, but they should not be. ULC or equivalent listing is required to sell an electric device within Ontario. Buying devices from outside of Canada, as well as purchasing refurbished, or grey market batteries and devices may void insurance and may bring legal consequences if the device causes harm.



The lithium-ion battery consists of an anode, a cathode, and a separator in an electrolyte. By passing lithium ions back and forth through the electrolyte during recharging and use, the battery works much better than any other current option. Well-built LIBs have a one in a million failure rate. It is not their design that makes them hazardous, it is how often they are built poorly, when they are changed or damaged, and how common they are.

So how do they fail?

The first way LIBs fail is due to design errors. When LIBs are not put together properly, they short, superheat, and ignite the electrolyte.

Damage can also cause LIBs to fail explosively. Any battery that is exposed to physical damage or significant heat should be considered dangerous and be disposed of through a reputable hazardous waste company.

Age and use can slowly change the chemical composition of a lithium-ion battery making a well-designed battery more likely to fail after a

significant number of cycles. Reputable manufacturers make it easy to find out how many recharges or cycles a battery is rated for. Any number of cycles that approach or surpass this recommendation can be considered significant.

Lithium reacts violently with both water and oxidizers. When super-heated, electrolytes in LIBs degrade quickly into water, extremely ignitable and toxic products, and oxygen and chemicals that can replace oxygen in the combustion process. This means two things.

- First, a compromised lithium-ion battery contains everything it needs to ignite and sustain fire, so cooling it and smothering it are not long-term solutions to extinguishing a LIB. Extinguished batteries are very unstable and continue to change chemically over time, making fire damaged batteries very likely to reignite unpredictably minutes, days, or even weeks after the first fire goes out.
- Second, a lithium-ion battery fire is a Hazardous Materials Response, with an extreme ability to cause cancers or death in both bystanders and firefighters. The hazardous byproducts of a LIB can either go into the atmosphere where it will mix until it is undetectable, or the fire department can apply water to it and have many of these products enter Zorra's water table at significantly higher concentrations.

For these reasons the officers and incident commanders of Zorra Fire Rescue have been given a significant amount of freedom when deciding how to deal with a lithium-ion battery fire.

- They may extinguish the battery if they can get a hazardous materials company to deal with the remains.
- They may let the fire burn out and focus their efforts on keeping people and property away from the heat and smoke.
- They may search around any fire for damaged batteries and remove them from the site.

Companies are working on less dangerous energy storage options because they know that any company that can build a battery that performs like a lithium-ion battery without the danger will become rich. For example, there are companies who claim that they are very close with sodium-based batteries. It is the hope of Zorra Fire Rescue that this evolution in battery technology happens before applications for large scale battery storage or production land on our doorstep.

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



# By-Law Enforcement

## Recreation Vehicle (RV) Parking:

Notice to all RV/boat owners. Our Zoning By-law allows front 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. After October 31, the vehicles may be stored on your side lot or rear lot provided that they meet the 5-foot setback from adjacent properties.

## Winter Parking

Please be advised that the winter parking restrictions will be enforced starting November 15th and remain in place until March 31, 2026 in accordance with By-law 48-20. For snow removal purposes, 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 set fine for this violation is set at \$50. No unauthorized overnight parking is permitted at the Thamesford District Recreation Centre.

Dave Robertson, By-law Enforcement Officer  
226-374-6795 drobertson@zorra.ca

## Leaves/snow removal on to Roadways

The autumn season is quickly approaching and therefore the leaves will begin to fall. As a reminder to all residents, depositing your leaves onto the roadway and sidewalk is dangerous and is a contravention of the Clearing Refuse from Land By-law No. 16-18. If you wish to drop off your yard waste, visit the County of Oxford website to view all brush, leaf, and yard waste depot locations. Pushing or placing any leaves, snow or ice on to roadway, or any other obstruction of a roadway is an offence that carries a Provincial Offences Fine of \$200.00.

## Keeping Properties Clean and Clear

In the Township of Zorra, all grass and weeds must be maintained at a height less than 8 inches. This is done to promote safety in the Township, including pest-control, as well as to maintain the appearance of Zorra. Further, property owners and tenants shall keep their land free from industrial and domestic wastes, inoperable motorized vehicles (both licensed or unlicensed), vehicle parts, construction materials, and other refuse. If refuse has started to accumulate on your property, you are required to place it in appropriate containers, stored at the side or rear of your lot, and placed curbside within 14 days.

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news and events in  
Zorra Township**  
**www.zorra.ca**



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Township of Zorra



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@ZorraTwp

# Tax Department

## SUPPLEMENTAL TAX BILLS

A supplementary/omitted tax notice is a tax bill issued by the Township which reflects any additions or improvements that have been made to your property. 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.

The supplementary/omitted 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.

From the assessment information provided by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC), the Township calculates the tax amounts due and issues tax notices, based on the following formula:

$$\text{Assessment Value} \times \text{Tax Rate} \times \text{Number of Days Liable}$$

Legislation allows MPAC to assess a property for the current year and up to two previous years, retroactive to the closing date. These tax notices are payable in two instalments, as indicated on the due date field of the payment stub.

If you are currently enrolled in one of the Township's Pre-Authorized Payment Plans (PAP), please note that supplementary tax bill instalment amounts must be paid by alternative method (cash, cheque, debit, etransfer, online banking) and are not part of your PAP withdrawals.

