

FREE

JANUARY 2010

the **h**umm

ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT & IDEAS



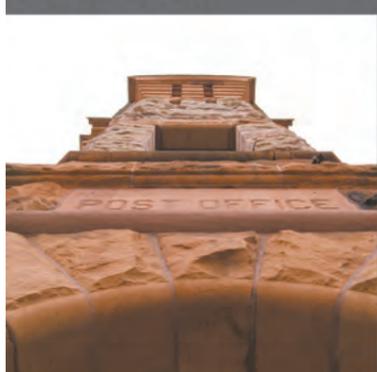
January's Events 20 & 21



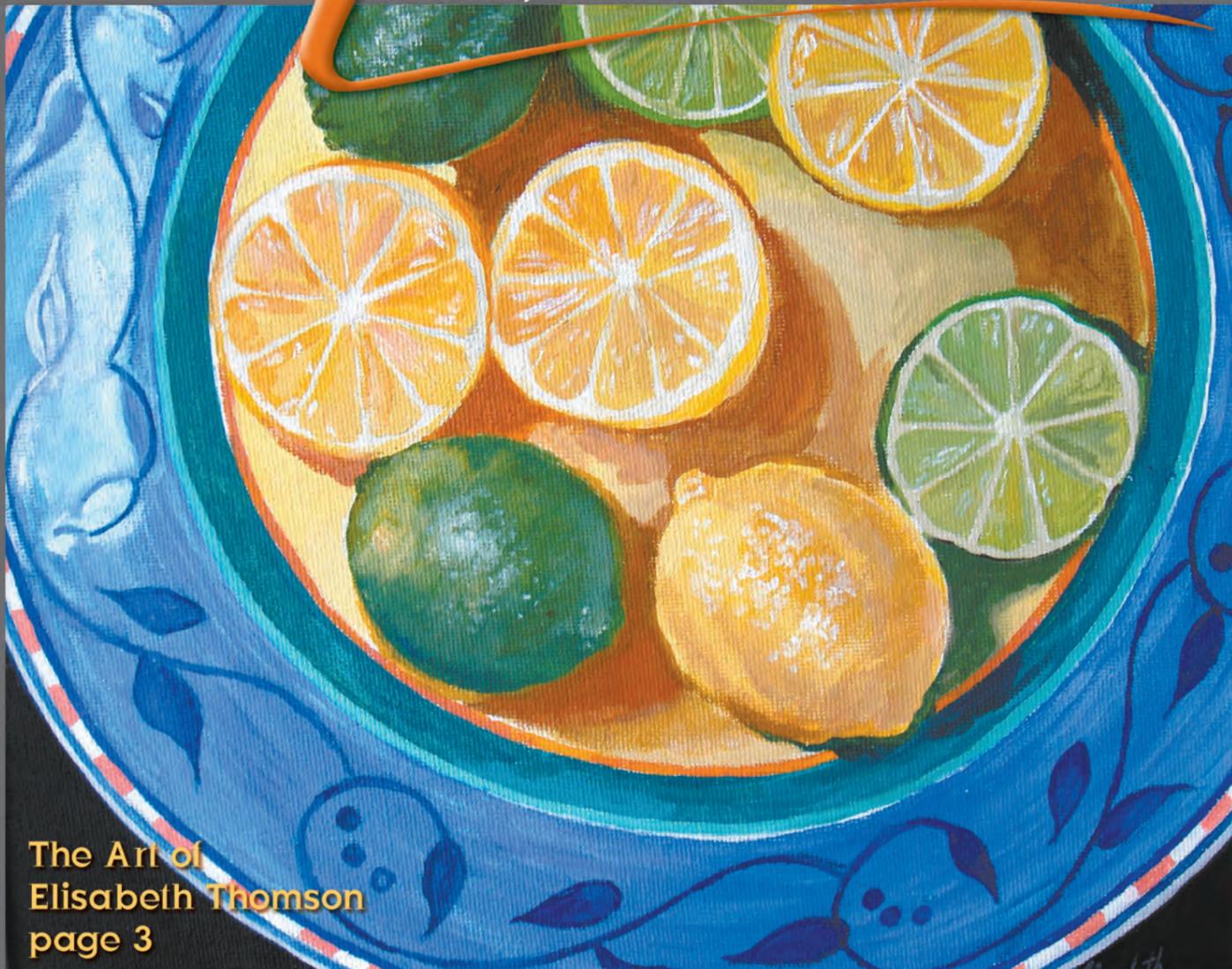
Into the Woods with Orion 13



Sunday Sessions 19



Get Kist in Arnprior 22



The Art of Elisabeth Thomson page 3



Happy 2010! Thanks for making our year a success.
May we wish you every success in the coming year.
from Everyone at Valley Design Co.



ARTBEAT

by Bill Buttle



“Y’know, if I resolve to practice early every day, you’ll never have to wake up to an alarm clock again!!”

Does Your Organization Need Volunteers?

In the February 2010 issue of *theHumm* we plan to run our fourth annual “Get Involved, Get Connected” resource for organizations seeking volunteers (and volunteers seeking local organizations). If you are running a community organization or service club, festival, cultural event, museum, conservation area, arts or activities organization within *theHumm*’s catchment area, we’d like to hear from you! Send us 80 words (maximum) describing what your group does, what type of volunteer opportunities you offer, and how people can contact you, and we’ll run them (free of charge) in our February issue.

Not sure exactly what we’re looking for? Here’s what the Rotary Club sent in:

The Rotary Club of Carleton Place & Mississippi Mills actively supports local community activities, such as the Alwood Treatment Centre, TYPS in Almonte and the Carleton Place Canoe Club. It also supports international programs such as PolioPlus and ShelterBox Canada. The club needs volunteer members to help raise funds for these projects; people who enjoy working in the community, sharing in friendship, and supporting the motto of Rotary — “Service Above Self”.

Please call 253-2602 or visit <www.rotarycpmm.ca>.

Due to space limitations, we can only offer 80 words per organization, and can only include groups that serve our catchment area (Lanark County and parts of Renfrew County). We are not able to edit down longer entries or brochures, so please send the text as you wish it to appear. Please email all information or queries to <editor@thehummm.com>. All information must be received by January 22 for inclusion in the February issue.



Who’s Reading theHummm

(above) In December of 2008 **Peter Brown** wrote: “In keeping with your tradition of collecting pictures of people reading theHummm in faraway locations, here’s one of Roger Plant and myself at The Clayoquot Community Theatre in Tofino, BC, just before a concert we did during the first week in November. The photo was taken by Lesley Sneddon.”

For a more recent shot of Peter and Roger, check out the article on page 19 about the new Sunday Sessions at Ballygiblin’s!

(below) In June of 2008 **Ellen Day** wrote: “Hi! My name is Ellen Day and my Dad (Steve Day) went skiing on Mount Ste. Anne in Québec City in the first week of April. Mount Ste. Anne is the highest vertical point east of the Canadian Rockies. I have attached the photo that my dad took of me reading theHummm in the gondola. Go Sens Go!”



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theHummm is a monthly arts, entertainment and ideas newspaper delivered free to businesses and visitor attractions in Almonte, Perth, Carleton Place, Westport, Pakenham, Carp, Arnprior, Lanark, Smiths Falls, Burnstown, White Lake, Balderson, and Ottawa. Our mandate is to connect and promote people and events in the small towns and rural communities of the Ottawa Valley — where the arts flourish and entertaining characters run amok!

Submissions

may be submitted by email or on disk.

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Thanks this month to:

Michael Bhardwaj from CBC Radio’s *In Town and Out* for inviting Kris to share some of her favourite “Christmas in the Valley” events and traditions on a Saturday morning in December. And to all the good folks who make time during the busy month of December to create those wonderful events!

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Happy New Year from the Riendeaus!

