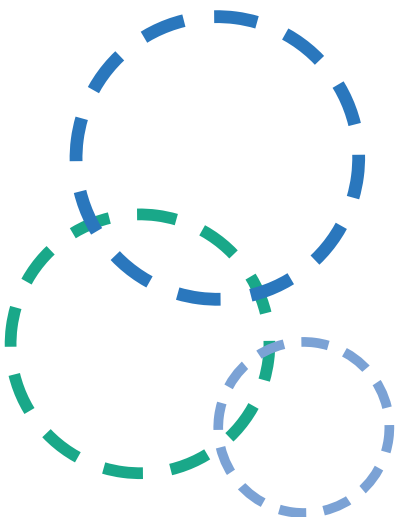
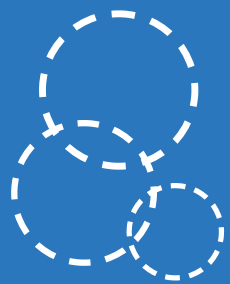


Community Report

2019/2020





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Grand River Agricultural Society has been supporting agriculture and rural life for more than 150 years.

Based first in Elmira - and now Elora - our organization has a proud history of promotion, partnership and facilitation in our community.

While our not-for-profit structure headed by a volunteer board of directors has remained constant, the scope of our work to benefit the communities we serve has evolved with the ages.

For several decades, organizing and presenting the annual fall fair was the cornerstone of our efforts. Today, our mandate to provide opportunities for people to be involved in the life of their community through agricultural and environmental initiatives is delivered in many exciting ways.

Now, more than ever, the Grand River Agricultural Society is empowering dozens of local individuals and organizations each year in their passionate pursuit of endeavours that action environmental concerns and enrich our local agricultural industry.

As a place of business, the Grand River Agricultural Society creates unique experiences fulfilling the dynamic interests of our guests. These award-winning activities and services are delivered through our talented staff within our exceptional facilities.

These facilities are growing to accommodate our expanding offerings, all of which drive our efforts to be a leading destination for unique agricultural, environmental, and entertainment experiences.

Our daily operations fuel our support of agriculture and rural life, and the people and organizations who shape this dynamic community.

We are proud to present this Annual Report, which captures these efforts during the period of April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020.

Paul Walker
President, Grand River Agricultural Society





GRAND RIVER AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Grand River Agricultural Society (GRAS) is a not-for-profit corporation, incorporated under the Agricultural and Horticultural societies Act of Ontario and governed by a volunteer board or directors.

Board of Directors

President: Paul Walker

1st VP: Garth Green

2nd VP: Deborah Whale

Past President: Don Jewitt

Legal Secretary: Robert Davies

Administrator: Dorothy Key

Directors:

Peter Ayranto

Jason Castellan

Skip Mahar

Tony Morris

Diane Squires

Gord Surgeoner

Jean Szkotnicki

Tom Wilson



Our Mission

The Grand River Agricultural Society, through its people, activities and facilities excels in creating unique experiences fulfilling the dynamic interests of our guests.

Our Vision

To be recognized as a leading destination for unique agricultural, environmental and entertainment experiences.

R&D

Researching the needs of an agricultural community and developing programs to meet those needs.

Events

Holding agricultural exhibitions.

Beautification

Encouraging the beautification of the agricultural community.

Support

Support and provide facilities to encourage activities intended to enrich rural life.

Conservation

Promoting the conservation of natural resources.

The GRAS Mandate

To encourage awareness of agriculture and to promote improvements in the quality of life of persons living in an agricultural community by:

Horse Racing

Conducting and promoting horse races at Grand River Raceway.



www.grandriveragsociety.com | info@grandriveragsociety.com

[f @grandriverag](#)

[@grandriverag](#)

[@grandriverraceway](#)



ECONOMIC IMPACT

**\$2
MILLION**

Agriculture

Community

Education

Events

3

Since 2004, the Grand River Agricultural Society has provided funding and Gift-In-Kind support for initiatives totaling \$2,097,887.