### Reason for Issuing Supplementary/Omitted Bills

You should have already received a Notice of Assessment from MPAC indicating the reason for your supplementary/omitted tax notice(s). A supplementary tax notice can be issued for any of the following reasons:

- New Construction** - The value of your new construction was not previously billed to you.
- Improvements/Additions to Property** - Renovations/improvements were done to the property that has increased the assessment value and this increase in value was not previously billed to you.
- Reclassification** - The entire property or a portion of your property has had a change to the tax class.

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 <http://www.mpac.ca/> for more details.

**CONTACT US:** Melissa De Luca, Tax Collector  
519-425-2304  
mdeluca@zorra.ca





# 2025 TAX NEWS

**We've Moved!**

**Township of Zorra  
163 Brock Street  
PO Box 189  
Thamesford, Ontario  
N0M 2M0**

**Payment due dates:  
August 29, 2025  
October 31, 2025**



**Property Tax Bills can be emailed to you! Sign up for e-billing on the taxation page of our website.**

## **Property Tax Billing**

The Municipality issues two property tax bills per year that are broken into four tax instalments.

Note that tax instalment payments are due the **last business day** of February, May, August and October.

Property tax bills are printed in advance of the due date. If your property taxes are in arrears (unpaid/past due) penalty and/or interest is added on the 1st of each month and the amounts on your tax bill will **not** include these charges for the period after the bill was printed. If you have missed making payments by the due dates please call the office to make sure you are paying the current amount owing on your account.

## **PAYMENT OPTIONS:**

### **Pre-Authorized Payment (PAP) Plan**

We offer a PAP Plan to make it easier to pay your municipal tax bill, and to help avoid late fees. There is no cost for this service. New for 2025! If you participate in our PAP 10-month or PAP 12-month payment plan you will no longer receive an Interim Tax Bill. Instead of the Interim Tax Bill, you will receive a PAP Withdrawal Letter in January each year that details the monthly withdrawals from January to June, which equals the Interim Tax Bill. You will receive a second PAP Withdrawal Letter in July of each year that details monthly withdrawals for the remainder of the year. Final Tax Bills will be provided.

### **Internet Banking**

You can pay by using internet banking with your financial institution. When setting up to pay your property taxes, select Zorra Taxes as the payee and use the 15-digit roll number on your property tax bill, excluding the dashes. If you are paying through your bank or financial institution, allow **three business days** for the payment to go through. All payments must be received at our office by the due date. Payments received after the due date are subject to penalty and interest.

### **Mail**

If you are mailing a cheque (payable to Township of Zorra) allow sufficient time for delivery. All payments must be received at our office by the due date. Payments received after the due date are subject to penalty and interest.

### **Visit / Drop-Box at the **\*\*NEW\*\*** Municipal Office**

Payment may be made in-person by cash, cheque, or debit at the Municipal Office during business hours (Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). If paying in person, be sure to bring your bill with you. Payment may also be made via the drop box at the municipal office, beside the main door. Cheques only!

**Sign up online for one of our Pre-authorized Payment (PAP) plans!**

**KEEP YOUR  
PROPERTY TAX BILL  
FOR YOUR RECORDS.  
There is a \$10.00 fee  
to issue a replacement  
bill (paper or electronic).**



**Did You  
KNOW**

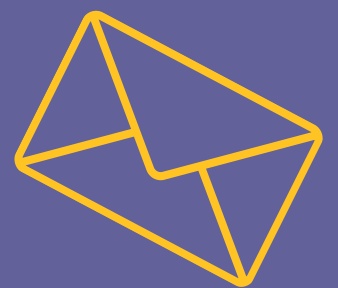
**It costs Zorra Township thousands of dollars annually to mail your interim and final tax bills?**

To mail your interim and final tax bill, it costs a total of



**\$4.86**

to buy bill paper, print the bills,  
buy the envelopes, stuff the  
envelopes, and apply postage.



Each bill takes staff time and tax dollars. It costs thousands of dollars annually to mail bills. Why worry about postal strikes when you could receive your bills on your phone immediately? E-billing is convenient and cost-effective; 9% of the Township's taxpayers already receive their bills online. To help us save, make the smart choice and signup for e-billing today at:  
<https://www.zorra.ca/forms/property-tax-e-billing-sign-up/>



## TOWNSHIP DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

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## TOWNSHIP DEPARTMENT INFORMATION



# Drop-in programs and classes have moved to PickupHub!

REGISTER TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR RECREATIONAL  
PROGRAMS ONLINE AT  
[WWW.PICKUPHUB.NET/ZORRA](http://WWW.PICKUPHUB.NET/ZORRA)

**PickupHub**



**STEP 1. CREATE YOUR ACCOUNT**  
**STEP 2. SIGN UP FOR A PROGRAM**  
**STEP 3. PLAY!**

FIND DROP-IN PROGRAMS IN ZORRA AND OXFORD COUNTY!

QUESTIONS? EMAIL [BOOKING@ZORRA.CA](mailto:BOOKING@ZORRA.CA)

ALL PROGRAM SCHEDULES AND DETAILS CAN BE FOUND AT  
[WWW.ZORRA.CA](http://WWW.ZORRA.CA)



# Zorra Celebrates



It was a hot and sunny day on Tuesday August 12, 2025 as staff from all of Zorra's departments gathered to prepare for a celebration. It has been 50 years since Zorra was created, due to the amalgamation of former townships of North Oxford, East Nissouri, Embro, and West Zorra.