Best wishes to the Humm community for a happy and healthy 2010 from Rob, Kris, Cori and D’Arcy Riendeau. Hope it’s a great one! For an update on all that’s new at Humm Headquarters (including our new headquarters), please see the editorial on page 5 of this issue.

The Drama of Elisabethan Art

Elisabeth Thomson sees the world differently. She observes with an eye for drama. When she looks at the outline of a tree against the sky, she sees bold shapes and angular outlines. Despite her name, her art reflects a much greater influence by the Surrealists than by the Renaissance Masters of

by Sally Hansen

the Elisabethan era. She paints stark, dynamic images using vibrant colours, frequently choosing blues and reds.

Thomson is creative, artistically fearless and utterly undeterred by well-meaning gallery owners who advise her to “pick a style and stick to it.” Instead, the best word to describe her artistic style is eclectic. Some of her canvases evoke images of landscapes by The Group of Seven; some are highly geometrical; others are semi-abstract. Like Salvador Dali, she is completely comfortable letting her subconscious guide her as she reconstructs images that appear in her dreams. Unlike Dali, she is gifted



with a gentler, more recognizable world in which to dream.

Raised in Ottawa, Thomson began studying art at the age of fourteen when she entered the four-year art course at the High School of Commerce. She remembers it as a marvelous experience, more like a junior college than a high school, offering her welcome freedom to explore her artistic interests. She remains grateful to her parents for their encouragement and support. By the age of nineteen, Elisabeth was selling pencil portraits on commission while managing a small art gallery in Hull, Quebec. She continued her artistic training, taking various fine and commercial arts courses at Algonquin College, the Ottawa School of Art, and the Haliburton School of Fine Arts. She also earned a B.A. in English Literature from Trent University.

Thomson’s paintings are eclectic because she is interested in everything. In her twenties she signed up for an \$80 bus trip from Ottawa to Vancouver that allowed her to stop wherever she wanted. She grabbed her camera and set off to see the wide world of Canada. When she finally reached the West Coast, she met a fellow artist who suggested that she try supply teaching. At that time all you needed was a B.A. She found that she really enjoyed kids, and her flair for drama enabled her to establish an easy rapport with them.

Once she returned home she completed a Bachelor of Education from the University of Ottawa. Today she divides her time between painting in her studio in Fitzroy Harbour, a small village on the Ottawa River between Constance Bay and Arnprior, and teaching at an elementary school in Ottawa.

“My mother always thought I should be an actress,” Elisabeth confides. She has just told me about the plays she has written, directed and produced as part of her classroom activities as a teacher of second-graders. Teaching provides yet another outlet for her limitless creative energies. Rather than search for educational products on the Web, she prefers to invent a new game or write a play that captures the specific interests, needs and abilities of her individual students.



Four years ago Elisabeth moved to Fitzroy Harbour with her wonderfully supportive husband John, who channels his parallel creative energies into making music when he is not working as a professional development instructor to other educators. Three years ago Elisabeth took a half-time leave from her teaching responsibilities to devote more time to painting. The move to Fitzroy has been inspiring. “I love it here. The hiking and cross-country skiing opportunities are amazing. Outdoors is where I develop most of my artistic and my classroom ideas. I love the peace; I find Arnprior busy in comparison,” she laughs.

Another setting that inspires and informs Thomson’s art is the family cottage at Little Hawk Lake in the Haliburton Highlands, south of Algonquin Park. She is a prolific artist, seeing



paintings everywhere she looks, filling multiple sketchbooks with designs rendered in pen because she prefers a medium that is bold

and immediate, not tentative. “I love edges and lines, the juxtaposition of positive and negative. My father was a cartographer — perhaps that influenced me.” A large part of her enjoyment is in the initial design of each potential canvas. When she returns to her sketchbooks she finds herself frequently to the angular, the stark, the dramatic.

She also is a writer, filling journals as well as sketchbooks, and she fully expects to write a book some day. My guess is that Elisabeth empathizes with Pogo when Walt Kelly famously had him say:

“We are confronted with insurmountable opportunities.” It will be interesting to watch where Elisabeth’s ongoing exploration of her multifaceted interests and talents takes her. Combined with her abundance of creative and physical energies, and her willingness to explore the subconscious, the sky is not the limit.

To get a good look at her journey so far, her website at <www.elisabeththomsonart.com> is an excellent

place to start. She is planning a spring show, and details will be posted on her website. She also has works on exhibit at The Gallery Gift Shop at 158 John St. North in Arnprior (623-7399, <www.thegallerygiftshop.ca>).

To arrange a visit to Carp River Studio at her home at 102 Old Ship Rd. in Fitzroy Harbour, you can contact her at 623-8474 or <e.thomson1@sympatico.ca>. For a novel gift idea for Valentine’s Day, take a look at her unique offer to “funkify” a portrait. Working from a photo, Elisabeth will create a funky, Cubistic portrait of your significant other, you, or up to three people. Just click on “Funkify Your Portrait” on her website to see examples of this novel gift of original art. She welcomes commissions for work based on special interests as well.



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The Affections of May

Artist Trading Card

WHO Elisabeth Thomson
WHAT Painter
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A Fond Farewell from
FITZGERALD'S

Farewell to our many loyal customers at Fitzgerald's. Thank you for your support over the past eight years. A very special thank you to our dedicated and hard-working staff. It's time to pass on the aprons for new adventures and beginnings.

Happy New Year
 from

Nick Diak & Brent Pattee

Chefs & Owners of Fitzgerald's Restaurant

While the weather outside may be frightful, *The Affections of May* by Norm Foster brings a ray of sunshine to the Studio Theatre in Perth. The Toronto Globe and Mail calls it "A charmer for all seasons," and in the bleak days at the end of January, a charmer will be just the ticket. After a resounding success in Smiths Falls last year, director Jeremy Dutton and his cast are bringing their production to Perth.

Norm Foster has taken one old house, one determined but heartbroken young woman, a charming rogue handyman, a scrabble-playing banker, and an ex-husband, and put them all in a small town in Ontario. Added to the mix is a good measure of witty, sophisticated dialogue,

some laugh-out-loud scenes, and some tender and bittersweet moments.

May, played by Katharine Coleman, is a young woman anxious to escape the city and open a bed and breakfast in small town Ontario. Her husband Brian (played by Johann Ramsaran) is clearly not on board with the plan, while the handyman (Jamie Schoular) and the local banker and president of the Scrabble Club (David Snider) are keen to win May.

Norm Foster's dialogue is always quick



Katharine Coleman (above, and below with David Snider) stars in Norm Foster's *The Affections of May*, at the Perth Studio Theatre. Photos by Johann Ramsaran.



and witty and these actors proved they were up to the challenge last year when the play was performed in Smiths Falls. They are looking forward to bringing the show to audiences in Perth as a co-production of The Studio Theatre and the Smiths Falls Community Theatre.

Get your tickets early and get ready for a ray of sunshine in cold and

dreary January. This is a not-to-be-missed production.

Tickets are \$18 in advance, \$20 at the door, and are available from Shadowfax (in person or by phone at 1-800-518-2729), The Bookworm and The Book Nook in Perth, and at Special Greetings and The Kiosk at the County Fair Mall in Smiths Falls. Performances are January 22, 23, 29 and 30 at 8PM, and January 24 and 31 at 2PM, at the Perth Studio Theatre.

—Joan Frommer

Theatre News In Our Area

Theatre News for the New Year

As we all know, things theatrical tend to slow down during January and February in our area, because the weather is so unpredictable (except for confirmed pessimists!) and because we are all so drained after the events of the holiday season. However, this year

by Ian Doig

the pressure to perform looks to be just too much for those footlights to stay off!