2019-2020 GRAS Philanthropic Commitments:

Iris Meck Communications Inc. **\$6,780** • Erin Agricultural Society **\$2,000** • Equine Erin/Horse Day Erin Event **\$2,500** • Fergus Agricultural Society **\$2,000** • OAC Leadership Conference **\$1,000** • 4-H Ontario **\$15,000** • Drayton Mapleton Agricultural Society **\$900** • Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies **\$1,000** • Ontario Equestrian **\$25,000** • Ontario Farmland Trust **\$1,500** • Ontario Soil & Crop Improvement Assoc. **\$1,000** • Huron Soil & Crop Improvement Assoc. **\$2,500** • Ontario Agri-Food Technologies **\$20,000** • Holstein Assoc. of Canada Use of the horse barn and storage area to hold judging competition.

Groves Hospital Foundation **\$84,000** • Community Mini Grants **\$13,147.72** • Centre Wellington Food Bank **\$5,000** • Centre Wellington Chamber of Commerce **\$750** • Everdale Farm **\$1,500** • CW Skatepark Assoc. **\$10,000** • **Petal for Portage** Sponsored event through facility, equipment, and food for riders to raise money for at risk youth

GRAS Margaret Bolander Award **\$250** • GRAS Douglas Campbell Award **\$250** • GRAS Scholarship/Bursaries **\$40,000** • University of Guelph **\$1,000** • University of Guelph – OAC Student Recruitment and Liaison Program **\$52,500** • Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc. **\$5,000** • Rural Ontario Institute **\$7,500** • Equine Guelph – University of Guelph **\$10,000**

Community Days: Hosted event to promote horse racing to the local community • **Pizza Perfect:** Host/sponsor event for 800 grade three students, teachers • **Waterloo & Grand River Dairy Show:** Provided facility, staffing, prizes for event • **Grand Taste Event:** Provided the Annex room rental to the CW Rotary Club • **Mounted Games Across Canada:** Use of infield for 5-8 competitions • **West-Central Junior Dairy Show:** Provided facility, staffing for event • **Grand River Truck & Tractor Pull:** Host/sponsor the event including facility, staffing • **BINGO:** provided room rental for Fergus-Elora Rotary Club.

**\$4.8
MILLION**

Spent on goods
and services

**\$2.5
MILLION**

Capital
improvements

**\$1.5
MILLION**

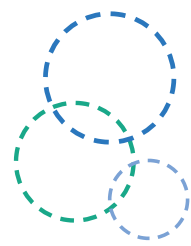
Total staff wages
and benefits

**\$442
THOUSAND**

Agricultural events and
community support



4



DONOR STORIES

The generous support of the Grand River Agricultural Society made the development of three 4-H project resources and an agricultural awareness learning day possible. Grand River Agricultural Society funded the following project resources that were released to 4-H'ers in 2019:

- 1) Introduction to Agricultural Biotechnology - This project introduces youth to some of the intricacies of modern agricultural biotechnology in a fun, hands-on environment while also discussing the social factors affecting the acceptance of biotechnology.
- 2) Farm to Table Connections - The possibilities are endless in this project! Youth discover how innovative events, products and services fit within the local food system and how they can be a part of creating your own small business.
- 3) Let's Get Growing – Whether it's a traditional garden with rows of produce or a hanging basket of salad greens, successfully growing your own fresh produce is simply a matter of evaluating your site and choosing plants that will thrive in those conditions.

4-H project resources are utilized by 4-H clubs and provide curriculum for 4-H youth to build skills and grow in their knowledge base. 4-H Ontario is grateful for the support provided by Grand River Agricultural Society to make these initiatives possible.



**\$15,000
GRANT**

**Katherine Smart; Manager, Corporate Giving & Philanthropy
4-H Ontario**



**ONTARIO
AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE**

The Liaison Program is crucial to sustaining strong enrollment in food and agriculture programs at the Ontario Agricultural College of the University of Guelph.

There are four jobs for every one of our graduates entering Ontario's food and agriculture industry. This stat showcases job prospects for our graduates, but is also a reminder that we must continue to grow enrollment in our academic programs to meet industry demand.