Staff setup tents, warmed up the grill, and got the popcorn machine fired up. There were cold drinks on ice and the water filling station was connected. Tables and chairs were setup and the front parking area was blocked to traffic. There was terrific entertainment by local musician Uncle G, and some of our firefighters from Zorra Fire Rescue's Thamesford Station brought one of the fire trucks for all to see. People started showing up and they didn't stop. So many familiar faces and a chance to visit and catch up. Ernie Hardeman presented a certificate of congratulations from his office, along with one from Premier Ford. A representative from

Arpan Khanna's office was here to present a certificate as well, since Arpan was out of the province.

In the end, almost 400 hot dogs were served and people didn't want to leave. We wrapped up the event after two solid hours of cooking, eating, and visiting. We managed to clean up and get everything put away with an hour to spare before the skies opened up for some much needed rain! Staff and Council were so pleased with the event and thankful to all those who braved the heat to come and spend time with us. Thanks for celebrating 50 years of Zorra Township!

We were thrilled to gather many current and former members of Council for a group photo.



*Standing left to right:*  
Katie Grigg, Gord MacKay, Steve MacDonald, Ron Forbes, John Hiuser, Paul Mitchell, Marie Keasey, Doug Matheson, Kevin Stewart, John Angehrn, Ken Minler, Crystal Finch, Bill Semeniuk.

*Seated left to right:*  
Jeanette Alyea, Margaret Lupton, Marcus Ryan.







## SEVERANCES & CONSOLIDATIONS

### 01. Zorra Township's Role

The process of severing and consolidating properties in Ontario is governed by a legislative and policy framework that involves the *Planning Act*, the Land Registry Office of Ontario, the *Assessment Act*, and the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC); all of which happens before it reaches the Zorra Township Municipal Office.



### 02. MPAC Assessment



MPAC will then send a Severance and Consolidation Information Form (SCIF) to the municipality. A SCIF combines assessments for consolidations and apportions assessments for severances. A SCIF will also provide any new roll numbers. MPAC will also send a property assessment notice to the property owners.

### 03. Property Value



At the time of severance (or consolidation), MPAC can only apply an apportioned (or amalgamated) value based on the value from the assessment roll, which may not accurately reflect the true assessment value of the parcels. The current value assessment of the newly created properties will be reflected on the next year's assessment roll.

### 04. Billing



The Municipality will bill using the roll and current value assessment included in the assessment roll provided by MPAC.

### 05. Questions?



For question about severances or consolidations, speak to your lawyer. If you have questions, please refer to our website at [zorra.ca](http://zorra.ca) for contact information.

This information is not intended to provide legal or tax advice.

## Senior of the Year 2025

Nancy Smibert



When you drive through Kintore you will often see Nancy riding her bike and picking up trash along the sides of the road.

She does this every day, rain or shine. She has been doing this for many years. She takes the trash home and sorts it, putting anything recyclable in its proper place.

Thank you Nancy for making Zorra a more beautiful place to live!

## Volunteer of the Year 2025

Brown's Corners Community Group

In 2021 a group of Brown's Corners residents decided that their community needed a place to meet on a regular schedule, in order to combat the mental and emotional toll of the pandemic lockdowns. Of particular concern were retired and semi-retired men, who lacked the support systems of employment and co-workers. The solution was Coffee Talk, a gathering every Wednesday morning to drink some coffee, eat some snacks and talk about current and past events in their lives. What started with 8 people has grown to up to 40 every week.

This success led to a monthly speaker's series, also held at the former Brown's School, called Wisdom Wednesday. Topics have included health (arthritis, melanoma, mental), dragon boat racing and the local history of the Amish. Co-ed crowds of 50 people or more attend and enjoy a social time after the presentations.



Pictured with Mayor Ryan are Jim Conn, Lynne Dietrich, and John Uren.

The group also holds other events, such as crokinole, square dancing and games for young people, plus an annual car show and tractor show. Funding is by donation only. Not only is an historic building being used on a regular basis, this group is providing a much needed service that has rejuvenated this rural community!

While the group is a loosely organized, grass roots organization, these four people are the key cogs in the machine. Lenora and Jim Conn provide the coffee, refreshments and snacks for both Coffee Talk and Wisdom Wednesdays. John Uren organizes and is the MC for Wisdom Wednesdays. Lynne Dietrich prepares a weekly newsletter, which not only reviews past and future activities at Brown's, but also includes notices for other events in the area. It has become the "newspaper" for the northern part of Zorra Township.





## BATTERY DISPOSAL

As of April 2025, we are no longer able to offer battery collection at our Township facilities. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Alternative convenient battery disposal options still exist within Oxford County:

- RecycleYourBatteries.ca shows your nearest drop off locations based on postal code. There are several locations in Ingersoll, Woodstock, Stratford, Tavistock and East London.
- Take a trip to Oxford's Waste Management Facility in Salford, open 6 days a week, to drop off all specialty waste including electronics, tires, batteries and much more - Special Recycling - Oxford County
- Utilize reusable cardboard cubes from Call2Recycle to store batteries until you are able to drop them off to a designated location

## Battery Safety Information

- Inspect batteries for any signs of damage or defect (swollen, corroded, leaking, or burn marks).
- Always practice care when handling batteries and use protective gloves/eyewear if there are any signs of rupture.
- Put a piece of masking tape over the +/- terminals of the battery to avoid short circuit.
- Store batteries in a non-conductive container made of plastic and keep away from heat sources or metal.
- Batteries which are damaged, defective, or recalled (DDR) should be put in individual plastic bags and stored safely away from other batteries until they can be taken to a disposal location.
- Dispose of used batteries at least every 3 months to avoid corrosion.





# First-term councillor encourages others to consider entering a race

Next municipal election is in November 2026 *By Stew Slater*

It was just over three years ago – in August 2022 during the grand opening of the splash pad at Embro Memorial Park – that Crystal Finch was first presented with the idea of serving on Zorra Township Council. Now, with about a year to go before the next municipal election, she's hoping to encourage others in the community to also consider running for office.

Interviewed recently, Finch admitted she faced challenges after unseating the incumbent Ward 4 councillor in the 2022 election. Indeed, those challenges largely came in the areas she highlighted – time commitment; balancing motherhood and employment with Council responsibilities – when she was approached by Mayor Marcus Ryan and Ward 2 councillor Katie Grigg during the splash pad grand opening.

Finch was instrumental in advocating for the installation of the Embro splash pad. Having operated a home-based daycare when her kids were younger, she knew the value such a facility could bring to the village. She had served on the Home and School committee at Zorra Highland Public School as well as volunteering at her church and the Embro and Zorra Agricultural Society. But gathering together an informal organization to lobby Council for the splash pad was her first interaction with municipal government.

"At the grand opening, Katie and Marcus kind of pulled me aside and told me they thought I would be a good person to have on Council," she recalled. "And I told them I have no idea about anything that happens at Council."

Her daughter was 14 at the time and two sons were 11 and six.

"I'm not somebody who is always wanting to venture out into something new," she explained. But Ryan and Grigg were sincere in their inquiry so she decided she better give it some thought.

By then, Finch had rejoined the workforce at a long-term care facility in Tavistock. Her biggest question for the two members of

Council was about time commitment. "Do I have time for this? I think that's what scared me the most."

After being elected, she said, it took basically the entire first year to get fully accustomed to the ebb and flow of meetings and responsibilities as well understanding the nuances of the information that is made available to councillors.

That year also proved that, as predicted, her biggest challenge was time management.



Zorra Township Council has morning meetings on the first Wednesday of the month and evening meetings on the third Wednesday of the month. Finch works every other weekend at the long-term care facility and the councillors typically get their information packages on the Friday before the Wednesday meetings. She prefers to use the weekend to look over those packages and plans to spend a good portion of Tuesday before the meeting at the Township office finding out more if she needs to. But with her work schedule, she sometimes has to juggle those schedules.

After only a few morning meetings following her election, it was clear that the 9 a.m. start time was difficult for both herself and Ward 1 Councillor Kevin Stewart. Both young parents needed to first get their kids

on the school bus before rushing to the meeting. Finch brought forward a motion to have the meeting start times moved from 9 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Receiving support for that motion was a confidence booster for the rookie councillor.

Still, she says it's not surprising that statistics from across the country indicate an under-representation of women – and especially young women – in municipal politics. Research conducted in 2023 at the University of Calgary on behalf of Federation of Canadian Municipalities showed that women represent 31 per cent of all municipal elected representatives in Canada, with the number slightly lower in Ontario at just over 30 per cent.

"As young mothers, we have a lot on our plates. And I don't necessarily want to generalize but I think, if you're an older man, you would often have more time to put into (the responsibilities of a municipal councillor)."

"As a mom, I want to be able to give the majority of my time to my kids."

There's also a balance that needs to be addressed in terms of receiving and responding to phone calls and emails from residents. She tells the story of being on vacation and a person contacting her by cellphone repeatedly and her husband finally telling her she needed to stop answering the phone.

"Although that hasn't been too much of a problem. The residents, for the most part, have been pretty understanding," Finch said. She credits Township staff with being able to handle most of the questions that come up, and being willing to take calls directed their way by councillors.

"A lot of young people like me think they don't have the time. But I found you're able to make that time once you make the commitment. And once you know you have support from your family and friends."

Have there been instances when residents have overstepped boundaries? Finch carefully considers her response.

"That definitely has been a challenge." In 2023, "I remember crying for half the night" after she was confronted by more than one person about her support of an initiative to bring a geared-to-income housing development to Embro.



She supported the idea because she thought it could benefit various segments of the population, including retiring farm parents who want to move off the farm and allow the next generation to take over, but don't necessarily want to sell the farm at full market value. So they need affordable options. She also saw it helping new parents moving back to their home community to raise their family – something she and her husband experienced. They bought their first home in Woodstock because they couldn't afford anything in Embro. And when they did eventually purchase something here, it was a challenge financially.

"I felt like I was just trying to hit those gaps that we have in this community."

Along with Ryan, she hosted a public meeting about the proposal at the community centre. It was packed, with many residents opposed and some of them strongly expressing their displeasure. "There was a lot of anger and upset from the residents," Finch recalled.

A University of Calgary study published in 2025 stated that "harassment in local politics is increasingly becoming the stated reason that local politicians resign early or choose not to seek re-election." A survey of 1,633 municipal representatives across Canada revealed 63 per cent "indicated they had experienced some form of harassment," with 12 per cent perceiving the harassment was targeted based on gender and 4.4 per cent perceiving it was targeted based on race. (Seventy-five per cent of those who experienced harassment did not have a perception that it was directed towards a particular identity.)

Finch says her experiences during and after that public meeting didn't leave her with the impression that harassment of politicians is a

...continued



problem in Zorra. And in that respect, she's similar to a majority of respondents to the University of Calgary study.

"Nearly 80 per cent of respondents said harassment is either not a problem (39.6 per cent) or somewhat of a problem (38.3 per cent)," the study noted. "A much smaller proportion of local politicians said harassment is a big problem in their municipality (6.8 per cent)."

