



Regional Review

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM DEPARTMENT

Durham Tourism helps festivals and events go green

Durham Tourism is taking an important step this summer to ensure that local tourism experiences offer "good natured, good times" with environmentally sustainable practices in mind.

As part of its GO GREEN sustainable tourism strategy, Durham Tourism partnered with Miller Waste Systems, Ontario Power Generation and three event organizers on a pilot project to encourage sustainable practices at local festivals and events.

Pilot events included: The Great Canadian Steak Cookoff (located in Whitby, on July 24 and 25), Highlands of Durham Games (located in Uxbridge, on July 25 and 26) and Oshawa Jazz and Blues Festival (August 6 to 9). The focus of these events was effective waste management, with the aim of achieving at least 50 per cent diversion.

"Festivals and events are an important economic driver for Durham Region, with more than 500 tourism-related activities held across the region each year," said Kerri King, Manager of Tourism for Durham Region. "The message from our tourists is clear—they want to reduce their ecological footprints, while having fun. Ensuring that Durham's festivals and events are environmentally sustainable is a necessary step in moving the region forward as a destination that offers active, healthy and environmentally conscious tourism experiences."

Each pilot event was equipped with bins to facilitate the separation



Trained volunteers at the Oshawa Jazz and Blues Festival assist with waste diversion.

of recyclables and organics. Event organizers also received a planning toolkit, as well as volunteer training resources, to maximize on-site waste diversion. In addition, members of the GO GREEN team—a group of volunteers trained in sustainable tourism practices—were at the events to promote Durham Tourism's GO GREEN message and encourage environmentally responsible actions.

"With these pilot events, we hope to show that effective waste management is achievable regardless of the size or nature of their events," said Shawn Williamson of Durham Sustain Ability

and The Baleen Group, a Whitby-based management consulting firm that helps organizations achieve their sustainability goals. "We want people to realize that it's fun to be green," he added. Based on event reviews and waste management reports, which are currently being compiled, Durham Tourism will develop a broader program in 2010 to help more local festivals and events become environmentally sustainable.

Since establishing its GO GREEN strategy in early 2008, Durham Tourism has held a series of workshops to give tourism operators

a broad range of information on sustainable tourism practices. Durham Tourism has also adopted greener marketing tactics, including the introduction of an e-newsletter, an expanded online marketing campaign, and the use of recycled paper and vegetable-based inks in print publications.

For information on how to green your own event, please refer to the "Top 10 Tips on How to Green Your Event" fact sheet, available on the Durham Tourism website at www.durhamtourism.ca.

MAKING BUSINESS HAPPEN

NORTH DURHAM MAKES BUSINESS HAPPEN

North Durham may be best known for its relaxed, rural charm, but countless business activities have meant a busy summer for this part of the region.

The Township of Brock, in collaboration with The Regional Municipality of Durham, Economic Development and Tourism Department, has prepared a Site Selector Information Package for individuals and companies interested in relocating to Brock.

The full-colour package contains maps of available employment lands; information related to employment statistics and taxes; development charge and utility rates; as well as key contacts. The package can be downloaded for free at www.townshipofbrock.ca. Print copies are available at the Brock Municipal Office and Durham Regional Headquarters.

To improve the vitality of its downtown area, the Township of Uxbridge established the Downtown Revitalization Steering Committee in mid-2008.

Much progress has been made since this initiative began. With feedback from the community, the committee has created a Vision Statement early this year. An action plan to guide the Downtown Revitalization Steering Committee was also created shortly thereafter.

Sub-committees are now being established to address immediate revitalization initiatives. A Community Improvement Plan will also be created in the coming months. Updates can be found on the Township of Uxbridge website, www.town.uxbridge.on.ca.

Brock, Scugog and Uxbridge are joining forces to promote local tourism at one of Canada's largest annual fairs—Canadian National Exhibition (CNE)—this year. The townships will promote north Durham as a "daycation destination."

Exhibits will feature many arts and culture groups, attractions and events such as York-Durham Heritage Railway, the Leaskdale Manse of Lucy Maud Montgomery and all-seasons fishing at Lake Simcoe. This joint promotion is expected to give local businesses and tourist attractions a strong boost.

New program encourages Durham to savour local foods



Durham Tourism recently became a member of the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance (OCTA), an industry-

driven organization that spearheads the Province of Ontario's effort to develop Ontario into an international culinary tourism destination. OCTA builds the province's capacity for culinary tourism by connecting participants in the culinary tourism supply chain, and leading efforts in research, education and product development. The group is

currently composed of 24 member organizations representing various regions, communities and more than 10,000 businesses across Ontario.

To celebrate and showcase Durham region's unique culinary offerings, Durham Tourism is launching Savour Durham. This new, exciting program gives Durham restaurants opportunities to partner with local

farmers and feature farm fresh products on their menus. A number of restaurants are already on board to support the local economy and showcase the region's fresh bounty.

To find out how your restaurant can be part of Savour Durham, email tourism@durham.ca.