

# VACs vs. Committees

**DIFFERENT STRUCTURE. SAME COMMITMENT. STRONGER COMMUNITY.**

The Town of Kearney is transitioning from formal Committees of Council to a more flexible, inclusive and community-driven model:

**Volunteer Advisory Councils (VACs)**



## COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

**VS.**

## VOLUNTEER ADVISORY COUNCILS

Formal committees established by Council under municipal procedural bylaws.

Advisory groups of volunteers who provide ideas, feedback and recommendations to the Town.

Operate under Council's authority with formal governance and procedural requirements.

Operates in collaboration with the Community Engagement & Recreation Coordinator, who reports to Council.

Members are formally appointed by Council for a set term.

Open and inclusive participation based on interests, skills, knowledge and availability.

Scheduled meetings with quorum, agendas, minutes, motions, and voting requirements.

No quorum or voting required. Focuses on collaboration and community-minded solutions. Meetings are adaptable to members' time and priorities as needed.

Focused on governance, oversight and Council approval.

Focused on ideas, event planning, program coordination and community engagement.

Misplaced financial liability on appointed Committee members.

Financial liability remains with staff and Council.

Formal minutes and resolutions presented to Council.

Coordinator presents quarterly reports to Council on VAC activities, outcomes and community input.

Formal motions or bylaws required to make necessary changes or decisions.

Changes and decisions are made based on evolving community needs and opportunities.

Support Council decision-making through structured governance.

Empowers community involvement and strengthens connections between residents, staff and Council.

*Why the Change?*



More Inclusive  
Participation



Timely Decisions  
and Community  
Action



Stronger  
Community  
Connections



Aligned  
Community and  
Municipal Goals



FRIDAY JULY 31 - SUNDAY AUGUST 2

Main Street, Kearney • Family Fun • Free Admission



Regatta

2026

50+ VENDORS • FOOD • BEVERAGE GARDEN • KIDZ ZONE • RAFFLES • GAMES • PADDLE RACES

CARDBOARD BOAT RACES • PENNY SALE • FIREWORKS • & MORE!

|                |                                                                                                                                                                                    |              |                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SAT & SUN      | Regatta Buffet Breakfast<br>presented by the Grumpy Vet<br>9:00AM - 11:00AM<br>Kearney Legion, 58 Park Road                                                                        | SAT & SUN    | Seniors Room Penny Sale<br>Sat Aug 1 • 10:00AM - 3:00PM<br>Sun Aug 2 • 10:00AM - 1:00PM<br>Kearney Community Centre,<br>8 Main Street              |
| SAT & SUN      | Vendor Market with 50+ Vendors<br>Sat Aug 1 • 9:30AM - 5:30PM<br>Sun Aug 2 • 9:30AM - Dusk<br>Main Street                                                                          | SAT & SUN    | Firefighters' Open House & BBQ<br>10:00AM - 3:00PM<br>Kearney Fire Hall, 111 Main Street                                                           |
| SAT & SUN      | Face Painting<br>sponsored by Krystal Cosstick & Ashley Chaban, Realtors®<br>11:00AM - 3:00PM<br>Main Street                                                                       | SAT & SUN    | Kidz Zone<br>sponsored by Hunt's Contracting<br>11:00AM - 4:00PM<br>Corner of Rain Lake Road & Main Street                                         |
| Fri July<br>31 | Magic of Christophe<br>6:30PM<br>Kearney Community Centre,<br>8 Main Street                                                                                                        | Sat Aug<br>1 | Regatta Parade<br>sponsored by Royal Canadian Legion<br>Kearney Branch 276<br>Registration at 9:00AM • Parade at 9:30AM<br>Lions Park, Main Street |
| Sat Aug<br>1   | Long Distance Canoe, Kayak and Standup Paddle Board Races<br>Registration at 9:30AM • Races at 10:00AM<br>Sand Lake to Mirror Bay Town Dock<br>Follow Signs to Dinsmore Beach Road | Sat Aug<br>1 | Kids' Land Sports<br>10:00AM<br>Park Road, Ball Diamond                                                                                            |
| Sat Aug<br>1   | Vintage & Classic Boat Show<br>presented by Scott Waites<br>11:00AM<br>Mirror Bay, Main Street                                                                                     | Sat Aug<br>1 | Singles Cornhole Tournament<br>Registration at 10:00AM • Starts at 11:00AM<br>\$10 per person<br>Kearney Legion, 58 Park Road                      |
| Sat Aug<br>1   | Hot Dog Eating Contests<br>Kids at 11:30AM<br>Adults at 12:30PM<br>Tent at Kidz Zone                                                                                               | Sat Aug<br>1 | Kids' Water Sports<br>12:45PM<br>McManus Beach, Lakeview Ave                                                                                       |
| Sat Aug<br>1   | Watermelon Eating Contests<br>Kids at 2:00PM<br>Adults at 3:00PM<br>Tent at Kidz Zone                                                                                              | Sat Aug<br>1 | Birds of Prey<br>4:00PM<br>Mirror Bay, Main Street                                                                                                 |
| Sat Aug<br>1   | Hypnotist Show<br>presented by Royal Canadian Legion<br>Kearney Branch 276<br>7:00PM • Tickets \$15<br>Kearney Community Centre                                                    | Sun Aug<br>2 | Watersport Events & Races<br>Registration at 12:30PM<br>Races at 1:30PM<br>Mirror Bay Town Dock, Main Street                                       |
| Sun Aug<br>2   | Cardboard Boat Races<br>Registration at 3:00PM<br>Races at 4:00PM<br>Behind Kearney Fire Hall                                                                                      | Sun Aug<br>2 | Pie Eating Contests<br>Kids at 12:00PM<br>Adults at 1:00PM<br>Tent at Kidz Zone                                                                    |
| Sun Aug<br>2   | All-You-Can-Eat Spaghetti Dinner<br>presented by the Grumpy Vet<br>4:00PM - 6:00PM<br>Kearney Legion, 58 Park Road                                                                 | Sun Aug<br>2 | Tina Turley & the New Boots<br>7:00PM<br>Mirror Bay, Main Street                                                                                   |

