



MEDIA RELEASE

April 6, 2024

Small curling club makes a big community impact!

BAYSVILLE, ON – On Saturday, MPP Graydon Smith met with the members of the Baysville Curling and Bocce Club at their Annual General Meeting to officially congratulate them on receiving a \$23,100 grant from the provincial government's Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF). The 18-month long Resilient Communities Fund grant was awarded in January and will enable the Club to buy to continue providing great service and communications with its membership and future members as well. In addition, the grant will help to secure expertise to engage in an accessibility feasibility review.

"I'm happy to see the amazing work of everyone at the Baysville Curling and Bocce Club. As we know, volunteers are the backbone of our communities and the way the members here offer their time for the betterment of the club is inspiring," said Parry Sound-Muskoka MPP Graydon Smith. "Congratulations on getting this Ontario Trillium Foundation grant so you can continue to grow your membership."

The grant will also help with the costs involved with website development and communications, creating teaching tools and purchasing training equipment. This will support existing programs, maintain the growth of membership in both the curling and bocce programs, and hopefully and literally open the doors to more participants in the community. A good example is the Learn To Curl program, a six-session program for new curlers to learn about game strategy and etiquette, equipment, the rules, safety, and to experience on-ice instruction. Most new curlers love the program, and in the past year alone this resulted in a 12 per cent growth in curling membership. The new teaching tools and equipment will help club volunteers deliver these learning sessions much more effectively.

And with regard to the feasibility study on accessibility, the Club's 41-year old building was not designed for accessibility, so a portion of funds will be used for architect and engineers' fees to assess the feasibility of renovations to facilitate accessibility for everyone.

"We see tremendous interest in the curling and bocce programs, as well as the many social activities, offered by the club," said Ed Mathany, President of Baysville Curling and Bocce Club.

“Thanks to these grant monies the club can streamline the way we deliver our programs and continue to engage more people in the region. According to recent economic development studies, migration to the region is increasing, along with the average age. Whatever we can do to keep people engaged, learning, and moving, will support our community goals of physical and mental health and wellness.”

“The curling season has just finished after several months of league play and five exciting club bonspiels. The bocce season begins soon and includes a 25% increase in the number of players over the past two seasons. Community members are clearly enjoying the comradery and they feel welcomed and safe participating in sport and activities organized by the Club,” proudly stated Mathany. “This volunteer-run not-for-profit club is really a big part of the social fabric of the Lake of Bays Township and we’re so pleased with our continued growth!”

“Non-profit organizations across Ontario deliver programming that makes a difference,” said Neil Lumsden, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. “That’s why funding that my ministry is providing through the OTF is so important. Our government wants to ensure that these programs and spaces remain the heart of communities across our province.”

The Ontario Trillium Foundation’s (OTF) mission is to build healthy and vibrant communities across Ontario. As an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada’s leading granting foundations, last year, OTF invested over \$110M into 1,022 community projects and partnerships. Visit otf.ca to learn more.

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Organization Contact for Media Inquiries:

Ed Mathany, President
Baysville Curling & Bocce Club
Phone 705-349-0513
president@baysvillecurling.ca