Still, that doesn't mean Finch didn't feel targeted to a degree because she supported what turned out to be an unpopular vision of housing needs in Embro. In the days that followed the meeting, she was confronted by phone, email and in public, sometimes by people she had known all her life and had been on good terms with all her life.

"I would be at one of my kid's baseball games and there would be someone who wanted to pull me aside and have that conversation. Which is fine; I'm happy to have people express their concerns to me. But when it got a little more heated, I had to say, 'I'm sorry, but this is not the place to have this discussion. Let's set up a time when you can call me.'"

With most of those people, it has since reverted back to being able to have fruitful and polite conversations. And Finch has been able to move on to support other initiatives and been able to connect with some of those same people in new ways – this time with common visions of how to move forward.

Healthcare has been her passion for years and she found a way to incorporate that into her work as a councillor by working with Embro-area native Sherry Garner of Coffee Talk Theatre Productions to bring her "I am



Enough" one-woman show to the village's Olde Town Hall in April 2025. The show tackles mental health issues and Finch used the partnership to also organize a Friday-Saturday series of displays at the nearby Legion featuring information about various organizations and resources for those facing mental health issues.

She admits running the program with Garner "was very good timing for me" because her daughter and niece had recently been in a vehicle collision, with her niece losing her life as a result.

Finch says she'll run again for Council in the fall of 2026. She's inspired partly by achievements like the mental health support weekend but also, significantly, by Zorra Township Council's continued participation in the annual Local Government Week celebrations in October – when schoolchildren visit the Township office and councillors and some staff visit the schools in the municipality.

She remembers even before she was on Council, her daughter coming home from school excited from learning about what Township Council does during Local Government Week. "That was our dinner conversation that night." So after being elected the previous fall, she was keen to attend her first Local Government Week session at Zorra Highland Public School in 2023.

Finch remembers being thrilled when a couple of the kids said, "I know you. I've seen you at the park."

"It's kind of neat for them to see me not just as a mom but as someone who's a leader in the community."

# ZORRA MULTI-USE COURTS COMMITTEE

The Zorra Multi-Use Courts Committee, with the dedication of volunteers and community support since 2019, has officially reached its fundraising goal—special thanks to Chair Andrew Goodwin, Deputy Mayor Katie Grigg, and all committee members past and present.

## Where Will the Courts Be Built?

After reviewing several locations, the Committee originally proposed building the multi-use courts at the Thamesford District Recreation Centre. However, in Fall 2024, a new opportunity emerged: a parcel of parkland generously donated to the Township by Kingwood Development.

### NEW LOCATION: OFF BROCK STREET NEAR THE GEORGE STREET EXTENSION.

This site will be part of a central, growing community hub—adjacent to a future elementary school, planned sports fields, and available parking—making it the ideal spot for recreation and community access.

The ZMCC has officially endorsed this site as the preferred location.



**NOTE:** This is a sample of what the Zorra multi-use project could look like and is not a visual of the actual project.

## When Will Construction Begin?

Before the courts can be built, important infrastructure and grading work must be completed within the new development.

The Request for Proposal will be issued in 2026, with construction to follow.



### STAY UPDATED!

Visit [www.zorra.ca/our-township/committees](http://www.zorra.ca/our-township/committees) or contact Sofia Caldwell, Manager of Recreation and Facilities, at [scaldwell@zorrra.ca](mailto:scaldwell@zorrra.ca).



# 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.

September 17, 9:30am  
October 1, 9:30am  
October 15, 6:00pm  
November 5, 9:30am

## 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  
Phone: 519-425-2308  
Email: nicole@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: jsmdonald@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: mmcloughlin@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

*Financial Analyst/Deputy Treasurer*  
Nicole Bowery  
Phone: 519-425-2245  
Email: nbowery@zorra.ca

*Tax Collector*  
Melissa De Luca  
Phone 519-425-2304  
Email: mdeluca@zorra.ca

*Financial Services Clerk*  
Aleksander Lindskoog  
Phone: 519-485-0784  
Email: alindskoog@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* - Paige Ford  
Email: fireprevention@zorra.ca

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

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

*Uniondale 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: tdrcc@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.zorraslatingclub.ca  
Embroid Minor Baseball Association  
www.embrominorbaseball.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.zorraslatingclub.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.embrobc.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  
Box 242, Thamesford, ON N0M 2M0  
Sheldon Wade, President 519-859-4348  
thamesfordlions@gmail.com

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  
Khanna, Arpan MP 519-421-7124

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  
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.tpdr.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 Nissouri Union Church  
519-349-2333





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**Hard copies will also be available at our local libraries and arenas.**



## Modern Square Dancing is for YOU!



Looking for something to do in the evening or something new to try? Modern square dancing is a great way to learn something new, have fun, meet new friends, relieve stress, and get some exercise! At Thames Valley Dance Club, we dance on Monday nights from 7:00-9:00pm. All you need is comfortable shoes and casual clothing. No experience or partner is required and anyone over the age of 12 is welcome (children from 12-15 with an adult, please). We will be starting our 2025-2026 season on Monday, Sept 8/25 at the Ingersoll Pipe Band Hall, 108 Wonham St. S. Ingersoll. The first night is free, and after that the cost is \$7.50 per person each Monday, paid monthly at the start of the month. For more information, contact Julie at 519-535-3314. Hope to see you on Sept 8th at the Ingersoll Pipe Band Hall!



