

**Recreation, Culture and Wellness Quarterly Report**  
 Wednesday, April 17, 2024

**Reporting Period:** Recreation, Culture and Wellness Quarterly Report for the period: January 1 – March 31, 2024

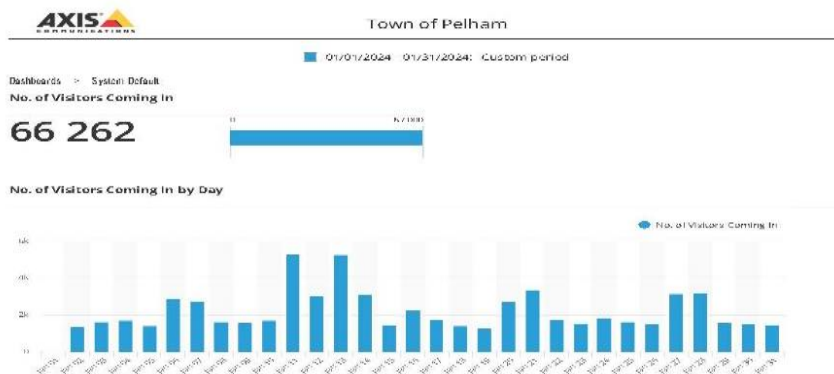
**Recommendation:**

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT 2024-0089 Recreation the Q1/2024 Recreation, Culture and Wellness Department Report be received for information.**

**Department Overview and Statistics:**

January 2024 started off in a fast pace within the Meridian Community Centre as the MCC played host to another Pelham International Silver Stick. With 78 teams from all over Canada and the United States using the community hub as the setting for the opening ceremonies all the way to the final games. Over the four-day Silver Stick International tournament the Meridian Community Centre experienced 16,607 visitors through the doors, of which 5,265 were present on the Thursday evening just for the opening ceremonies.

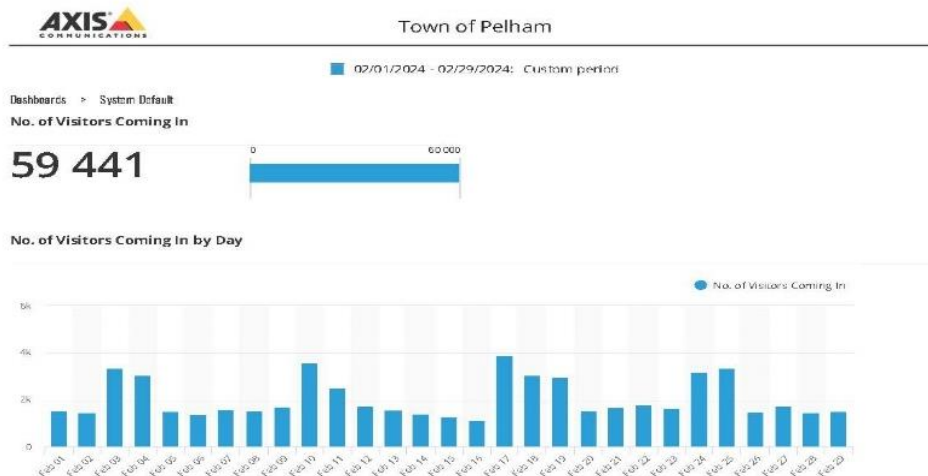
The Meridian Community Centre continually showed growth in numbers within our visitors, revenues, and programs put forward. In January the Meridian Community Centre experienced 66,262 visitors. This was a 10%



increase of over 6,000 more visitors than the previous January 2023 visitor numbers of 60,294.

In February Recreation, Culture, And Wellness staff continued to provide customer service, setting up and tearing down for events, rentals, and programs, all the while cleaning and maintaining a standard of service to the best of their abilities. The Meridian Community Centre experienced 59,441 visitors for a wide range of different reasons making the Centre a very significant hub of importance for Pelhams community.