First up is a collaborative effort: Perth's Studio Theatre Productions is bringing the **Smiths Falls Community Theatre's** production of Norm Foster's *The Affections of May* to the stage of the Studio Theatre on January 22, 23, 29 and 30 at 8PM, and at 2PM on the 24th and 31st. What a good idea — to bring successful productions from around the area to Perth audiences — it increases the exposure of the good work of other troupes to local audiences and vice versa! Tickets are \$18 from Shadowfax (call 1-800-518-2729), The Book Nook or The Bookworm

in Perth, or \$20 at the door. Next is Perth's **Orion Theatre Company**, which comes to the stage of The Myriad Centre (in the old Perth Shoe Factory) with the wild and crazy Sondheim/Lapine musical, *Into The Woods* at 8PM on February 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, and 13, with 2PM matinees on the 7th and 14th. Orion consistently produces excellent work — their *Cats* of a couple of years ago was, in my opinion, a classic — and as their audience capacity is limited, better mark this one down on your calendars. Tickets are \$25, available by calling 264-9610.

On the audition front, **Studio Theatre Productions** in Perth is holding auditions for their March production of the classic film thriller *Laura* at the Studio from 1:30-4PM on Sunday, January 3, and 7:30-9PM on the 4th. They are looking for a cast of eight: five men and three women, covering a wide range of ages.

And **Theatre Night in Merrickville** is preparing to present their spring production: *Veronica's Room*, a full length chilling mystery thriller that explores the

thin line between fantasy and reality, madness and murder. Show dates haven't been confirmed as yet, but late April would seem likely. Auditions are planned for mid January; visit <www.merrickvilletheatre.org> for further information.

And a head's up for February — get your tickets early for the **Valley Players'** production of *The Almonte Radio Show*. This locally-written show, directed by the phenomenal Catherine Clark, runs for only one weekend (February 26-28) at the Almonte Old Town Hall, complete with live band and interspersed with old-fashioned radio ads for local businesses. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for students and seniors, and are available from Levi's Home Hardware & Building Supplies (256-3732). Visit <www.valleyplayers.ca> for more information.

So the flow of activity just keeps on coming — ain't it amazing? And things will just keep getting busier from month to month now, as we move further into 2010. Happy theatre, everybody!

New Year, New Digs, New Voices at *theHumm*

If you're looking for *theHumm* office in the New Year, have we got good news for you! You need no longer worry about arriving at the Riendeau household and being greeted by

by *Kris Riendeau*
a barking dog, a pile of teenagers, or a Humm editor in her housecoat. In fact, you needn't try to locate the house at all! Since October 2009, we have been headquartered at 73 Mill Street, on the second floor of the stately Old Post Office building in downtown Almonte.

Honestly, it feels like our fairy godmother came by, waved her wand, and transformed our tiny home office (once our kids' nursery, until they got too big for a crib and needed rooms large enough to accommodate proper beds) into a spacious office with twenty foot ceilings and room enough for four (count 'em — *four!*) desks. She went to work on the pets as well — in place of the cats who occasionally sauntered by in the hallway there are now actual people who wave "hello" as they pass our office door and chat with us when we find ourselves together in the common kitchen up under the clock tower on the funky third floor. And much as we love our dog, we find Rona Fraser to be a far better conversationalist and creative contributor to Humm endeavours (sorry, Fly!).

And if that weren't enough, there's still the feeling we get at the end of a solid day's work, after commuting home (2.5 blocks, on foot, watch out for that one icy

patch) and exchanging our heavy winter boots for cozy slippers. What *is* that feeling, exactly? I believe other earthlings call it... coming home! Home — where the computers aren't, where the business line doesn't ring, where the UPS guy doesn't deliver while I'm still in my bathrobe. OK, the teenagers are still there, but you can't expect a fairy godmother to work *magic*, can you?

Seriously though, working from home was clearly a viable option for us for over a decade. It allowed us to cut costs, have flexible schedules, and see more of our kids than we otherwise would have (and often, more than they wanted!). But there comes a time when even a small operation needs to embrace growth — when a change of scenery, a good dose of collegiality and new creative energy are exactly what the godmother orders. We're very grateful to the real fairy godmothers in this tale: to Stephen Brathwaite for finding us an absolutely perfect space; to Rona Fraser for coming on board with fresh ideas, a great sense of humour and a habit of bringing truffles on Fridays; and to the business community of downtown Almonte for being so welcoming.

We'd also like to welcome a few new folks to the growing cadre of Humm contributors. This month you'll find the second instalment from John Pigeau, a novelist and freelance writer who recently moved Perth and agreed to cover that dynamic community on a regular basis. If you have any ideas for his monthly "Postcards From Perth"

column, please give him a shout at <jpigeau@hotmail.com>. He'd be delighted to hear about other writing jobs as well!

We also got a lovely Christmas present in the form of an email from Danielle Grégoire, the Almonte-based dynamo who was instrumental in giving voice to the Lanark County spoken word and slam poetry scene. She has contributed an update on poetic events for the New Year in this issue, and has also indicated an interest in covering poetry and literature in the months to come! If you have something you think she should hear about, please contact her at <danielle.gregoire@hotmail.com>.

And speaking of Humm contributors, please feel free to resolve to hug one on a regular basis in 2010. These good folks write to support creative endeavours in their communities; they write to inform you about events, fundraisers, artists, farmers, green initiatives and good causes throughout the Valley; they write (or draw cartoons) to give you a smile or to provoke you into action (if that action happens to take the form of a letter to the editor, let us have it at <editor@thehumm.com>). But in all instances they write because they care. And we love them for it!

To all the columnists, contributors, cartoonists, readers, advertisers, landlords, event organisers, distribution spots — to the whole Humm community — thank you for your continuing support and friendship. And here's to a happy and healthy 2010!



Who's (Proof)Reading theHumm

The Humm Team: (l-r) Rob and Kris Riendeau are joined by Rona Fraser, our (relatively) new assistant editor and calendar co-ordinator, in our (very) new office space at the Old Post Office building in downtown Almonte. Come by and visit us in 2010!

Young Awards Gala

Fostering dynamic arts initiatives in the schools of Mississippi Mills

February 20, 2010

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Tickets: \$10

Stress is in the Eye of the Beholder

(That's Why it's Twitching...)

Yes... she's writing about stress again.

Here's the thing: most of us experience way more stress than is healthy. And I would like to do what I can to help you feel less stressed and thereby increase your joy and health.

"What selfless bull...oney," you say.

Well OK, fine — what I am really trying to do is reduce my *own* stress. To accomplish this I will do some research, test some theories, and thereby hopefully experience more joy and less indigestion. And if I can help you feel better too, then great! Hey — the fewer stressed people we have in our homes, on the phone, and on our roads, the fewer people there are to aggravate us, right?! It's a ... what's the opposite of a "vicious circle"? It's a virtuous circle!

A Short History of Stress

Did you know that stress was a Canadian invention? OK, not exactly... but the term was coined in the 1930s by Viennese endocrinologist Dr. Hans Selye, who worked at McGill University and the Université de Montréal, researching ani-

mals' response to physical stressors (cold, restraint, etc). Other researchers extrapolated these studies to humans and to the psychological stressors in our lives, such as being fired, moving house, the death of a loved one, a coworker who plays their music too loudly... Wait — that

American philosopher and psychologist William James said "The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another."

last study is being done by a friend of mine (and possibly by my boss).

The Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale was developed to examine a possible correlation between stress and illness. It lists 43 life events, graded by the stress they can produce. You tally the numbers for events you've experienced in the past year to get a reading of how likely you are to experience illness. There is one for non-adults as well. You can find the scale in Wikipedia. Make it fun! Have a competition with your friends!