Sunday, August 2 • FIREWORKS AT DUSK

Mirror Bay, Main Street



Shuttle Bus routes to Sand Lake and Emsdale available.  
Pickup begins at 7:00PM  
\$10 round-trip • Kids under 13 ride free  
Contact Tomara at 705-380-7002 to register



The Biggest Little Partners.



Town of  
Kearney



Kearney & Area Public Library



Lions Club



Kearney Seniors' Club



St. Patrick's Parish





## Welcome to our June 2026 Newsletter

Included in this issue:

- Ontario's Native Bee Pollinators
- Report on the June 13<sup>th</sup> Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary Presentation
- Water Trivia Event – July 11<sup>th</sup> at the KCC

### Ontario's Native Bee Pollinators

A pollinator is an insect or animal that moves pollen from the male anther of a flower to the female stigma of a flower. Pollinators are a “keystone species”, meaning they are a necessary component of sustaining life on earth for all species. 80% of flowering plants depend on insects for adequate pollination, so pollinator’s health and well being are important for the health of any ecosystem. We have about 400 native insect pollinators including bees, wasps, flies, butterflies, moths and beetles. While regular honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) get most of the media attention, they are actually a domesticated non-native species imported from Europe centuries ago. Today they are raised almost like livestock. Many farmers have pollination contracts with commercial beekeepers. They pay a rental fee per honey bee hive to have bees placed in their fields and orchards for the duration of their crop’s blooming period. The hives are trucked around the country to pollinate specific agricultural crops. Many beekeepers make more money from pollination contracts than from the honey and related products the bees produce.

To start lets look at a couple of examples of our native bees. Most people have seen **Bumble Bees** (genus *Bombus*) those large, furry, yellow and black bees as pictured on the right. They are the only native bees that like the Honey Bee are social insects, live in colonies with a queen and could have 50-500 plus workers. Unlike honey bees, a bumble bee colony dies in the fall. It starts with a single



queen when she emerges from hibernation in the spring. She searches for an abandoned underground tunnel such as a chipmunk, mouse or vole burrow, builds a nest, gathers pollen & nectar and then begins laying eggs that will develop into worker bees. Initially the queen must continue to forage for food and also take care of the nest and the developing worker bee larvae. As the pool of worker bees develop, the smaller workers will take care of the nest and larvae. Most of the larger ones become foragers (for pollen or nectar) and a few act as guards to protect the hive. They do store a small amount of nectar for their own use. In the fall the queen lays eggs that will produce multiple queens who will leave their home nest to mate and then find a new place to hibernate for the winter to repeat the process the following spring.

Bumble bees are very good pollinators and are especially effective with plants that have long tubular flowers that may be inaccessible to honey bees or similar pollinators. They are also capable of thermoregulation or shivering so they can be active earlier in the spring or in cooler wetter weather. Most bumble bees can use buzz pollination (or sonication) to shake pollen out of a plant's anthers. The technique which is essential for some flowers, involves the bee rapidly vibrating their flight muscles while gripping the flower. Several species of bumble bees including the Common Eastern Bumble Bee are widely used by commercial greenhouses to pollinate plants such as tomatoes and cucumbers. Unlike honey bees, bumble bees are quite content to work inside buildings like greenhouses. Female bumble bees do have stingers but are not aggressive as long as you are not attacking them or their hive.