An increased usage trend continued into February with just shy of a 10% increase over February 2023, with 5,682 more visitors through the facility. This was another year RCW staff went above and beyond to make the annual Family Day festivities a success, bringing the community to the Meridian Community Centre for numerous activities, programs, and ultimately fun for the children. In a quick timespan on Family Day our facility seen just shy of 3,000 visitors join in the festivities. Our Recreation, Culture, and Wellness team never shy away from creating positive experiences and



memories, always providing customer service to an excellence.

03/01/2024 - 03/31/2024: Custom period

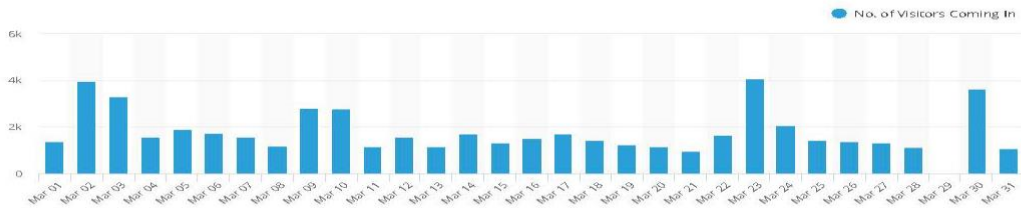
Dashboards > System Default

No. of Visitors Coming In

**54 842**



No. of Visitors Coming In by Day



By March 1<sup>st</sup> the Meridian Community Centre was busy with Pelham Basketball hosting OBA finals, PMHA and STA Admirals finishing their play downs, along with Niagara Centre Skating Club hosting their annual Gala. The Meridian Community Centre experienced another 10% increase in visitors with 54,842 people in the month of March, a 5,586 increase over March 2023's 49,256. RCW staff consistently aim for growth not only in programs, rentals, and recreation, and service levels but also to utilize the space to encourage community and inclusivity into Pelham's largest investment.

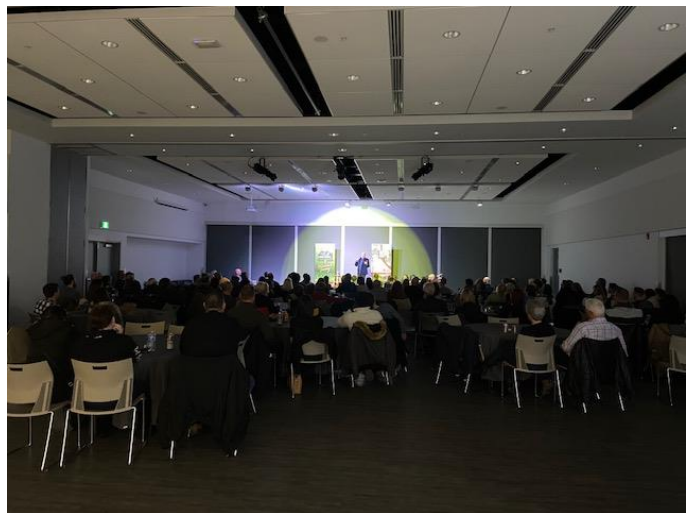
**Big Band**

The Town of Pelham's Big Band Dance Night, featuring the Jimmy Marando Swing Band takes place every third Tuesday of the month in the Accursi Room at the Meridian Community Centre. It is a night filled with swing, jazz, classical music, and lots of dancing! The attendance has been growing steadily with an average of 140-160 attendees throughout the last three months. This event continues to offer free admission with food and beverage available for purchase.



### **Comedy Night in Pelham**

On February 24<sup>th</sup>, the Garden City Comedy Festival hosted "Comedy Night in Pelham", an evening of laughs with an all-star lineup headlined by Mark Matthews. The powerhouse lineup also featured performances from Crystal Ferrier, Gerry Hall and Allie Moore, hosted by Niagara's own David Green. The evening sold out, with a total of 241 attendees. The evening was a great success filled with lots of laughter. Bar services were available for purchase.



The next Comedy Night in Pelham is planned for Saturday July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Tickets will be available starting in June. Call 289 668 3425 to reserve a table of 8 for \$200 or individual tickets for \$30. Bar service will be available for purchase. Doors open at 7pm. Showtime 8pm.

