



CENTRAL COUNTIES TOURISM NEWSLETTER

September 2022



Robintide Farms, York Region

E.D.'S CORNER: A Word From Chuck Thibeault

My wife, Trish, is back from the U.K.! To catch you up, my much better half has been in Birmingham, England since early October 2021 as part of the Organizing Committee for the Commonwealth Games. Back here on the home front, it has been me, my three boys and a never-ending stream of their friends for the past 10 months. At one point I commented that they were treating our place like a frat house. Quick as a whip, Gavin (now 19) said, "Dad, it's not a frat house. We are calling it our country club! It is very exclusive to our friends, and we are even talking about getting membership cards." I asked him why he thought it was a country club and his response was, "Because we have a man-servant living here." It was too quick and funny for me to actually get annoyed. Needless to say, Trish's return (the kids gave her the country club title of "Health and Safety") means that some adjustments need to be made. [Continue reading.](#)

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MEMBER NEED TO KNOW...

New Central Counties Tourism Board of Directors

The CCT Board of Directors plays a vital role in supporting the tourism interests of the region and advancing our mission and vision. We congratulate our new Chair, Mike Whiston, Tourism Advisory Committee, AOC Consulting with the Town of Uxbridge and Vice-Chair, Dwayne McMulkin, Cedar Fair Entertainment Company, Corporate Director, Marketing & Brand Management. Along with new members of our 2022-23 Board of Directors:



- Ana Stuart, Manager, Features & Education, Royal Winter Fair
- Carol Maitland, Economic Development Officer, Town of Shelbourne
- Laura Gibbs, Manager, Cultural Services City of Pickering, Cultural Services
- Shruti Ganapathy, Executive Director, Markham Arts Council

We also thank Nanci Malek for her years as CCT Board Chair and continuing service, as well as those who have completed their terms for their contribution of knowledge, experience and expertise.

- Ashley Travassos, Executive Director, City of Vaughan, Tourism Vaughan Corp.
- Gary Brown, Orangeville Blues & Jazz Festival
- Kelly O'Brien, General Manager, Galen Weston Centre for Food, Durham College

A full list of Board members can be found on our [website](#).

REMINDER: Fourth Partnership Funding Intake Deadline

The deadline for the fourth Partnership Opportunities Program intake periods is Sept. 15, 2022 for projects beginning Oct. 1 - Dec. 31, 2022. Don't miss this opportunity to make your great idea a great draw for visitors to the region. The final intake deadline is Dec. 15, 2022 for projects beginning Jan. 1 - Mar. 31, 2023. More information can be found on our [website](#).

Hotel Occupancy Up in Central Counties

Hotel occupancy data is an excellent tourism recovery indicator, and overnight stays in the region continue to improve. Overall occupancy percentages for the past three consecutive months are slightly higher than the same months in 2019, with year-to-date revenues (2017-2022), currently 11-14% higher than previous years. Hotel Data Reports can be found [here](#).

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION, COLLABORATIONS AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT WINS

Markham Public Library Receives Funding for Revitalization Programs

The Markham Public Library (MPL) has received \$25,000 for its MPL Trail Project, which will help restore vibrancy to the Main Streets of Markham and Unionville. The initiative highlights the natural and cultural history of the area through storytelling and programming, emphasizing the wellness benefits of nature while attracting visitors to the two main streets. Read more at yorkregion.com.

CCT Partnership Funding In Action

With the return of summer events and the ongoing desire for people to explore locally, businesses and communities across the region seized the opportunity to develop new tourism products and grow existing ones. Check out these great initiatives that came to fruition through the [CCT Partnership Opportunities Program](#).

[Angelstone Events](#) - This world-class equestrian facility successfully applied for partnership funding to increase their venue seating capacity, lighting, and for the creation of a visitor guide for their Major League Show Jumping event. More than 6,000 spectators attended this international competition.



Image: @angelstoneevents

[Stouffville Fusion Fest](#) - Stouffville Fusion Fest, is a free festival celebrating the culture, food, music, and entertainment of the Mediterranean. Funding secured through CCT helped to launch the inaugural event, held in July. It attracted an estimated 6,000-8,000 visitors from around south and central Ontario.

[Backroads of Brock](#) - Backroads of Brock is a collaboration of nine agri-tourism and artisan businesses in Durham's Brock Township who teamed up to create a rural day trip itinerary for those looking for a fun summer outing. Partnership funding was used to help promote this new tourism product with a visitor map, signage, and more.

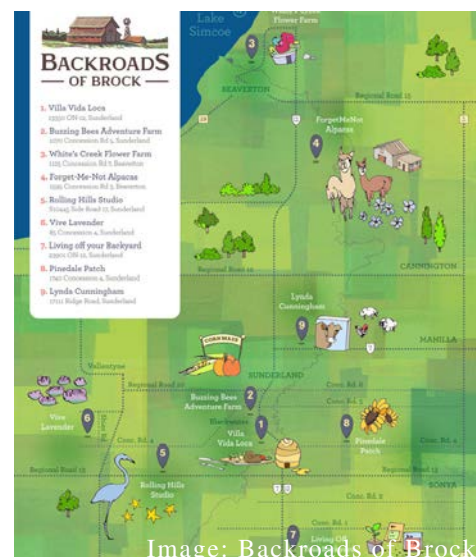


Image: Backroads of Brock

MARKETING AND MORE...

Summer 2022 has been action packed and filled with exciting initiatives and opportunities that have allowed us continue putting York Durham and Headwaters on the map for visitors. From podcasts to live on-location TV segments and interactive web content, we've been working with businesses to help spread the news about all the region has to offer. Here are some summer highlights.

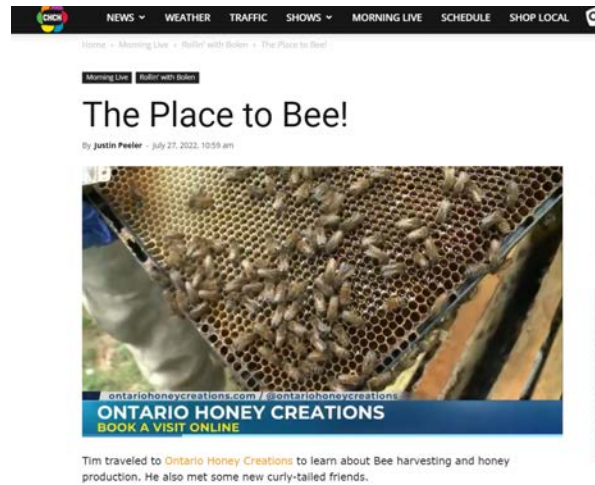
Scugog Arts' Art Waves Podcast

CCT Executive Director, Chuck Thibeault, talks tourism with Marion Meyers, host of *Art Waves* podcast. This is a great interview that provides insight and inspiration on the vibrant intersection of tourism and culture including why tourism matters, creating a destination, and the importance of the arts for visitors. Enjoy this episode of [Art Waves](#).



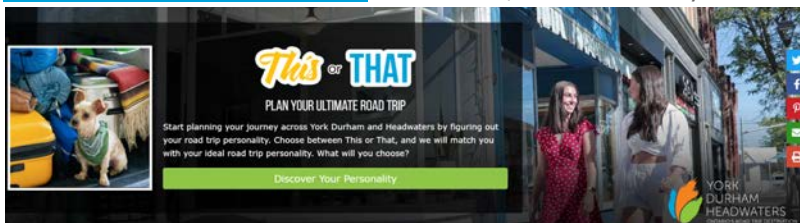
CCT & Destination Ontario Media Collab

In collaboration with Destination Ontario, we welcomed CH Morning Live's Tim Bolen to the Headwaters region. His *Rollin' with Bolen* segments were buzzing...with bees...as he got up close and personal with these sweet insects at [Ontario Honey Creations](#). CH Morning Live is the Hamilton Niagara region's number one morning show with more than 50,000 followers on Twitter and Instagram. You can watch these buzzworthy segments online [here](#).



New This or That Online Itinerary Builder

In late August we launched This or That, a fun online itinerary building tool designed to engage visitors and help them find their YDH Road Trip Personality. Visitors to the [YorkDurhamHeadwaters](#) website (more than 1,000 daily) choose between two images, each representing a different CCT visitor personality. At the end of the quiz, visitors are given an itinerary map to get them started on their YDH Road Trip! [Find your Road Trip Personality.](#)





FUNDING & SUPPORT

Greenbelt 2022 Call for Proposals Now Open

The [Greenbelt Foundation](#) is accepting Letters of Intent (LOIs) for their 2022 Fall Grant Round. LOIs are due by 5:00 p.m. on September 21, 2022. Current priorities include pandemic recovery, strengthening Greenbelt agriculture and community engagement. More information on funding guidelines and priorities can be found [here](#).

Racialized and Indigenous Supports for Entrepreneurs (RAISE) Grant Program

The RAISE Grant will help grow local businesses across Ontario and will be delivered through Digital Main Street, the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas (TABIA), and the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA) in collaboration with the Parkdale Centre for Innovation. Successful applicants will receive a \$10,000 grant to facilitate innovation and growth, as well as training and coaching for sustainable economic development. Online training for RAISE will include modules about business financials, cash flow management, creating a business plan, business operations, marketing and public relations strategies, and digital transformation. Read more [here](#).

Say Cheese! In addition to financial support programs, did you know that CCT stakeholders have FREE access to more than 19,000 regional photos through our Digital Asset Library? It is an excellent resource for content and marketing initiatives. [Register or login](#) for access.



Clockwise left to right: [Goodlot Farmstead Brewing Co](#), Headwaters Region; [Villa Vida Loca Market](#), Durham Region; [Avalon Lavender Farm](#), Headwaters Region

TOURISM

LEARNING & EVENTS

★ NEW Courses Now Available through CCT's Learning Lab

Elevate your online skills with our new [Social Media Marketing Program](#). The four-course series was created to help take your social media confidence and creativity to the next level. You will learn best practices for social media including foundational tools, how and when to engage online, content planning and creation, and publishing tips. From social media novices to advanced users, these courses will help hone your skills, inspire, and increase your strategic use of this essential marketing tool. [Register for FREE or login today.](#)

TIAO Presents:

Free Webinar Sept. 24, 2022 - How to Work with Post-Secondary to Support a Diverse Workforce. Learn how to work with post-secondary educators to hire and mentor the growing number of international students in tourism programs. [Register here.](#)

Ontario Tourism Summit Oct. 25-26, 2022 - Join tourism professionals from across the province to share and collaborate on the future of tourism. [Register today.](#)

Registration Now Open for the 2022 Ontario Hospitality Conference

On Nov. 1-2, 2022, the Ontario Restaurant Hotel & Motel Association is hosting their first ever [Ontario Hospitality Conference](#) at the Westin Toronto Airport Hotel. The event will gather foodservice and accommodation leaders for two days of networking and education. Visit www.ontariohospitalityconference.com for more information.

Free Webinar: Navigating LGBT+ Diversity & Inclusion in the Tourism Industry

On Sept. 14, 2022, to support efforts in developing market-ready products, Canada's LGBT+ Chamber of Commerce (CGLCC) is offering a free training webinar - Navigating LGBT+ Diversity and Inclusion in the Tourism Industry. The webinar is designed to help tourism-based businesses learn about LGBT+ inclusion and how to effectively understand, value, and serve LGBT+ customers and employees. [Register here.](#)

TOURISM

INDUSTRY NEWS

York Region Arts Council Local Pairings Program

Local Pairings is a program that engages artists, venues, and event organizers to partner with [York Region Arts Council](#) in activating arts across York Region. The goal of Local Pairings is to provide artists and organizers with mutually beneficial opportunities. For more information, click [here](#).

Centennial Students Looking for Work & Placements

[Centennial College School of Hospitality, Tourism and Culinary Arts](#) has students who are seeking industry linked challenges including part-time work while studying, full time summer employment while studying and full semester Work Integrated Learning as a capstone to their second or third years of learning. For more information on how to work together please email Amy Kearns, Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Coordinator at AKearns@centennialcollege.ca.

Accessing Talent Through Technology

The [Ontario Restaurant Hotel & Motel Association](#) (ORHMA) has launched a new partnership with FindWRK to introduce Ontario's hospitality industry to an innovative digital platform connecting workers and employers. The platform allows job seekers to build a detailed profile that employers can search through and filter enabling them to find workers more efficiently. [Employers can access the portal here](#) and [Workers can access the portal here](#).

Smart Serve Recertification webinar available online

TIAO's FORWARD MOTION: Smart Serve Recertification webinar recording is now available online. The webinar shares important information about the recent changes to the Liquor Licence and Control Act, 2019 including Smart Serve recertification course content, how testing will work, and when you need to complete recertification. [You can watch the recording here](#).

Connect with us on social!