**Solitary Bees** make up about 80% of Ontario's native bee species. Solitary bees do not live in hives, produce honey for our use, or have a queen with hundreds of worker bees. Because they do not have a hive or collective home to defend they are exceptionally gentle and rarely sting. About 70% are ground nesting bees that either dig burrows themselves in well drained porous soil or utilize existing tunnels or burrows made by rodents or other small creatures. A few examples are Mining Bees (*Andrena*), Sweat Bees (*Halictidae*) and Squash Bees (*Peponapis pruinosa*). I was surprised to learn that what I had thought was a series of small ant hills in a sandy





area near our garage was actually the ground nests of several dozen pollinators. Since a particular nest was only visited every five - ten minutes it required patience and a watchful eye to catch the owner arriving or leaving. While each ground nesting solitary bee has their own nest some species will tolerate a neighbours tunnel entrance six – ten inches away as in the photo above. Apparently some will often even share a common entrance that branches out into tunnels that go to separate underground areas for each bee where they maintain their own nesting chambers. This tolerance to close neighbours seems to involve “ family” (daughters of a single queen). Most of these ground nesting bees do not linger at the entrance to their nest (entering or leaving) . For an observer it makes it difficult to identify them. I managed to get a partial picture (above) of this nest owner (possibly a sweat bee) clearing the blocked entrance hole to its nest. Since the nest is in porous soil, dampness & mould can be a problem. Some bees waterproof their tunnels and chambers, others just enclose each egg chamber in a cellophane like bag. The type of waterproofing material is species dependent but is created by the bees themselves.



The **Mason Bee (Osmia)** is another type of Solitary Bee that utilizes existing cavities as nest sites. They use burrows or tunnels in wood made by beetles and other insects or hollow dead plant stems. They begin pollinating early flowers and blooming fruit trees once temperatures are over 48 F . They are active from April through June and are about 2/3 the size of honey bees. The males hatch first with the females following a few days later as the temperature warms up further. Because it is early in the season, it is critical that the females immediately find suitable flower blossoms to build up their strength for all the work ahead. Unlike Honey Bees that can forage over a large area, Mason Bees need to find their nesting sites within 100m of the blooming plants that are their food source. The tunnel like cavity in plant stems or preferred wood should be about 0.8 cm in diameter extending 12-15 cm. The female will collect some pollen and nectar from nearby blossoms, go to the far end of the nesting cavity where she will deposit the first loaf of pollen and some nectar and then lay an egg on it. She then seals the chamber shut with a wall of mud. She will continue the process of creating individual egg chambers

each sealed with a wall of mud all the way back to the entrance. To protect the future population of egg laying females, the initial series of eggs laid at the back of the cavity will only produce future female queens. The eggs in the chambers near the entrance will produce male drones. The bee larvae are an attractive food for birds & insects. Parasitic wasps will try to lay their eggs in any accessible egg chambers so that their larvae can feed on the bee larvae. During the summer and fall, the bee eggs hatch, the larvae feed on the pollen and nectar food left in the chamber, then create a cocoon and go through the pupal stages of growth before overwintering as adults inside their cocoon. The following spring the adult leaves the cocoon to repeat its life cycle.

### **Why Our Native Bees Are Threatened**

Native pollinators are facing rapid declines. Habitat loss, pesticide use and climate change are reducing their populations. Some native bees are not generalists and depend on a small number of plants for nectar and pollen. They and the plants they pollinate are codependent. In some areas competition from commercial honey bee hives for pollen and nectar have a significant impact on the native bee population. Solitary bees are especially vulnerable because they often are active only for a couple of months and must create and prepare their next generation based on the pollen & nectar resources available during that period. It is easy to see how the arrival of a large number of contract pollinator honey bees who wouldn't necessarily just work on the agricultural crops could impact the local native bee population.

### **How You Can Help**

- Plant a garden that blooms with different flowers from April until October. Use native flowers if you can. Be aware that commercial garden center flowers may have absorbed pesticide residues from soils in the greenhouses which will contaminate their pollen & nectar. Try to use locally grown plants.

#### **Here is a list of Bee Friendly Plants courtesy of the David Suzuki Foundation**

Early season – Blueberry, Cotoneaster, Crabapple, Cranberry, Crocus, Foxglove  
Heliotrope, Hazelnut, Heather, Primrose

Mid season – Blackberry, Cat mint, Catnip, Chives, Dahlia, Hyssop, Lavender,  
Raspberry, Sunflower, Yarrow, Willow

Late season – Aster, Beggars Tricks, Borage, Coneflower, Cornflower, Cosmos,  
Goldenrod, Pumpkin, Sedum, Squash

- Provide natural nesting sites – leave some areas of bare sandy ground undisturbed and leave some natural plant stem and wood litter undisturbed in the some areas in the fall. Compost and brush piles can be natural over wintering sites.
- Try to avoid all synthetic chemical pesticides and be especially skeptical of any that are advertised as “natural”, “organic” etc. Encourage your neighbours to also make their property pesticide free so you can have larger refuge areas.
- Join Community Science projects like Bumble Bee Watch to help scientists.