## Friendships, Cultural Competence, and Languages all in one!

If you are thinking about eye-opening, and jaw-dropping places for 13- to 17-year-olds to expand their horizons and their education, ISE Ontario has some suggestions. Six of them.

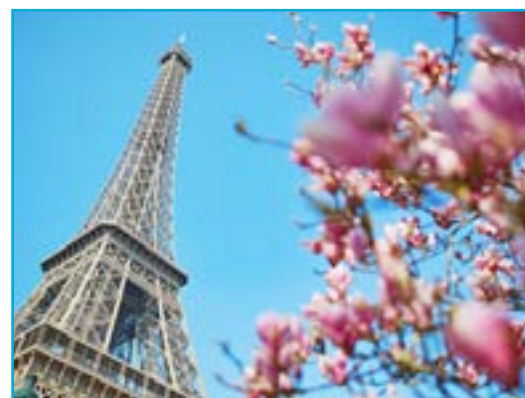
If you are thinking about how Canada's trade is being realigned to parts of the world like Germany, Europe's economic motor, or any of the 29 countries where French is an official language, or Spanish-speaking lands on three continents, then ISE Ontario has some destinations which will provide astonishing experiences.

If the word "reciprocity" hasn't been used often enough in the news of late, add this sense to it: When ISE Ontario matches students from Ontario to students in Italy, Ireland or Switzerland, they are matched by interest, then spend 9 weeks together here during the school year and 9 weeks together in Europe.

If "Endless Summer" reminds you of a Beach Boys' album, you will sadly recognize that summer never lasts as long as desired, and that ISE's

summer exchanges are 3 weeks, in each of two lands. 6 glorious weeks in total.

Follow the lead of your peers and friends who have already participated in ISE's amazing exchanges. Visit the web-page at [www.iseontario.on.ca](http://www.iseontario.on.ca) and/or contact [bryasmit@oxford.net](mailto:bryasmit@oxford.net) for more information. ISE can organize exchanges for students, families, teachers, community groups, sports teams and others as above and in other formats. Contact us!



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2025



DOORS OPEN: 7:30PM - SHOW: 8:00PM

COFFEE, TEA, SOFT DRINKS, SNACKS, DESSERTS

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"CLOSE YOUR EYES AND YOU'LL IMAGINE YOU'RE HEARING JIM AND GREG SINGING THOSE ICONIC HARMONIES. DEREK BARNES AND BARRY JAMES PAYNE, ALONG WITH 5 STELLAR MUSICIANS RECREATE THE SOUND OF BLUE RODEO FOR A NIGHT TO REMEMBER!" NOT TO BE MISSED!

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## Trojans Hockey

The Thamesford Trojans are gearing up for another fast-paced, action-packed season of hockey! Our first home game is September 12th as we welcome the Mount Brydges Bulldogs. The Trojans regular season home games are most Friday nights, puck drop at 7:30pm at the Thamesford Arena.

We have several returning players and are looking forward to introducing some new faces to our roster, as we have been actively recruiting some new talent in the off season. The players and coaching staff have been working hard in preparation for the upcoming 2025-2026 season. Speaking of hard work, the volunteers who help organize and bring this team together continue to work tirelessly behind the scenes.

The Trojans are one of the very last community owned teams in the Yeck Division of the PJHL. The support of the fans, volunteers and sponsors are what keep us alive and thriving. Anyone interested in sponsorship opportunities can contact any executive member for more information.

This organization is approaching a HUGE milestone in the team's history as we gear up for our 50th anniversary season in 2026-2027.

One of our biggest supporters has been and continues to be the Thamesford Lion's Club, as they manage the concession stand, including the licensed refreshments at all home games.

We hope to see you all when we take the ice in September.

*Your Thamesford Trojans Executive Board*



*Thanks to everyone who came out for the 15th Annual Trojans Golf Tournament! The weather was beautiful and the Ingersoll Golf Club provided a great location for the event.*

*Congratulations to Trojans Alumni player Jamie Jongsma and his teammates Willy Jongsma, Craig Thomas and Drew Martin who came up on top for the day! Thank you to all the sponsors and volunteers who helped make this event a great one!*



## Oxford 4-H Club

The Oxford Cloverbud 4-H Clubs have been busy discovering about various 4-H topics this year. The clubs learned about chocolate at a tour of the Habitual Chocolate in Woodstock. The Cloverbuds participated at alternative sports at the Ingersoll Bowling Lanes and Aduro Athletics for personal fitness. They learned about dairy nutrition & processing at Danensview Farm and Donker Lane Dairy Farm. The Cloverbuds had fun at the clowning & music meeting where they played carnival games & musical chairs, dressed up and made grape fruit animals. Both clubs had youth making tie-dye t-shirts and tambourines. One club youth made slime at one of the meetings. Both clubs youth were able to participate at the Embro Safety Day in June and the 4-H Ontario opportunity Discovery Day at Dorchester in July. One club visited the Woodstock Fair doing a scavenger hunt and watching the Llama show dress-up class. There were 38 youth this year in the two Cloverbud Clubs. Cloverbud youth have been entering items into the Oxford Fairs... hopefully you have seen them!!

Other topics for the Cloverbuds to check out this year are goats, fruit & vegetables, pigs and fall & nature fun before attending the Oxford 4-H Awards Night in November.

Cloverbuds is open to youth ages 6-8 by January 1st with a new curriculum each year to explore different aspects of 4-H. If you are interested in being part of the 2026 Oxford Cloverbud 4-H Clubs, please contact Shonna at oxfordcounty4h@gmail.com. The club is also looking for volunteers to help make it a rewarding experience for the youth.

