



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Leeds and the Thousand Islands Ignites Inspiration with Tourism Summit

November 30, 2017, Lansdowne, ON – The Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands (TLTI) and members of its Economic Development Committee extend gratitude to the many residents, tourism providers and business owners who participated in the Ignite Inspiration Tourism Summit on Friday November 24, 2017. It was a successful day filled with engaging businesses, making connections and sourcing local.

The day unfolded with representation from both sides of the border. Welcoming messages from MP Gord Brown and Assemblywoman Addie Jenne of New York State, stressed the importance of partnership packaging and expanding our tourism reach. Economic Development Committee Chair and MC for the day, George Horton, announced his excitement, "We are thrilled to see so many interested in tourism, including many dignitaries from surrounding areas." Mr. Horton deserves his own accolades, as the evening before he won the Chamber of Commerce 'Keeper of the Islands' award.

The morning Keynote speaker, Carol Greenwood from the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario, shared how her organization advocates on behalf of smaller tourism-related businesses with Government partners. She shared details from the recent provincial-wide conference and explained how individual tourism providers can join in on 2018 initiatives as indicated at tiaontario.ca Membership Page.

A panel of local business owners shared their success stories and the importance of engaging the surrounding community, enhancing the customer experience from start to finish, exploiting social media, and appreciating all that we have to offer right in our backyard. The panel was facilitated by Kathrine Christensen of Thousand Islands Accommodation Partners; "a titan in the tourism industry," as introduced by Mr. Horton.

And connections were exactly what the 'Network Collaboration' lunch was all about. During this time, participants were both filling their bellies with a deliciously prepared meal from Bill Thake Memorial Economic Development Leadership winner Wendy Banks of Wendy's Country Market and connecting with each other. There was also an opportunity for participants to win 30 minutes with a local success story to learn from their experiences and make new partnerships.

The afternoon session included industry experts skilled in promoting and expanding what tourism providers can offer, not only in TLTI but across the province and US border. Website links to [The Great Waterway](#); the [Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Sport](#); and the [Thousand Islands International Tourism Council](#) are valuable resources and outlets to share services and products.

The end of the day exploded with flair! The afternoon Keynote speaker, Guy LaFlamme from Ottawa 2017, presented 17 Lessons Learned from planning and executing the Canada 150 events in the nation's capital. He wowed the audience with 'dreaming big' and 'leaving a legacy'. Mr. LaFlamme has been influential in the tourism industry for many years and recently won a 'Lifetime Achievement Award' from TIAO and the prestigious 'Order of Ottawa' invested by Ottawa Mayor, Jim Watson.

Mayor Joe Baptista closed the Summit by expressing how teamwork and collaboration can produce innovation that has never happened before. The perfect example being the dedicated work of the Tourism Summit Committee, which included George Horton, EDC Chair; Kim Goodman, Recreation Coordinator; Amy Webb, Community/Business Outreach Assistant; Terry Childs; Vicki Leakey, Councillor; and Kathrine Christensen, TIAP.



Township of
Leeds and the
Thousand Islands



Pictured: Joe Baptista, Mayor; George Horton, EDC Chair; Kim Goodman, Recreation Coordinator; Amy Webb, Community/Business Outreach Assistant; Kathrine Christensen; and Guy LaFlamme. Photo credit: Catherine Orth.

This Summit was a culmination of the community's input and feedback. Staff want to bring you more events like this! If there is a key economic driver that you would like to profile, please share your ideas with us at amy@townshipleeds.on.ca.

Videos of the day will be posted to our website and available to share via social media shortly.

For more information, contact:

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