Good vs. Evil

Remember: not all stress is bad. Life without any stress would be... well... boring, right? Stop picturing yourself lying on a beach with an umbrella drink in your hand and a hot partner beside you! Sure, that would be nice, but you certainly would

not appreciate it if that were all you did, day in, day out. Yes, I too would like to test that theory... but back to the topic at hand. I have a word for you to amaze your friends with. We all know "distress", which is, well, bad stress. Dr. Selye also coined "eustress": good stress — stress which increases our physical or emotional strength, such as weight-training or facing a challenge.

So Now What?

Now we know good stress is helpful and bad stress can make us sick. What can we *do* about it? Although the stressors in our lives may feel like they are out of our control, if you think about it, a lot of our stress is self-inflicted.

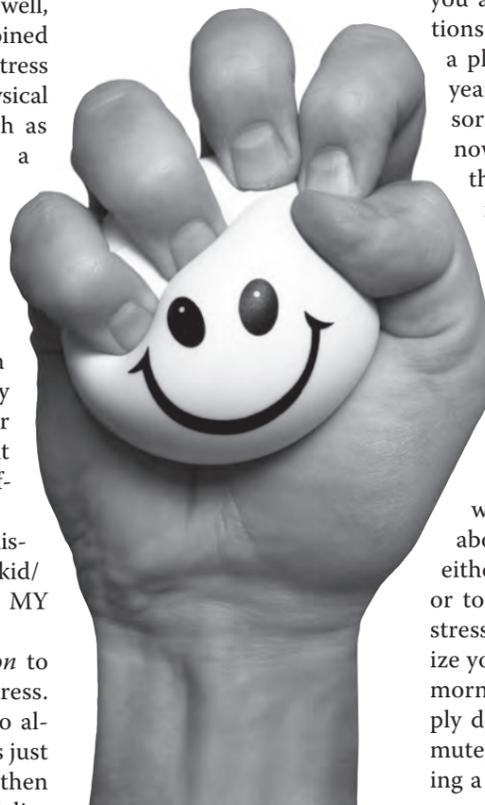
"What?!" you exclaim, disgusted. "My boss/spouse/kid/parent/client causes all of MY stress!"

Not so. It is our *reaction* to them that causes the stress. Perhaps your boss seems to always bring you urgent tasks just before quitting time. You then work late, fuming. Upon delivering the results to your boss (who has already left so WHY did she have to make you do the work tonight?!), you put on your jacket and hat and gloves and boots, swearing at winter and wondering why on earth

you choose to live in a country that is freezing cold for half the year and hot as hell the other half. You get into your car and are promptly stuck in traffic. You are HUNGRY and you just want to get HOME!! And when you get home, you see your kids have not hung up their jackets and... and...

You've heard the expression "Life's too short"? Well it *is* and if you don't calm down, it's gonna be even shorter! Your best bet is to decide, at the start of your day, that you will just roll with the punches and enjoy your day, whatever happens. Waiting until you are stressed out and then screaming "RELAX!!" at yourself in the mirror does not seem to work well.

I know that it is not easy



— I myself am well known for my rants, and if that same telemarketer calls me ONE MORE TIME to change my long distance plan, I may REACH through the PHONE

and... ahem. I know, I know... I'm working on it. If your boss gives you work at quitting time, ask whether they need it now or first thing tomorrow. Stuck in traffic? Try singing along to music and just accepting you will get there when you get there. That worked wonders for me in Montreal traffic. I also used to enjoy letting people into my lane (not often done in Montreal) and feeling like some benevolent traffic goddess. As for the kids and their jackets... well... your kids are home and they are safe — perhaps you can revel in the joy of that thought as you hang up their jackets again.

So, my stressed out friends, why don't we make a resolution? It *is* January, after all. If you are against making resolutions, then how about we make a plan? That 2010 will be the year we recognize our stressors and let go of some. Right now — think of just one small thing that stresses you that involves only yourself and your surroundings (i.e. not your mother-in-law or your spouse). It could be your desk (what a mess) or your morning routine (always running late!) or commute (why won't they get out of my way?!). Consider what exactly stresses you about it and make a decision either to change the situation or to accept it. Either way, the stress should leave you. Organize your desk. To de-stress your morning, get up earlier or simply do less. For a relaxed commute, I highly recommend leaving a bit earlier and listening to your favourite music — this is YOUR time to enjoy.

Because that's it, isn't it? Every day we have is OUR day to enjoy. No one looks back and wishes they'd spent more time ranting.

— Rona Fraser

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Memories of Holidays Past

A not-so-recent conversation between my father and me. Kingston. Circa 1974. I was about five.

ME: Dad, how can Santa Claus come to our house? We don't even have a chimney.

DAD: Oh, well... Santa works in mysterious ways. He'll come to our house. Don't worry.

by John Pigeau

ME: How can he and all those reindeer land on our roof? It's so slanted.

DAD: Well... he has a magic sleigh. And magic reindeer, too. They can land anywhere.

I unleashed ten or so more questions, and Dad had a plausible answer for them all. My sister, Liz, would chime in too, although with fewer questions and a bit of an attitude, truth be told.

It was always difficult to get to sleep on Christmas Eve, but neither my sister nor I had any trouble whatsoever jumping out of bed at 5:30 the next morning and sprinting into the living room to see if Santa had come and what goodies he had left under our tree.

We were never disappointed. Every year he spoiled us silly. All in all, I thought Santa was a pretty swell guy — right up there with my dad and my grandfather.

Now that I'm forty, my priorities have changed. I often forget that someone might have gotten me a gift until they hand it to me on Christmas Day. The best gift of all, of course, is good health and happiness. It's celebrating the holidays with family and loved ones that matters; having fun, enjoying and being thankful for a delicious homemade meal, remembering and telling stories, saying a prayer for those who are no longer with us, and clinking glasses to a healthy, happy new year.

That being said, I do enjoy buying gifts for my family and friends. I love finding just the right present — a book on MGs for my future father-in-law, say, or a trendy new tool for my father (pliers that also work as a hammer; I know you've seen these types of things advertised too). The payoff is the happy looks on their faces. They don't even need to say, "Thank you." Although they do, of course, and that feels nice as well.

I also like taking a drive on Christmas night to look at all the wonderfully decorated homes. When my Gram Chapman was alive — she passed away several years ago, aged ninety-six — Dad always took us all out on Christmas eve to look at all the pretty lights around Kingston, and you could just tell Gram loved it. A smile never left her face, and occasionally she'd say, "Just lovely," her eyes almost misty with tears.

My fiancée, Erin, and I have taken a few leisurely drives around Perth recently, and it's heartwarming to see the care and effort people put into adorning their porches with garland and ribbons, snowpeople and lights of all colours.

"My Gram would love it here," I tell Erin. "The prettiest town in Ontario at Christmas."

It's difficult not to feel nostalgic during the holiday season. I fondly recall my Great Uncle Dez dressing up as Santa one year and presenting me with the best gift a four-year-old boy could ever dream up: a bright red fire engine! Or the year in Kingston I woke up to unwrap a shiny new set of golf clubs. (When I was a kid, I golfed like a fiend and, hu-

mily aside, I was actually pretty good.) I hugged both Mom and Dad — and maybe even my sister, and likely our dog, Taffy — then Dad told me to give Gramps a call in North Bay. It was a phone call we made every Christmas morning, typically before 7AM. Gramps had the greatest laugh — a jolly, raspy laugh, quite a bit like Santa's actually — and he'd laugh and say, "What did you get, you little hot dog?" (He always called us "hot dogs," my sister and me and all of our cousins. It was his favourite term of endearment.) I would breathlessly list off every gift I'd received, and Gramps would laugh — *oh ho ho ho!* — then I'd pass the phone to my sister who would do the same as I had, but perhaps with a little more decorum.

See? Just two of a million great memories and I'm blathering away.

I was getting to a point, I know I was. Oh, yes. First, I know you're reading this in January, so... I hope you enjoyed a lovely holiday season with fam-

ily and friends, and all my best to you and yours for a healthy, happy new year.