## A Warning About Commercial “Bee Hotels”

Unfortunately in a well-intentioned rush to protect some native pollinators commercial interests have flooded the market with some pre-fab “bee hotels” as in the picture to the right that have design flaws built in. Here are some things to avoid:

- large quantity of nesting tubes in one box is a hotspot to attract pathogens and parasitic mites that can destroy the total bee population in the box. In nature cavity nesting bees lay eggs in highly dispersed and isolated locations which they don't reuse.
- The high density concentration of bee larvae attract predators – both birds and animals like skunks and racoons. If the tubes are just 2-3 inches long and the back ends of the tubes are open and not covered - both parasitic wasps and birds can easily penetrate the egg chambers.
- If the tubes cannot be removed and thoroughly cleaned or replaced then the “hotel” should be retired and not re-used again.
- the structure that holds the tubes does not shed water resulting in the tubes and their contents getting wet which encourages mould growth
- General consensus is that if you want to provide cavity nesting sites you should buy or make good ones then also manage them. Manage means harvesting and cleaning the cocoons in the fall, cleaning and re-assembling the nesting box, then storing the dry cocoons over the winter. In the spring when the weather and flowers are ready, place the cocoons in a secure box outside so bees can return to nature .



## National Pollinator Week in Canada just happened to be June 22-28 this year

I've retired my store bought “bee hotel” and decided to make some better ones using a recommended design. I'll test it to see if the bees approve the new & improved design. If so - I will include the plans in a future newsletter along with usage data.

Hope you enjoyed this article – the research was fun but I just scratched the surface !

### Here are just a few of the sites that I searched for info:

Hbrc.ca PollinatorPartnership.ca Monroe.cce.cornell.edu Bees of Toronto  
Xerces.org wildlifeconservation.ca OntarioNature.org iNaturalist.org

## **Report on Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary Presentation June 13 at the KCC**

About 40 people attended the presentation on Saturday morning from 9:30-11:00

The presentation covered information on the Sanctuary itself, what typically happens to a rescued animal from its rescue & possible rehab until it is eventually released back into the wild. They also talked about how the public can safely co-exist with wildlife.

AVWS received \$170 in cash donations from attendees and enough bags of clean linens & towels etc to fill the box of a pickup truck plus a large box of sterile medical supplies. The Whelan family won the draw prize for the Group Tour to Aspen Valley

Evelyn & Lauren Horwood won an AVWS tuque for the highest score in the Scat 'n' Tracks Quiz . Many thanks to the AVWS staff who made the trip up to Kearney to talk to us about their Sanctuary and the great work they do and to everyone who came out in support and donated linens & towels.

# Water Trivia Event

Sponsored by

KWEF - Kearney Watershed Environmental  
Foundation

**Sat. July 11,<sup>th</sup> & August 15,<sup>th</sup> 10:30am, @ Kearney Town  
Office**

Teams of 1-5, (points given for age and waterfront diversity)



Great Prizes

Family Friendly



June 25, 2026

**Re: Request for Provincial Action on the Accuracy of Municipal Voters Lists**

Please be advised that at its regular County Council meeting held Wednesday, June 24, 2026, the Council of the County of Peterborough passed the following Resolution:

**Resolution No. 129-2026**

Moved by Councillor Carolyn Amyotte

Seconded by Councillor Carol Armstrong

**Whereas** the Province of Ontario shifted responsibility of the municipal election voters list from MPAC to Elections Ontario by amending the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, through the Helping Tenants and Small Businesses Act, 2020, effective after the 2022 municipal election; and

**Whereas** many of the eight lower-tier Township elector lists presented by Elections Ontario have discrepancies in voter counts from the 2022 municipal election, specifically in the number of eligible non-resident property owners which are significantly lower than the 2022 numbers; and

**Whereas** Elections Ontario has acknowledged the discrepancies and is planning to address them;

**Now therefore be it resolved that** the Corporation of the County of Peterborough urges the Province of Ontario to immediately encourage prioritization of the review of data specifically related to non-resident property owners to ensure voter lists are as accurate as possible prior to August 14, 2026; and

**That** this resolution be forwarded to the Premier, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the local MPPs, AMO, ROMA, AMCTO, EOWC, FOCA, all Ontario municipalities and the eight lower-tier Township Clerks for support.

Sincerely,



Kari Stevenson

Director of Legislative Services/Clerk