

**localbriefs****LOCAL GROUPS SEEK NEW SINGERS, BAND MEMBERS**

The Orillia Wind Ensemble (OWE) and the Orillia Vocal Ensemble (OVE), under the direction of Roy Menagh, are looking for new members.

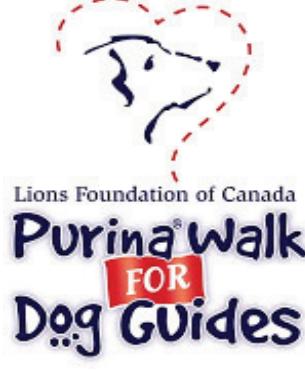
The OWE is currently a 45-member concert band, which has been in existence for more than 20 years. Rehearsals are Mondays from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. beginning Sept. 9 at Patrick Fogarty Catholic Secondary School.

The OVE is a 60-voice, four-part choir locally known as the "pay-it-forward choir." The OVE rehearses Tuesdays starting Sept. 10 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church.

For more information about the band or choir, email Anna at info@orilliawindensemble.com or, for the band, check out orilliawindensemble.com.

**PURINA WALK FOR DOG GUIDES PLANNED**

Orillia's fifth annual Purina Walk for Dog Guides in support of the Lions Foundation Canada will take place Sept. 29 at Couchiching Beach Park, Pavilion 1. Registration will begin at 10 a.m. followed by the walk at 11 a.m.



All money raised will go to the care and training of service dogs in various categories, including guide dogs, seizure-response dogs and companion dogs for children with autism.

Simcoe North MP Bruce Stanton and Simcoe North MPP Garfield Dunlop will attend the event.

For further information, contact Laura at blinkl@rogers.com or call 705-327-2068.

**MUSEUM, GEORGIAN LAUNCH PROJECT CATWALK**

The Simcoe County Museum and Georgian College have fashion sewn up.

Project Catwalk, showcasing Georgian College as one of four competing schools, is held annually at the Creativ Festival in Toronto and gives students a set of specific parameters to create and complete a challenge within a predetermined timeframe.

Three of these handmade dresses, created by the Georgian College European pattern-making fashion-design class instructed by Maria Calautti, will be on display at the Simcoe County Museum until Oct. 17. The dresses are original designs created by the students and completed in the 2010-12 Project Catwalk competitions.

Regular museum rates apply: adults, \$6; students/seniors, \$5; children, \$4. Museum members and preschoolers receive free admission. The Simcoe County Museum is located at 1151 Highway 26.

Visit museum.simcoe.ca for further details.

**COLUMN:** Festival expands to two days, to downtown eateries, incorporates youth element

# Ashiko supports 'amazing cause'

**M**usic defies national and cultural boundaries and it is synonymous with our development as a species. It offers us a bridge between our emotions and the world around us. Live music also allows us to cross this bridge with other listeners through shared experience.

This is why the Ashiko World Music Festival is important.

In its fifth year, Ashiko has always brought something unique to Orillia — a festival featuring exceptional, world-class music acts on the Stephen Leacock Museum grounds. Ashiko is also unique in its purpose. Every dollar from ticket sales goes toward supporting The Sharing Place food bank. This aspect makes Ashiko not only a music festival, but a social cause.

Festival organizers, the Ashiko audience and even the artists are all motivated by the fact this day amounts to something valuable for the community of Orillia.



Ross McIntyre

Ashiko has received great coverage and feedback over the years and has been referred to as a "hidden gem" of music festivals. This year, the organizers recognized the need for growth and this expansion has come to be in a few exciting ways.

First, the festival is now a two-day event, with local restaurants serving as the venues for Ashiko this Saturday. With places like Apple Annie's, Brewery Bay Food Company, Bistro 179 and The Brownstone on board, audiences can enjoy free music and, at many places, menu options as well. Susan and Nancy Willsey co-own Apple Annie's and will host the jaw-dropping finger-style guitar of Maneli Jamal Sat-

urday from 2 to 5 p.m.

"We thought that this was one of the best ideas and it was just such a natural fit to add the Saturday," said Susan Willsey.

Christine Hager, executive director of The Sharing Place, said the downtown venues hosting Ashiko acts as a great addition.

"It is a way for The Sharing Place to give back to the community and the businesses that support us," said Hager.

In many ways, it is a perfect example of collaboration between local businesses, charities and artists.

Another way Ashiko has grown this year is through the addition of a youth component, spearheaded by Champagne Thomson. With talents well beyond her age, Thomson has co-ordinated a day of live music and art. Saturday morning will include both visual and musical artists at the Orillia Farmers' Market, followed by an afternoon of more music

and artistry at the Orillia Opera House.

"This is the youth of Orillia's contribution to such an amazing cause," said Thomson. "It incorporates both audible and visual talents by using the collaboration of live music and artwork."

This addition to Ashiko has helped broaden what it means to be a music festival. When asked why this was a direction Ashiko wanted to go in, Thomson said, "I believe, by adding a youth component, we not only increase the interest pool, but it also allows youth to make a difference by using the arts."

The idea of the youth component to Ashiko was initially based on a bursary opportunity until that application fell through.

"When I was denied that funding, I wasn't about to give up, because The Sharing Place has always been a cause that I have supported, as I know of many people dear to me that have utilized the facility when times got

rough," Thomson said.

Once again, the undercurrent of support for The Sharing Place runs through all aspects of Ashiko.