Second, I think it's okay to feel a little sad at the holidays, too. To miss those we have loved who have passed on, or to wish for better times. We are human, after all; we're quite capable of experiencing a new emotion every five seconds or so. I know I'll inevitably shed a few tears when one of my four brilliant nephews says grace at Christmas dinner. They never forget to include their great-grandparents in their prayers, or people less fortunate. My father never fails to say, "Grampa loved Christmas! Boy, would he have enjoyed this meal!"

Tears tinged with joyful memories are never shed in vain.

— John Pigeau is a novelist and freelance writer who lives and writes in Perth. His debut novel, *The Nothing Waltz*, can be found at fine bookshops in Almonte, Carleton Place, Westport, Kingston, and Perth or by e-mailing <jpigeau@hotmail.com>.

Dean Batstone's *No Angel*

It was reading Neil Young's biography "Shakey" that inspired Dean Batstone's approach to recording his latest CD, *No Angel*. In an attempt to capture the fragile magic of the musical moment, Dean and co-producer Paul Antonell decided to record every song "off the floor with live vocals and limiting ourselves to only three takes. In every case on this new album (and incidentally, Neil, true to your belief that the first take is always the best...) the tracks that made the record were the first takes — without exception." The result is a truly honest and engaging record that features some great songwriting. Every song is a wonderfully collaborative performance by some very gifted musicians with moments of brilliance but no over-the-top flash. The album is a confident, mature offering from a performer who has been working on his craft for over two decades.

It is really no surprise that Dean has produced such a strong recording; what *is* surprising is that he is not better known locally. As a professional musician with six CDs to his credit (and two out-of-print LPs), he has an impressive collection of material out there, but local recognition is still elusive. He lives in Almonte but only plays in this area



Now I'm rolling over bridges
I thought bad judgment had burned down
And I'm riding this broken highway
But I love that dirty sound

— from *Can't Break Me* by Dean Batstone

occasionally. His career is largely south of the border where several independent radio stations have picked up the first single from the new disc, *Lay Me Down*. His recent stint opening for singer/songwriter Shawn Colvin has also helped bring his music to a receptive new audience.

There are plans afoot for a local CD release in the near future, possibly in late January, but the details were not firmed up in time for this issue of *theHumm*.

We will post information about the event on our website calendar as soon as they are available.

If you would like to check out *No Angel*, copies are available at The Groundz in downtown Almonte or from Dean's website. On the site you can find out more about Dean, hear some selected tracks from each of his many releases and order a CD or six. You can find it at: <www.deanbatstone.com>.

— Rob Riendeau

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January 2010

7

Going Nuts Over Bats

Learning to Love These Most Amazing Mammals

What's the first thing you think of when you hear the word *bats*? Do you shiver or do you smile?

Bats may be the most misunderstood creatures of the animal kingdom. There are some one thousand species worldwide, of which eight can be found in our area. Bats are furry mammals that have four fingers and a thumb joined by a membrane to form wings that they use to fly, scoop up insects to eat, and wrap around their bodies to keep themselves warm or cool depending on the temperature. These nocturnal mammals are incredibly agile flyers, navigating through the dark by means of echolocation — using the echoes from the ultrasonic sounds they make to locate and identify objects. Bats can swim. Bats' knees point backwards; a feature that helps them steer during flight and makes it easier to hold their legs straight while

winter conditions, local bats hibernate in cool, damp, quiet and dark hibernacula — the conditions found in natural caves and abandoned mines. Little Brown Bats will travel up to hundreds of kilometres to find the ideal hibernaculum, such as one in Renfrew County where between fifteen and twenty thousand bats spend the winter. After hibernating, pregnant female bats gather together in nurseries, and usually give birth to one pup each. Babysitting can then be shared with the other mothers.

Perhaps because of their nocturnal habits, many myths have evolved falsely maligning bats. Ontario bats do not drink blood; only their Central and South American cousins are "vampires". They are not blind, although most bats, being nocturnal, do not make much use of their eyes, and their ears are correspondingly large. They do

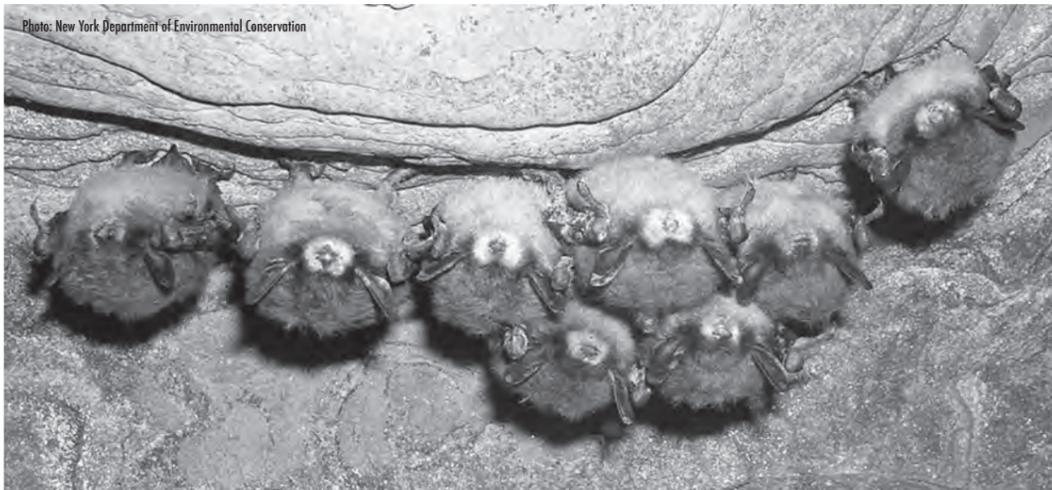
though none have yet been officially declared endangered. Loss of habitat, pesticides and human disturbances during hibernation are all known causes. But there is currently another more menacing threat facing our bats. White Nose Syndrome (WNS) is destroying bats across the United States, and in some areas in New York State and Vermont up to 90% of the populations have been affected. This mysterious white fungus has not yet been confirmed in Canada, but all bat lovers are greatly concerned that WNS could wipe out our Little Brown Bat population within ten years.

If you would like to find out more about these little furry mammals, and indeed learn to love and protect them, you will have an opportunity on Sunday, January 31 to meet Ministry of Natural Resources biologist Amy Cameron, who is actively



Healthy Little Brown Bats (like the one pictured above) make great neighbours. They are indigenous to this area, and can eat up to five thousand mosquitoes in one night! Unfortunately, populations of Little Brown Bats in the United States are currently under threat from White Nose Syndrome, a fatal white fungus shown in the photo at left.

On Sunday, January 31, Ministry of Natural Resources biologist Amy Cameron will speak about these fascinating mammals and the factors that threaten their survival. You can hear Amy, and find out how you can help, from 2-4PM at Nature Lover's Bookshop in Lanark Village.



resting. They sleep upside down during the day (and the blood does not all run to their heads) so they only need to let go to take flight.

The most common local bat is the Little Brown Bat, and little it is — weighing only eight grams but with a wingspan of 22cm. It eats some twelve hundred insects in one night (including, of course, mosquitoes!). It is a long-lived species, and in fact one bat banded in eastern Ontario currently holds the longevity record at thirty five years. In the summer some bat species gather in colonies, while others live alone. The former include species that roost in buildings, such as our local Little Brown Bat, whom some of us have occasionally encountered as unwelcome houseguests. As they are not able to survive the harsh

not fly into humans' hair.

Why should we care about bats? These fascinating and curious mammals contribute to the biological diversity of the wildlife in our woodlots. In addition, bats also play a significant role in controlling insect populations, thus making an important contribution to pest control for farmers and to those who enjoy sitting outside in the summertime. Bats can consume from fifty to over one hundred percent of their body weight in insects *each night* during the summer. For example, when nursing her young, a Little Brown Bat needs to consume her body weight every day (equivalent to about five thousand mosquitoes). It is estimated that more than half of the bats species in North America are in decline, al-

researching and working to protect our bats. She is looking for help with her work and will suggest many ways in which caring individuals can contribute. She will be at Nature Lover's Bookshop at 62 George Street in Lanark Village from 2-4PM making a presentation on Ontario bat species, their reproductive behaviour, habitat requirements, threats to the population, local research initiatives and stewardship opportunities. Children are welcome.

For further information regarding this and other workshops and special guests this winter, call 259-5654 or visit <www.natureloversbookshop.ca>. If you have specific questions about bats you can contact Amy directly at 732-5506 or <Amy.Cameron@ontario.ca>. — Mary Vandenhoff

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Feeling Sheepish at Blairich Farm

About nine years ago, I moved to Brooke Valley — a loosely termed “community” of back-to-the-landers, artists, craftspeople, musicians, writers and tradespeople, just west of Perth. The land here changes from the flat, more fertile fields close to Perth,

by Susie Osler

to sandy valleys, rocky outcrops and forest as one moves west past Wemyss towards Brooke on Highway 7. Our area boasts “marginal” farmland at best. Nonetheless, it is land that has attracted a wide variety of characters from all over the world.

Blairich Farm is named after Don McRae’s grandfather’s farm in New Zealand (and is a nod to their Scottish heritage). Sally and Don moved to North America following a series of academic postings that Don was offered in the U.S. and then Canada. The family settled more permanently in Ottawa when Don (who practices international law) became the Dean of Common Law at Ottawa University. The McRaes bought their 88-acre farm in Brooke Valley in 1992 initially as a place to get away from the city. After testing the waters in a number of college programs in Ottawa, Stephen (one of their three kids) decided to spend a few weeks out at the farm and found he much preferred it to city life. Soon after, he got his first eight sheep and started to learn about farming. A few years later, Sally returned to her farming roots (she grew up on a New

Zealand farm), moving from the city out to the farm in 1999 after retiring from a career in physiotherapy. Don continues to come out on weekends to help out on the farm. This is another interesting take on what a “family farm” can look like.

It took me several years after moving to the area to meet the McRaes, even though their farm is just around a couple of corners from where I live. At that time, Sally had gamely accepted the responsibilities of taking charge of Stephen’s small flock of sheep while he ventured off to New Zealand to do some soul-searching. I’ll admit to admiring her willingness to step in while he was away. When asked how she learned what she knows about raising sheep, she answered, “From Stephen and just by doing it.” It’s true that, at some point, one has to leave books and worries behind and just jump in and have a go — and this seems to have been the approach that she and Stephen have taken over the years.

This isn’t to say that they were without mentors. Stephen got his first six ewes and a ram from another Perth-area sheep farmer, Phillip Jones, in 1995. He worked with and learned from Phillip for several years before his journey to New Zealand. Down Under, he continued his training by working on a “normal” New Zealand sheep farm — thousands of acres pasturing thousands of sheep. Though the conditions for raising sheep are vastly different from our Ontario circumstances, it was invaluable experience and is a good ex-

ample of Stephen’s belief-put-into-action that farmers need to be open to new experiences, different ideas and alternate approaches to doing things. Being willing and able to pick and choose what newfangled ideas or technology make sense for one’s own operation is important, and requires an open yet somewhat analytical mind.

The McRaes are currently in the process of increasing the number of their breeding stock to two hundred (they presently have 170). Their lambs are a cross of Rideau Arcott with Dorset or sometimes with Suffolk. Rideau ewes consistently have multiple lambs (three is common) and the Dorset and Suffolk breeds are valued for their large lamb sizes. The hope is that a cross will lead to the production of multiple large lambs. The ewes are bred three times every two years. The goal is to eventually produce six hundred lambs per year.

The need to secure additional acreage for pasturing their growing number of sheep has led to an interesting arrangement with several people living on old farmsteads in Brooke Valley. It is a win-win situation for everyone. The fields are too small for today’s large field machinery (not to mention their poor soil quality and low potential for crop yield). This means that the land is more suited for pasturing livestock. The McRaes keep their sheep from late spring to mid-fall on this additional hundred acres of local pasture, rent-free. In return, the landowners see their fields kept open and improved through a continuous application of manure and routine bush-hogging. To deal with the ever-present predator problem, llamas guard the flocks and the animals are corralled each night to prevent coyotes from having a free meal. This management method seems to keep losses in check.

Sheep graze very close to the ground, making them more susceptible to parasites than other types of livestock. Managing this can be particularly challenging for sheep farmers in wet summers. Wet summers, like the ones we have had for the last



Who They Are

Blairich Farm
Sally and Stephen McRae
RR4, Perth, ON K7H 3C6
264-2972
<smcrae72@hotmail.com>

What They Sell

Lamb — whole animal freezer orders (or half if split with someone). \$4.25/lb (hanging weight) plus abattoir and butchering fees. Order well ahead from the farm (orders will usually take at least a month).

Oriental Lamb Chops

- 3 Tbsp toasted sesame oil
- 6 thick lamb chops
- ¾ c. chopped onion
- 3 cloves minced garlic
- 3 Tbsp soy sauce
- 3 Tbsp chili paste
- ¾ c. tart orange marmalade
- 1 ½ Tbsp rice wine vinegar
- 1 Tbsp minced ginger

Heat oil in a skillet large enough to hold the chops. Add chops and brown them lightly on both sides. Transfer chops to paper towels to drain. Add onion and garlic and cook, covered, over low heat, until tender and lightly coloured. Add soy sauce, chili paste, marmalade, vinegar, and ginger. Simmer for 2–3 minutes, stirring. Return chops to skillet, cover and cook over low heat until done — about 7 minutes. Serve immediately, spooning sauce over chops.



two years, provide continuous good pasture but are a parasite’s dream-come-true environment. As a result, farmers witness their ewes wasting away, and their lambs have slow weight gain. Farming always demands rigorous observation, an understanding of what possible solutions there are to problems, and a creative application to mitigate those problems given one’s particular circumstances and objectives. Despite all of the challenges, the McRaes love what

they do. They love the life — being outdoors and active, having a constant variety of work from day to day and season to season, and growing food for people. Witnessing improvements to the land, and consequently within the flock as a result of good animal management practices is indeed rewarding. Finally, a life working with animals is perhaps the biggest appeal for both Sally and Stephen. “The animals teach me a lot. They have no hidden agendas!” says Stephen.

www.fieldworkproject.com

A New Year of Opportunities!

Well, dear friends, here we are in 2010 — a new year, a fresh page, and a time to make resolutions and plan for the future.

I've decided to start off my New Year by signing up to be a VOLUNTEER. As you will see in the February issue of *theHumm*, there are many volunteer opportunities out there and they all sound so interesting in one way or another.

by Euphemia Lark

From my own personal experience, I have learned that volunteering is a great way to get to know your community. If you have just moved here, it's a chance to make new friends and, if you've lived here for a while, it's a chance to work alongside old friends who are pulling together in support of a common goal. You can be sure that whoever you are, and whatever you sign up for, your efforts will be truly appreciated. Of course, the big winner in all of this is the town because, without volunteers, our non-profit and charitable organizations simply couldn't exist.

Looking over the lists of volunteering opportunities, I think I may sign up to help deliver Meals on Wheels, a wonderful service

provided by The Mills Community Support group. Or, perhaps I may join the hospital auxiliary for the Almonte General Hospital/ Fairview Manor. Why, I'm even tempted to volunteer with the Pee Wee Hockey organizations or even the puppet festival. I've heard that these organizations can be a lot of fun! Since no one ever gets paid money to be a volunteer, I always try to get something back in the form of enjoyment or a deep feeling of satisfaction.

Then, after I sign up to be a volunteer, I'm going straight out to buy a ticket to the **Young Awards Gala**.

This fundraiser, now in its second year, will take place on

February 20, 2010, from 6PM, at the Almonte and District High School. Tickets are \$65 and can be purchased from **Foodies Fine Foods** and **Blackbird** in Almonte, and at the **Three Yellow Tulips** in Pakenham. Since there are only 300 tickets available and I know that last year they sold extremely well, I'm definitely going to get my ticket early. This is an event you don't want to miss!

The organizers tell me that the Young Awards Gala "will be a fabulous evening of mingling, terrific food, wonderful entertainment and an extensive silent auction based on experiences rather than things." Believe me, it's definitely a highlight of the Almonte social season, as well as

a great way to support arts initiatives in the schools of Mississippi Mills.

Entertainment for the Gala will be produced by **Mississippi Mills Musicworks** (you can bet there will be lots of live music) and the host of the evening's program will be local spoken word sensation, Danielle Grégoire. The Mumbo Jumbo Voodoo Combo will provide the after-dinner dance music with a Mardi Gras beat. Other big entertainment surprises are in store, so stay tuned and watch for more information in the next issue of *theHumm*.

The Young Awards board members believe that the Gala brings much-needed attention to

arts and cultural initiatives. In a time when arts funding tends to be sporadic and often gets cut from school budgets, they feel it is imperative for a creative community like Mississippi Mills to find ways to keep offering opportunities to local students, artists and performers. One of their priorities is to partner artists with schools for the benefit of both.

If you'd like to support the Young Awards, you can (a) buy a ticket, (b) put a table of eight together by emailing <reside@sympatico.ca>, (c) donate to the silent auction <sbrathwaite@storm.ca>, (d) be a sponsor for part of the Gala <ricdenis3@gmail.com>, or (e) volunteer for the organization <kris@thehummm.com>. Another volunteering opportunity!!

So, after I've signed up to be a volunteer and bought a ticket to the Young Awards, what's next for 2010?

Well, I'm thinking of buying a condo! There are now many available in Almonte and all of them in beautiful heritage buildings right downtown. I have to say, it's a lifestyle that calls out to me right now and one I intend to pursue. I'm off to investigate and I'll let you know how I make out in my next column.

Until then, Happy 2010 to you all!



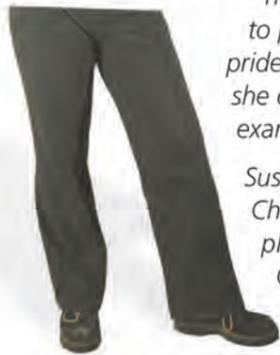
The 2010 Young Awards Gala takes place on Sat., February 20 in Almonte. Last year's event raised \$10,000 for arts initiatives in the schools of Mississippi Mills. This year's Gala will feature great food, live entertainment and a fabulous silent auction. It will also celebrate the contributions of artist **Sue Adams** (left), recipient of the Cultural Achievement Award, and **Fern Martin** (right), recipient of the Community Volunteerism Award. Get your tickets today!



"There's such a supportive business culture in Mississippi Mills — people really help each other out."



Susan Strackholder



With her background in art and design work, photography seemed a natural next step for Susan Strackholder. She purchased her first digital camera ten years ago and started photographing her own children, but was soon taking shots for family and friends. When a co-worker helped her land her first stint as a wedding photographer a few years ago, she decided to make it official and create **Susan Strackholder Photography**.

She has since branched out to include family and pet portraits, and often works right in her clients' homes to better accommodate their schedules. This flexibility also allows her to photograph special occasions such as new babies' first days at home. Susan takes pride not only in the shots themselves but also in the presentation of the final product — she delights in creating visual memories that will be treasured forever. You can find examples of her work at www.ssphotography.ca.

Susan joined the Mississippi Mills Chamber of Commerce when she photographed their recent Business Gala, and has found it to be a useful and dynamic business networking organization.



Susan Strackholder — Mississippi Mills Chamber member since 2009



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Bayeux Tapestry at Textile Museum

A replica of the Bayeux Tapestry by artist Raymond Dugan will be visiting the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum at 3 Rosamond Street East, Almonte, from January 12 to April 25. The piece was created over eight years by Dugan, and is done in the original eight colours. This world class replica of the famous 70-metre tapestries, embroidered in the 11th century, celebrates the conquest of England by William, Duke of Normandy. See the legendary animals, ships, Vikings, Normans and Saxons illustrated in exploits of William and Harold without the expensive trip to France!

Admission to the museum is \$5. For more information, contact 256-3754 extension 4 or <mvmt@magma.ca>, or visit <www.textilemuseum.mississippimills.com>.



The winner of the Pick a Picture Promotion at Perth Picture Framing Gallery for the month of December was John Mlacak's *Autumn, Laurentian Wood*, pictured above. For more information visit <www.galleryperth.com>.

Ready... Set... LO-GO!

Bicycle Month Launches Design Competition

The group behind last summer's successful Mississippi Mills Bicycle Month has news to take the edge off January weather. Riding in Mississippi Mills (or RIMM, as the bicycle believers call themselves) has rolled out a logo design contest with a cash prize for the winning design. The contest is open to all and the deadline is February 28.

"We are looking for a graphic image that represents our goal, which is to transform Mississippi Mills into a great place to cycle," says RIMM chair Jeff Mills. "Our mandate is to promote cycling as recreation and transportation," he continues, adding that RIMM is just one of hundreds of such groups being formed in North America and Europe as people rediscover the myriad benefits of people-powered travel.

Guided Bike Tours

Creating fun events such as Bicycle Month is one of the ways RIMM plans to accomplish its goal. Last year, the group worked with the Town, the District Health Unit and two dozen other local organizations to host Mississippi Mills Bicycle Month — a collection of 28 events including guided bike tours, a bike rodeo and a show of bicycle-themed art. Hundreds of people participated, endorsing the idea with their enthusiasm.

"We're already hearing from people who want to participate in 2010 — groups we didn't work with last year," Jeff says, listing off activities in the works. "Foodies Fine Foods is talking about a progressive picnic for cyclists, an amateur astronomer wants to lead a stargazers' ride, and we're really excited about the Blakeney Arts Festival." As well, the Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists are working on a carbon reduction challenge they'll cross-promote with RIMM, and the Rusty Spokes bicycle club is working on a seniors' ride.



Photo by Jeff Mills

For Almonte resident Neil Carleton, the highlight of the summer of 2009 was the "Birders on Bicycles" ride organized for Mississippi Mills Bicycle Month

Meanwhile, many of last year's Bicycle Month events will be reprised. The Almonte United Church, for example, is planning to repeat its supported ride to Parliament Hill, which attracted about sixty riders last year, and the Birders on Bicycles guided bike tour is already on the calendar.

Cycling Tourism

RIMM provides posters, calendars, maps and publicity support to organizations that host bicycle events in June. Last year, media coverage of Bicycle Month included a Saturday Travel section article in the Ottawa Citizen, a ten minute province-wide interview on CBC radio, and numerous articles in local newspapers — including, of course, *theHumm*. This media coverage played

into RIMM's goal of promoting cycling tourism in the area.

"We met people from outside Mississippi Mills who came to our events because they heard about it on the radio," Jeff says. "Once they were here, they stopped for a bite to eat and shopped on our main streets, and they loved it!" Already, savvy business owners are stocking up on items to tempt visiting cyclists in June 2010 — check out the adorable bicycle earrings at Blackbird, for example.

For more information about Mississippi Mills Bicycle Month, including guidelines for the RIMM logo competition, go to <www.mmbicyclemonth.ca>.

To take part in Bicycle Month 2010 as an event organizer or sponsor, call Jeff Mills at 256-3379 or email <bicyclemonth@gmail.com>.