The 4-H program is a leadership development program for youth ages 6-21 from urban and rural areas learning about health, environment, technology, agriculture, science, food, community and communication in a hands-on learning atmosphere.

To know more about the 4-H program, please contact the Oxford 4-H Communications Coordinator, Shonna Ward, by email oxfordcounty4h@gmail.com or call/text 519-854-6919 or check out Oxford County 4-H Facebook.



## Thamesford Lions Club Thamesford Lions Community Events

### "Catch The Ace" Progressive Raffle

Weekly Prize Draws

8pm Tuesday nights streamed LIVE on "THAMESFORD LIONS" Facebook

Tickets (\$5) can be purchased in Thamesford from:  
Dewy's Auto • Village Catering & Deli • Brunny's Sport Bar & Grill • JC Graphics • Mc Farlan Rowlands Insurance • Shell Gas Station

Tickets (\$5) can be purchased in Embro from:  
Highland Restaurant • Embro Family Pharmacy

Contact: Lion Tony 519-285-3618

### Canada Outdoor Farm Show - Food Booth

Tuesday Sept 9, 2025 to Thursday Sept 11, 2025  
8:30AM to 5PM daily - Woodstock

### Photos With Santa

Saturday, Dec 6, 2025

Time TBA

Thamesford Recreation Centre

Contact: Lion Doris 519-808-6197

### Christmas Caroling Showcase

Saturday Dec 6, 2025

6:30PM - Thamesford Recreation Centre

Contact: Lion Rebecca

email: beckiehag@gmail.com

### Thamesford Arena Canteen

Serving on weekends during Thamesford Trojan & Minor Hockey Home Games

**Follow Us on our new "THAMESFORD LIONS" Facebook page for the Latest News on these & other community events coming your way!**



## COUNTRY CONCERT at the EMBRO FAIR!

We heard you! For 20 years you have wanted a country concert back at the Fair – and so we are bringing it back!! This is going to be a rocking night of high energy Country music, outdoors under the new pavilion with opener Chris Clark and headliner Alexa Goldie. Grab your tickets for just \$30 – space is limited – and see these artists in your hometown because soon enough you have to pay to see them on the big city stages! Tickets available at embrofair.com.

### EMBRO FAIR SEPT 13th and 14th

Mark your calendars for the Embro Fall Fair! Featuring a Saturday Night Country Concert and all your Sunday favourites like, Car Show, Baby Show, Pet Show, Zucchini Races and Farmer Olympics. There will also be a petting zoo, pony rides, facepainting and so much more! Grab your tickets online at [www.embrofair.com](http://www.embrofair.com)

### Come volunteer with us!

Volunteering is a great way to meet your neighbours, connect with your community and give back. All volunteer opportunities are suitable for anyone teenage years and older. Email [ezasadvertising@gmail.com](mailto:ezasadvertising@gmail.com) for more information or check out [embrofair.com](http://embrofair.com) to sign up for a date.

**Sept 11th:** Embro Fair Indoor Set Up (Receive FREE homecooked dinner)

**Sept 13th & 14th:** Embro Fair activities , 2-3 hour shift (Receive FREE admission )

**Sept 15th:** Embro Fair Clean Up (Receive FREE lunch)

### Interested in leading a fun workshop?

The EZAS is planning the next round of homecraft: the art of homemaking workshops for 2026. If you have a skill related to homemaking (baking, cooking, sewing, gardening, crafting and more) and would like to teach fellow community members about what you do - email us at [ezasadvertising@gmail.com](mailto:ezasadvertising@gmail.com)





## Perils of Persephone

November 2025

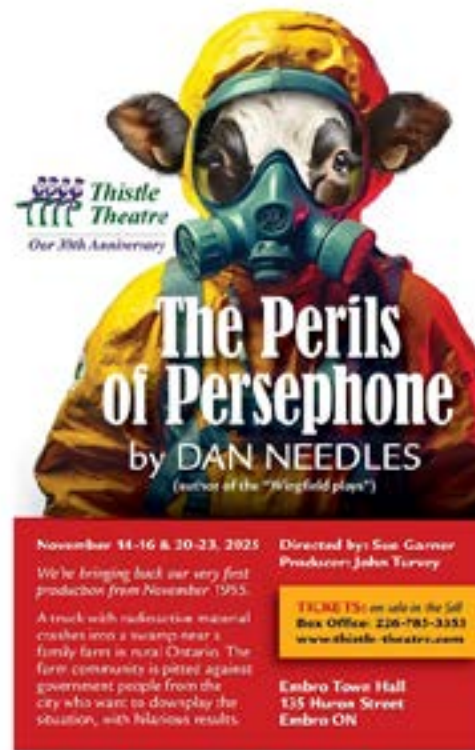
We are excited to announce that the November 2025 show for Thistle Theatre will be "The Perils of Persephone" by Dan Needles. We're bringing back our very first production at Thistle Theatre from November 1995 to celebrate our 30th Anniversary. Show dates will be November 14 to 16, and 20 to 23, 2025.

This play by Dan Needles, who is most well-known for his series of "Wingfield" plays, first premiered at the Blyth Festival in 1989. The play is set in the same fictional farming community of Persephone Township as the "Wingfield" plays. The play tells the story of a truck with radioactive material that crashes into a swamp near a family farm in rural Ontario. The farm community is pitted against government people from the city who want to downplay the situation, with hilarious results.

The show will be directed by Sue Garner and produced by John Turvey.