Visit **[www.gardencitycomedyfestival.com](http://www.gardencitycomedyfestival.com)** for more information or to purchase ticket!

### **MCC Art Walls**

During Q1 of 2023, art displays were showcased on the Meridian Community Centre art walls. During the month of January and February, Welland artist David Holtby showcased his paintings in the atrium of the Meridian Community Centre.

During the month of March, the Pelham Art Association displayed art throughout the atrium and upper hallway, showcasing authentic paintings created by over 30 local artists.

The month of April and into May, the Pelham Art Festival is due to come in and display art for their art festival on Mothers Day weekend – May 9-12.



### **Pelham Farmers' Market:**

Staff have been working with the Farmers' Market Committee on operations for the 2024 Pelham Farmers Market Season. The market will operate Thursday May 2 through October 10.

The Farmers Market Committee met on March 6, where vendors for the 2024 season were determined. There will be around 25 vendors in total plus a non-profit booth.

### **Summer Chill Supper Market:**

Staff is in preparation to host the Summer Chill Series on Thursday evenings from June 13 to September 5. The event will have options for local food vendors, as well as local beer, wine, and cider vendors. There is also opportunity for local musical performances and buskers. Food, beverage, and musician vendor applications have been submitted, and will be determined after the April 2 cut-off date.

## **Family Day**

The 2024 Family Day Adventure welcomed over 2900 people to the Meridian Community Centre. Families enjoyed open family gym time featuring various activities such as a learn to play lacrosse session ran by the Pelham Raiders, a bouncy castle, pickleball, shuffleboard and more! Families lined up for the interactive opportunities including face painting, balloon animals, magic shows and laser tag sponsored by the Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee. This fun filled day also included a sponsored skate by the Rotary Club of Fonthill and a community expo which allowed over 12 community volunteer groups, service clubs or sports teams to engage with the community and share information on their upcoming seasons, projects, and volunteer opportunities.

## **Pelham Summerfest**

The Pelham Summerfest working group have been working diligently on sponsorship and logistics for Pelham Summerfest 2024 and are now meeting bi-weekly. Pelham Summerfest will take place July 18<sup>th</sup> – July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

## **Hoppin' Easter Egg Hunt**

On Saturday March 30, Pelham's annual Hoppin' Easter Egg hunt returned to Centennial Park. Over 2500 people attended the event to hunt for eggs, participate in the annual Easter colouring contest and to meet the Easter Bunny! This year, a local real estate agent Shannon Leigh sponsored the Easter Bunny photo backdrop as well as the colouring contest prize pack!

The hunt had three designated age group areas and three special Golden Eggs were hidden in each age group! Those who were lucky enough to find the Golden Egg took home an Easter prize pack! A barbeque and warm beverages were provided to families for free by the Fabulous Fenwick Lions.



## Seniors Programming:

### Seniors Social and Seminar Series:

Continuing with the New Horizons 2023 Grant, the Town of Pelham completed the monthly seminar and social series in Q4, offered to the 55+ community, bringing in speakers that provided engaging, educational, and entertaining workshops/sessions.

The Town of Pelham was approved for the New Horizons for Seniors Program 2024 grant that will run from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 – December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Upcoming seminars include Pelham Cares on April 11<sup>th</sup> and A Senior's Bike Safety Presentation on May 15<sup>th</sup>.