— Ruth-Ann McKimmon

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Good Intentions

The Reever Report

We made it: skidding, sliding, and spending our way through the Christmas rush. We all knew it was coming, and like the lady at the post office opined: "We enjoy the pressure. It gives us something to focus on when the days get shorter." And they did seem shorter when we had so much to accomplish that we nearly forgot to find the peace we were craving.

by Glenda Jones

All right, so here comes January, that blessed reprieve from the holidays. Here's the time to do all those things we were leaving for when we would have more time. And how many have you stacked up? Plenty, I'll bet. I know I have, and I intend to do something about it.

First off, I'm signing up for an art course. However, I need to buy some new paints before I do that. Also, I'll have to dig out that pad of paper from the bottom of the drawer. While I'm looking, I might as well weed out all the paintings I have never framed. Hmmm, there must be a dozen there, some really awful, some not so bad. I likely have frames stashed in the closet, so I'll take a minute and root those out. I have enough art to start a gallery in that closet. Maybe I shouldn't be taking an art course at all; I should be taking a closet-clearing course.

Secondly, I think I could do with a session of pilates, you know that exercise programme that purports to preserve the youthful figure, or good balance, or just a fun morning out with the girls. I'll stop in at the gym, and get the information today, if the gym's open and if I remember. I wonder if I need to buy a big exercise ball first, and I wonder where I'll find one of those. Snazzy outfits all the women wear... Maybe I should put that off for a month or two while I pursue the painting angle. I can always get enough exercise out skiing.

But oh dear, now I'm two for two on no actual plan here! All right, seriously, I think I could use January to get some organizing done for a special trip in June. I could write to a few people, set up some appointments, get a brochure prepared, and go back to my group in March with stuff accomplished. The brochure business will be a trial though, since I really have no idea how to do that with my limited computer knowledge. So I'll line up a friend to help me. We should be able to do the thing in an afternoon. (And will that be before or after the art course and pilates?) I'll find a day, leave it with me!

Maybe the course ideas should be abandoned in favour of a quilting project to be finished for Granddaughter's birthday. Oops, that would be early January, and I haven't even got it cut out yet. That's not going to happen. One more plan jettisoned.

Perhaps the thing to do is ease into the projects by reading the five books on the Canada Reads list, and then I could choose to do one course in the latter part of the month. So, one book a week times five — that's the month shot, isn't it?

I've got the solution now: I'm going to use January to make a definite plan of action for February. But wait, that's a really short month with hardly time to turn around before it's March. Most of the courses are well underway by then, and I'd be left in the dust. That's just about the time to start ordering seeds and stuff, meaning that gardening season is just around the corner.

At this rate, winter is going to be over before I even get started on it, so the only course of action is to get up every morning, check the thermometer, fasten on the skis and head out, letting one day follow after the other at the same breakneck speed it does now. There'll be tons of time to come up with a plan, so don't think my good intentions are going to be wasted. Why, as I write I've got a project on the go. It's an afghan I'm knitting out of a sweater that was a disaster. It keeps my hands busy so my mind won't dwell on the thousand other things I thought I'd be accomplishing in January. If I really faced facts, I'd realize that this afghan may not be completed by the end of the month either! How can I be so busy doing nothing?



Here's a wonderful picture we had taken with Elizabeth Manley on Sunday, Dec. 13 when the Olympic Torch Run came to Almonte. She recognized that we were wearing our '88 Olympic jackets (see last month's Reever Report for details), and insisted on a picture with us. Our pleasure for sure!

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Orion Theatre Goes *Into The Woods!*

An ambivalent Cinderella? A bloodthirsty Little Red Riding Hood? A Prince Charming with a roving eye? A witch... who raps? They're all among the cockeyed characters in James Lapine and Stephen Sondheim's fractured fairy tale *Into The Woods*.

When a baker and his wife learn they've been cursed with childlessness by the witch next door, they embark on a quest for the special objects required to break the spell. Their adventure sees them swindling, lying to and stealing from Cinderella, Little Red, Rapunzel and Jack (the one who climbed the beanstalk). Everyone's wish is granted at the end of Act One, but the consequences of their actions return to haunt them later on, with

disastrous results. What begins as a lively irreverent fantasy in the style of *The Princess Bride* becomes a moving lesson about community responsibility and the stories we tell our children.

The original production, which featured Bernadette Peters as the Witch and Joanna Gleason as the Baker's Wife, ran for 764 performances on Broadway and had a seventeen month national tour. This February, the Orion Theatre Company brings this popular show back to life for a two-week run in Perth!

Orion Theatre Company was formed in 2002 by collaborators Peter Dixon and Heidi Stepanek in order to provide a professional atmosphere for amateur actors, musicians, and stage technicians

who love musical theatre. After the success of Orion's first nine shows (*Rocky Horror Show*, *The Fantasticks*, *Cabaret*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Evita*, *Cats*, *Godspell*, *The Producers* and *Grease*), they are thrilled to present *Into The Woods* as their tenth. Heidi explains: "Peter and I absolutely love this show and have been wanting to mount it for some time, but were just waiting for the right cast, space, and opportunity to do so. It is incredibly challenging both musically (Sondheim's rhythms and melodies are constantly in flux) and in terms of acting. We have a stellar eleven piece orchestra under the baton of Peter Woodwork, as well as an incredibly talented cast of nineteen. The voices are incredible — both from local

talents who are familiar to the area, as well as some new emerging talents from Ottawa that have to be heard to be believed!" The entire theatre space will be used for this production — audience members will walk into a veritable forest when they arrive, and there will be witches, princes and giants popping up all around them throughout the show!

Into The Woods will be performed on February 4, 5, 6, 11, 12 and 13 at 8PM, and on the 7th and 14th at 2PM at the Myriad Centre for the Arts (1 Sherbrooke Street in Perth). Tickets are \$25 each (call 267-9610 with a VISA or MasterCard number). For opening night on February 4, tickets are only \$15. Please visit <www.myriadcentre.com> for

a seating chart and more information. Please note that seats are reserved, and the best ones go quickly! The last four Orion shows sold out weeks before the performances, so don't be disappointed — get your tickets early!



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Folkus-ing on the Foggy Hogtown Boys

For a while, The Foggy Hogtown Boys may have been a well kept secret, but apparently there have been some leaks. Over the last five years, an ever-widening audience has been raving about the band. With four critically acclaimed CDs and tours from coast to coast, the Toronto-based group has established itself as one of the most exciting bluegrass bands in the country. Luckily for you, the Foggy Hogtown Boys (FHB for short) will be rolling in for a visit Saturday, February 6, as the third instalment in this year's Folkus Concert Series in Almonte.

The FHB are: Andrew Collins on mandolin, Chris Coole on guitar, Max Heineman on bass, Chris Quinn on banjo and John Showman on fiddle. From the band's inception, it was apparent that this particular group of musicians had a special chemistry that translated into some very powerful and entertaining music. This is not just five hot pickers in the same place, playing the same tune at the same time. The Foggy Hogtown Boys are a band with a unique sound that is the sum of its members' personalities and musicianship. Although instrumentally the band has the power to dazzle any audience, the song is always given top priority. This commitment is evident in the care taken to arrange each song in a way that allows the story and feeling of the lyrics to surface and not be overshadowed by pyrotechnics.

Although, the group draws a great deal of inspiration and material from the "golden age" of bluegrass and country

music, and solid original songs written by members of the band blend well among the old chestnuts. In 2005, they released *Northern White Clouds* — a 100% Canadian content bluegrass album featuring some excellent writing from all the members of the band. The 2007 release, *Pigtown Fling*, was a collection of original bluegrass and old-time instrumen-



Catch the Foggy Hogtown Boys (above) with opener Joey Wright on Saturday, February 6 at the acoustically excellent Almonte Old Town Hall

tals. