



Naturally Spirited

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Grant Funding Allows Rural Community Cooperative Digital Service Squad to Continue to Help Small Businesses Adopt Online Technologies

June 7, 2022: Killaloe, ON. The municipality of Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards, in partnership with the municipalities of Madawaska Valley, Bonnechere Valley, Brudenell Lyndoch and Raglan and North Algona Wilberforce have announced that they have received a \$51,153.90 grant from the Digital Main Street program for a two-year Digital Service Squad program, which provides small business owners with the tools and support needed to digitally transform their businesses.

We are extremely grateful and excited for this opportunity to host a Digital Service Squad for 2022/2023! This funding will allow us and our partner municipalities to help many local businesses in our area achieve their online goals while providing digital training and support for a host of new and exciting opportunities! – Mayor Janice Tiedje

Digital Service Squads (DSS) are the cornerstone of Digital Main Street (DMS), with trained specialists who meet with brick-and-mortar small businesses, at no cost, to help them complete an online assessment and to introduce them to online training modules designed to build their digital knowledge and skills. This one-on-one DSS assistance includes support for basic website setup, Google Business Profiles, 360° photos, social media presence, and much more. Squad members are also trained to help qualified small businesses with the development of their Digital Transformation Plan and then with the application process for a \$2,500 Digital Transformation Grant.

“Small businesses are innovative and entrepreneurial, but often lack the resources to respond to change, be resilient, yet flexible,” said Kay Matthews, Executive Director, OBIAA. “OBIAA is delighted to work once again

alongside the Digital Main Street team and is thrilled to support the Rural Community Cooperative's squad. The Digital Main Street program's resources, grants, training, and Digital Service Squad assistance provide the means for more small businesses in communities across Renfrew County to adopt innovative ways, create new revenue streams, expand their markets, and face the future with optimism and confidence."

Beginning on August 1, 2022, the Digital Service Squad member will start working towards helping local business owners for a term of approximately 10.5 months in the hopes of serving at least 240 businesses in the catchment area. Starting in Madawaska Valley, time allotted to each municipality will be based on the number of businesses in the area. The DSS member will work down Highway 60 toward Eganville until November 2023 when the project is scheduled to be completed.

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ABOUT THE RURAL COMMUNITY COOPERATIVE

The Rural Community Cooperative is a partnership between six rural municipalities in Renfrew County. The group focuses on various community and economic development projects, sharing costs and resources. Partnering municipalities include the municipalities of Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards, Madawaska Valley, Bonnechere Valley, Brudenell Lyndoch, Raglan and North Algona Wilberforce and White-Water Region.

ABOUT OBIAA

OBIAA is the network that represents unique and vibrant BIAs across Ontario. The Association supports and advocates on behalf of its members through the building and nurturing of strong relationships and partnerships. OBIAA is a leader in the development and sharing of information, tools, resources and best practices, and is the ONE voice on common issues.

ABOUT Digital Main Street

Digital Main Street is a program that helps main street businesses achieve digital transformation. The program is built around an online learning platform, structured training programs, and our Digital Service Squad, a team of street-level team members who help main street businesses grow and manage their operations through technology.

Digital Main Street was created by the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas (TABIA) with direct support from the City of Toronto. DMS is also supported by a group of strategic business partners, including Google, Mastercard, Shopify, Microsoft, Facebook, Intuit QuickBooks, Square, and Lightspeed. The program is delivered Pan Canada in support of small business thanks to the support of all three levels of government. www.digitalmainstreet.ca

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