### Fraud and Scam Prevention Seminar Series:

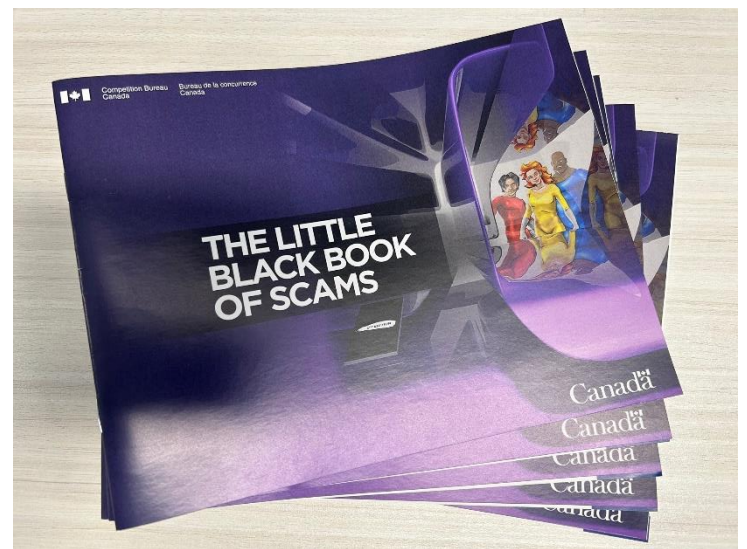
As part of the Seniors Community Grant Program 2023-2024, the Town of Pelham is hosting a monthly seminar series, geared to the older adult community, that provides information on fraud and scam prevention. This 'lunch and learn' type of seminar series partners with Crime Stoppers of Niagara and Niagara Regional Police Services, who present important information, guidance, resources on protecting yourself over a 5-month period. This began in November with the "Be Aware, Take Care" presentation that had 35+ people attend. December's "Cyber Safety & Security" presentation brought attendance numbers to 100+ people, our highest seminar series attendance yet.

The Q1 Fraud and Scam Series registration results are as follows:

- January 17<sup>th</sup> (Identity Scams) – 105 Attendees (pre-registered)
- February 21<sup>st</sup> (Telemarketing & Bank Scams) – 126 Attendees (pre-registered)
- March 20<sup>th</sup> (NRPS Presentation) – 135 Attendees (pre-registered)

March was the final presentation to wrap up this series, and numbers show the continuous growth in registrations and interest in being educated on the topic.

Prints of the “Little Black Book of Scams”, created by the Government of Canada, were ordered and were handed out at each seminar to attendees, with more copies available at the MCC.



#### Niagara Community Foundation Grant (NCF) Seminars:

Two NCF grant-funded seminars were held and hosted at the MCC in Q1, with PATH partnering and facilitating the presentations. The first was on February 13<sup>th</sup> (The Study of Trees in the Urban Forest) with presenter Ivan Fredette. This seminar had approximately 50 people in attendance. The second presentation was on March 26<sup>th</sup> (The Value of our Natural Heritage) with presenter Albert Garofalo. This seminar had approximately 80 people in attendance.



Pelham Seniors Advisory Committee Survey:

To continue to meet the needs of seniors in Pelham, we continue to encourage feedback. A survey is provided online, in-person at our seminars, workshops and events, as well as in our monthly e-newsletter link to community members who subscribe, that provides opportunity to better understand the needs of the town of Pelham’s 55+ population. Q1 updated results are shown here, with an increase in feedback and participation in the survey since Q4’s results.

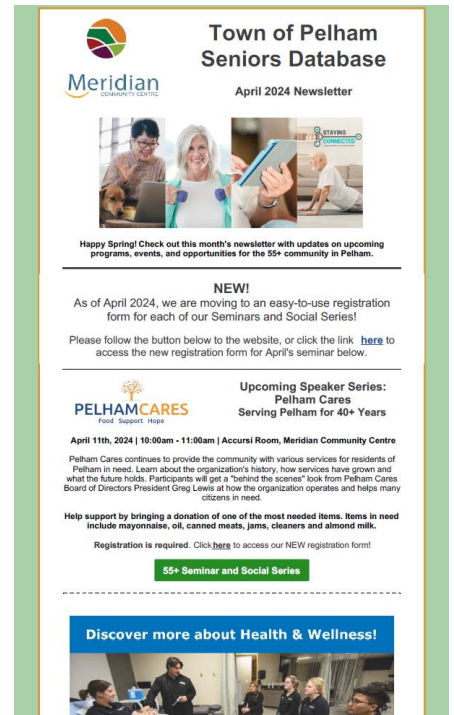
Staying Well, Safe, Connected and Active Survey Results					
Information Survey	1	2	3	4	5
Health, Wellbeing & Education	4	11	32	56	161
Walking & Transit - Safety & Accessibility	33	27	45	27	122
Safe & Affordable Housing & Community Spaces	30	22	39	46	114
Aging in Place and LTC	15	9	25	37	170
Social & Civic Engagement	3	7	32	53	162
Communication & Information	5	3	32	66	154
The following categories are scored in terms of importance to you, with 1 being the least important and 5 being the most important					