We are excited to announce our cast! We had a high turnout for auditions, with everyone who came out displaying solid acting skills. Thanks to everyone who came out for auditions. The actors chosen include a past Dramarama grad, and 2 others who are new to Thistle Theatre. These new folks have been in shows, one in neighbouring groups and one on the other side of the world! There are certainly a few familiar faces as well. Director Sue Garner and Assistant Director Lynda Pillon look forward to working with the following people:

Eldon - Doug Turvey; Marge - Heather West; Wendy - Becca Potter; Orval - John Hazeleger; Francis Hinkley - Shrirang Raval; Henry Burford - D'Arcy Irvine; and, Skip Fuller - Becky Issenman.



Are you interested in being a volunteer or being part of the crew for this production? Please reach out to John Turvey at john.a.turvey@gmail.com. We still have a few spots to fill. Stay tuned for more details about box office in the coming weeks.

## Mighty Men of Zorra

**Auditions - September 2025**  
**Production - March 2026**

Thistle Theatre is presenting another historical play this coming winter 2026 called the "Mighty Men of Zorra". This play will detail the successful local tug of war team climaxing with the win at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. The play written by Bill Butt will also describe historical community events leading up to the win.

We need men and women of all ages to audition for this new play which also includes music of the time.

Auditions will be held on Sept 21 and Sept 24 starting at 7 pm at Knox United Church in Embro. Information for the auditions can be found on Thistle Theatre's website [thistle-theatre.com](http://thistle-theatre.com) or by texting Don Hilborn at 519 537 3756.

The Mighty Men of Zorra is a play about a group of actors at Thistle Theatre trying to create a play about the history of the township. It is a play within a play; the action of the play takes place during a rehearsal. The play leads towards the story of The Mighty Men of Zorra and their tug-o-war victory; however there are a lot of other events dramatized along the way. We are looking for actors of all ages and genders. You don't have to be a man to play one of the "Mighty Men". The play is a comedy which celebrates the long history of people pulling together and persevering as a community in Zorra. It also celebrates the

**Box office information can be found on our website at [www.thistle-theatre.com](http://www.thistle-theatre.com) or call (226) 785-3353.**

long proud tradition of theatre making in this community.

We look forward to seeing you at auditions, and having you join us at the theatre for this production in March 2026.



## 2025 AORS Municipal Public Works Trade Show

The 2025 AORS Municipal Public Works Trade Show, presented in partnership with the Oxford County Road Supervisors Association (OCRSA), has shattered attendance and exhibitor records, cementing its reputation as Ontario's premier public-works showcase. Held June 4-5, 2025 at the Woodstock Fairgrounds, the show welcomed well over 2,000 municipal professionals, suppliers, and community guests and featured more than 300 indoor and outdoor exhibits, the largest footprint in AORS history. Included in the committee from Zorra was Steve Oliver, Director of Public Services; Derek Collins, Construction and Fleet Supervisor; and Chair Aden Corcoran, Retired Director of Public Works. The committee worked hard for several years to make this a successful event and we wish our congratulations to everyone involved. Visit <https://aors.on.ca/> to read more!





# Harrington Homecoming Centennial

100 years ago in 1925, 1,000 people or more gathered for a 2-day celebration - the first "Harrington Old Boys & Girls Reunion". Almost 500 of those attending, both local and from London, Toronto, Niagara, New York state, Michigan and beyond were captured in a panoramic photograph taken on Pitt's Hill in beautiful Harrington. Our Community Association (HACA) saw a great opportunity to recreate that historic photo and celebrate Harrington's proud heritage this past August 9th. A rallying cry was splashed across all publicity materials, "Be part of the big picture!" And with a population today perhaps only one-quarter of 1925, the community was able to gather 240 people by the historic stone schoolhouse, with Pitt's Hill in the background.

The Harrington Homecoming Centennial was certainly more than a photo-op. But what a fun photo-op it was! Pipers from the Ingersoll Pipe

Band led participants away from "downtown" activities to the photo site. And how appropriate, given our heritage, as one of Harrington's most famous residents back in the day was Sutherland Ross, a piper whose tunes are still a part of bagpiping repertoire today. Activities included heritage displays upstairs in the Harrington Hall and in the library downstairs; in the restored Grist Mill; and in the schoolhouse. A nature scavenger hunt, a petting zoo, a storyboard walk and, of course, the food truck kept all ages occupied.

The streets of the village also were on display with historical signage in front of buildings and sites with historic significance, such as the homes of the village doctor, or shoemaker or tinsmith, or the location of a long-

gone hotel, post office or sawmill. The pond and dam were looking spectacular August 9th despite recent droughty conditions.



An interesting fact about panoramic photography, then and today, is that crowds would be photographed in sections, with the camera moving and capturing pieces of the final picture that were then spliced together in the darkroom (or on a computer). Fleet-footed youngsters would sometimes start posing at one end of the crowd, then scamper behind the crowd to the other end of the picture, thus appearing twice in the same picture! No such scallywaggery was detected in Harrington on the 9th. But it's a practice they may want to revive for the 2125 bicentennial. A final note. Pitt's Hill, named after an early settler, is visible behind the crowd in 2025's panoramic photo, somewhat ironically as the current owner of the property hopes to turn it into a gravel pit - another reminder that rural life continues to face constant challenges. In our modern age, it takes a



real effort to convince people, especially youth, that where they live has a vibrant history where important things have happened and do happen. It's up to us to remember, to celebrate, to educate and to motivate. The Harrington Big Picture celebration accomplished all that!



Photo courtesy of Doris Weir Photography

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