The Liaison Program also supports improving the skills of our students. Each year, we hire a team of current students as Liaison Assistants who develop and deliver our recruitment programming. Student staff create lesson plans, facilitate in-class workshops, and lead secondary students through experiences on-campus. The Liaison program nurtures full-circle engagement from future students to current students, which facilitates learning and growth for their future careers.

The success of the Liaison Program is made possible by industry and alumni support, especially by leadership donors like the Grand River Agricultural Society. The support we receive from GRAS and other donors is fundamental to our ability to continue to attract students to our undergraduate and diploma programs, and employ student staff to participate in recruitment efforts and promotion of careers in food, agriculture and environmental studies.

**- Carleigh Johnston - OAC Liaison Manager
Ontario Agricultural College, University of Guelph**

With support of GRAS,
In fall 2019 and winter
2020 semesters, OAC
Liaison Program achieved;

2,743 — **19** — **29** — **6**

Individuals Reached On Campus Engagements Off Campus Engagements Webinars

Pedal for Portage

Established in 1985 as Canada's first adolescent substance abuse residential rehabilitation program, Portage Ontario relies on community support to serve vulnerable, at-risk youth suffering from substance dependencies.

It is with the support of, and through the generosity of our community partners, such as the Grand River Agricultural Society, that Portage has been able to help over 4,000 youth rediscover the joys of a drug free life.

We are indebted to the Grand River Agricultural Society's generous support of our annual Pedal for Portage event over the years without which it would not have enjoyed the success it does, thus helping our programs remain free of cost to at-risk youth.

We consider the GRAS as a partner in helping youth overcome their addiction, reintegrate into society, pursue careers and be contributing members in the community.

**- Daniela Rodrigo; Associate Director, Development
Portage Ontario**



ACCESS
TO OUR
FACILITY

\$250,000
DONATION



GRAS is Top Ten at Groves

There is an age old saying that it “takes a village” and the team at the Groves Hospital Foundation knew it would certainly take that, and more, to meet their \$20 million fundraising goal to bring the dream of a new hospital to life.

After many years of planning, and background work the current campaign was launched in 2014. GRAS was able to join as early adopters pledging a \$250,000 donation in May of 2017. The donation was the largest that year and remains on of the top ten donations to the now completed campaign.

“We are so appreciative of the commitment GRAS made to the New Groves Hospital 2020,” shares Lori Arsenault, Executive Director of Groves Hospital Foundation. “As a leader in the agriculture sector, the GRAS donation was one of the first from that community,” she adds, “and sharing news of the donation added credibility to the project, while also inspiring and motivating others to contribute.”

The GRAS donation sponsored the naming of the Healing Garden, a therapeutic landscape designed to reduce stress, promote a sense of well-being and hopefulness. The space will specifically aimed to promote a sense of serenity and encourage social interaction at the hospital campus for patients and staff alike. Overlooked by patient rooms, Ambulatory Care Treatment Areas and boardrooms, used for education and training, the garden is there for all to enjoy from both inside and out.

The Foundation proudly announced in June of 2020 that the doors to the new hospital would be opened on August 9th. Shortly after this time there were able to share that they had met their goal of \$20 million, a huge feat for the team and the community at large.

The New Groves Hospital. Caring for Today. Growing for Tomorrow.

**- Lori Arsenault; Executive Director
Groves Memorial Community Hospital Foundation**



Horse Racing at The Grand River Raceway

A total of 490 races were conducted this year, eight more than last year. The number of horses starting per race was consistent with 2018 at 7.9. On-track wagering on GRR was \$735,495, or 7% of the total, a decrease of 19% from last year. Wagering in the US on GRR was \$6,117,320, an increase of 25% over last year, and representing 59% of the total pool.