Pelham Seniors Database Email Newsletter:

The Town of Pelham has put an increased focus on communication and information sharing with the senior community. Part of this initiative was creating a monthly email newsletter with resources, programs, events, and information for the 55+ local community. By the end of Q1, we currently have 675 email subscribers to this newsletter – this number continues to grow monthly based on previous monthly subscription trends. Staff has been able to improve the quality of the newsletter in Q3 by using an online marketing company to create an effective and professional email newsletter for subscribers. Residents can subscribe through the website and email (online), and through our surveys and feedback forms in-person at events and programs.

Niagara Older Adult Alliance (NOAA) Meetings:

On February 29<sup>th</sup>, the Seniors and Community Services Programmer, as well as members of the Pelham Seniors Advisory Committee, attended the NOAA meeting held at the Thorold Senior Citizens Centre. Staff and Committee representatives from all 12 municipalities take part in the meetings to share updates on older adult programs and initiatives and challenges being faced. Next meeting is in the works and plans are to meet 2-4 times a year.



[Niagara Older Adult Alliance meets for first time since pandemic - PelhamToday.ca](https://pelhamtoday.ca)

Brock University MAG (Master of Applied Gerontology) Student Practicums 2024:

The Seniors and Community Services Programmer will be overseeing two MAG Student Practicums from May – August 2024, who are being onboarded to assist with two separate projects while completing their 300 hours for their program.

Student 1: Social Prescribing Project and Education Support

Student 2: Recreation Project and Support

Both positions have been filled successfully in Q1, with preparation for both students to start on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

### **Communities in Bloom Working Group:**

The Communities in Bloom working group began meeting in Q1. The working group consists of both municipal employees and community members that provide a wonderful variety of perspectives and representation. The group currently has 12 members – 8 staff and 4 resident volunteer members. The group has focused on reviewing past competition results for the Town of Pelham and planning the itinerary and routes for the upcoming judges tour in July 2024 based on the key criteria of evaluation.

### **Youth Programming – Camps:**

Q1 saw three different types of camps offered – Winter Break Camp, PD Day Camp and March Break Camp. Various games, activities, trips and guest entertainers were part of the camp experience with many campers in attendance, returning for multiple camps.

- Winter Break Camp: January 2 – 5, 2024  
Registrants: 35  
Extended Care Registrants: 15
- PD Day Camp: February 16, 2024  
Registrants: 13
- March Break Camp: March 11 – 15, 2024  
Registrants: 82  
Extended Care Registrants: 46

## **Art Your Service – Free Virtual Seniors Programming Subscription:**

The Town of Pelham partners and subscribes to 'Art Your Service' – free virtual live classes for older adults based on a weekly calendar. With the subscription, Pelham residents can register through the Seniors and Community Services Programmer to join the list and receive free weekly calendars of activities to access from home. Currently at the end of Q1, the Town of Pelham has over 100 subscribers. The Town of Pelham renewed membership in January 2024 for a full year subscription.

## **Volunteers**

During Q1 of 2024, Staff received seven new volunteer expression of interest forms through the Town's website. All the applicants received digital training and were added to the Town's volunteer database. Town Staff continue to advertise volunteer opportunities by emailing the community volunteer database.

One Senior VIP (Volunteer in Pelham) has continued to contribute her time to the Meridian Community Centre. During Q1 of 2024, this volunteer contributed a total of 10 hours to assisting with the Orchestrum Music drop-in program on Friday's.

Volunteers assisted at the Easter Egg-Hunt at Centennial Park. 2 volunteers contributed approximately 4.5 hours to the event. Volunteers helped with traffic navigation, assisted with the colouring contest and prize distribution.



## **Dedication Program**

In the first quarter of 2024, the dedication program received two bench dedication inquiries. Both inquiries are ongoing and will be followed up by the customer later this Spring.