This is an ideal opportunity to support the community while extending your summer by a few weeks. Ashiko takes place all weekend, with the main stage at the Stephen Leacock Museum grounds. Admission is a donation of \$20 and kids younger than 12 get in free. More information is available on Facebook or by contacting The Sharing Place.

*Ross McIntyre is a director at Camp Couchiching and the Couchiching Community Initiative. He is passionate about outdoor education and community building. This column profiles community organizations dedicated to Orillia and opportunities for local youth engagement. If you have a story idea, email rossmcintyre@gmail.com.*

**COMMUNITY:** New groups' goal 'to help generate awareness about the legion ... and its services'

# Legion welcomes motorcycle clubs at its branches

**COLIN WACKETT**  
Special to The Packet & Times

The Ontario Command of the Royal Canadian Legion recently announced a new initiative for legion branches across Ontario.

At a press conference, Ontario Command president Bruce Julian outlined the details to assembled legion and chapter riders from various groups, including the Veterans 1st Cav.

Riders.

Dominion Command had earlier approved the start of motorcycle groups within local branches and Ontario Command enthusiastically supports the initiative, said Julian.

In his presentation, Julian spoke of the services supplied to veterans and serving members and their families since 1926 and the fact the legion is the largest veteran service and community support organization in Canada.

But, he pointed out, many legion members are also motorcycle enthusiasts and this aspect of the legion, until now, had not been addressed.

"So, here I am today to say, based upon popular demand from our legion members, that Dominion Command has launched this initiative to create a motorcycle group to help generate awareness about the legion,



its community engagement across the country and its services to our serving and retired veterans, RCMP personnel and their families," Julian said.

"The Legion Riders are now able to mount up across Canada and form clubs at legion branches from coast to coast."

Reaction from riders at the press conference was positive. When being thanked for attending, the riders from the Veterans 1st Cav. Riders said they were there in the name of veterans who need support because "that is what they do."

Alongside the legion, they were happy to attend and support the initiative. Some of the riders were already legion members and told of veterans who were urged to join the legion when having trouble with Veterans Affairs.

Each branch in Canada has a veterans service officer to help all veterans.

Other club riders asked how quickly this could be started within branches. Legion riders are offering help to branches who wish to form their riders groups.

A new crest for Legion Riders has been designed and is available through the branches.

For further information, contact the Orillia Legion, Branch 34, by calling 705-325-8442.



Submitted photo  
Motorcycle enthusiasts were on hand recently when Ontario Command president Bruce Julian outlined details of a new initiative of the Royal Canadian Legion to support motorcycle clubs within legion branches.

**FAITH:** 'High Holidays' are a religious celebration of reflection and repenting

# Jewish community ready for New Year's celebration

**CHERYL BROWNE**  
QMI Agency

As with any New Year's celebration, Rosh Hashanah is the time for both closure and new beginnings.

Dating from the Bible's Old Testament, the upcoming Jewish High Holidays are a religious celebration of reflection and repenting, turning the page on a new calendar to the year 5774 in September.

The initial services — marked over two days — remembers the creation of Adam and Eve, as well as the day Jewish people renew a divine desire to accept God as King.

"It's our New Year's," said Steve Sperling, president of Barrie's Am Shalom synagogue.

To mark the end of the 28-day monthly calendar, Sperling said it's at this point in the year when they've finished reading the five books of Moses in the Torah.

"It culminates with Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, which is very much a religious holiday," Sperling said. "Then, we start again for a whole year."

In the Jewish tradition, Rosh Hashanah is observed by the sounding of the shofar, a ram's horn, which signifies the trumpet blast of a people proclaiming the King, as well as a call to repent for 10 days until Yom Kippur.

Altogether, there will be 10 blasts of the shofar during the course of the 10 days.

With more than 300,000, or 2%, of the world's estimated 14 million Jewish people living in Canada, even the most secular Jews may attend a service during the High Holidays.

Sperling expects a congregation of about 300 people to attend the Am Shalom synagogue; even members from as far away as Newmarket, Collingwood and Huntsville will attend.

"It's like any other religion in that sense. At certain times of the year, everybody seems to come. This is one of those times," he said.

Steven Shulman, spokesperson at the United Jewish Appeal in Toronto, said the High Holidays are a fine balance of celebrating the new year and reflecting.

"We celebrate the new year's approach, but there's also a time of reflection on what we did as individuals, as a community and as a people," Shulman said.

He noted in the Canon of Jewish Law, there were rules governing what negative actions drew certain penalties.

"If you didn't speak to someone properly, you're to look inside yourself to see if you did something contrary to the precepts of the religion. There's no 'get out of jail free card,'" he said.

After more than a week of both private and community reflection, Shulman said they approach the

26 hours of fasting beginning an hour before sunset to an hour after sunrise on Yom Kippur as the year's final cleansing ceremony.

Seasonal foods, such as apples and pomegranates dipped in honey to encourage a sweet new year, are consumed.

Shulman said Jewish people will wish each other a "good" New Year, as opposed to a happy one.

"You can be happy but still not treat others properly. A good year includes happiness, but incorporates being honest and making a positive difference in your community," he said.

Rosh Hashanah begins today with an 8 p.m. service, followed by a 10 a.m. service Thursday. Yom Kippur will begin around 8 p.m. Sept. 13 and end with an all-day event Sept. 14 beginning at 10 a.m. at Am Shalom, which is located at 767 Huronia Rd. in Barrie.

For information, call 705-792-3949 or visit amshalom.ca.



MARK WANZER Special to QMI Agency

Steve Sperling, president of Barrie's Am Shalom, is ready to celebrate Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The High Holidays begin today.