The leading driver for the meet was Robert Shepherd, who recorded 38 driving wins from 250 starts. The Flamborough, ON resident recently surpassed 3,600 career wins and \$25 million in purse earnings, record his sixth straight \$1 million season and his 13th consecutive season with at least 100 wins. Meet leading trainer was Jodie Cullen, who recorded 24 wins and trained horses to purse earnings of \$127,759. Nearly half of her 95 starters finished in the top three, and more than one in four found the winners circle.

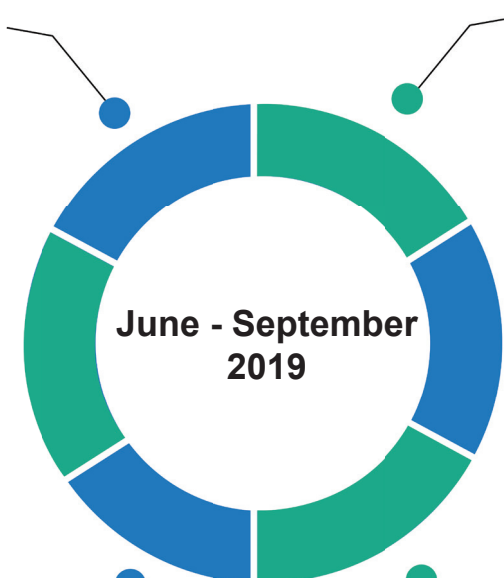
\$10,382,589

Wagered from all sources on horse racing at GRR

\$216,304

Average wagered from all sources per race

48
RACE
DATES



\$101,997

Average purses paid per card

\$3,399,670

Wagered on-track on all horse racing

\$4,895,857

Total purses paid



The \$239,000 Battle of Waterloo was won by Sports Obsession, driver Jody Jamieson, and trainer Carl Jamieson. The Sportswriter colt is owned by Carl and George Harrison from Walton, England. The all source wager of \$488,696 was a record for Industry Day at GRR.





At **The GrandWay**, we pride ourselves on providing entertainment and creating experiences for all. With various attractions ranging from horse racing to gaming, and event spaces perfect for hosting weddings, parties, and corporate functions, we aim to combine elegance and community in all that we do.

Fiscal year 2019-2020 was the first year of the new Board approved Strategic Plan and in line with the key priorities, diversifying the revenue base and, realizing the potential of our physical assets, the build of The GrandWay Event Centre commenced.

Wasylo Architect completed all design for the renovation and expansion of the original Lighthouse Restaurant and Ship In Barn, and site plan approval by Centre Wellington was received in September 2020. Paulsan Construction were awarded the project and activities began in late October. The construction contract represents an invest of \$5,505,668 plus HST.

Projected completion was scheduled for June of 2020 and is now revised to fall 2020 due to the outbreak of Covid-19.

www.grandway.com

[@grandwayevents](https://www.facebook.com/grandwayevents)

[@Thegrandwayeventscentre](https://www.instagram.com/Thegrandwayeventscentre)

\$6
MILLION
Total Investment

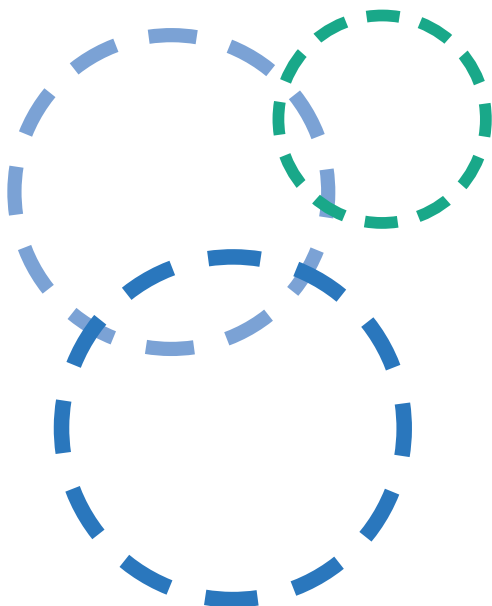
**NEW
SPACES**

300 Person Banquet Hall
Additional Event Room
Corporate Boardroom
Simulcast & Lounge

LOCAL
EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES

**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**





Grand River Agricultural Society

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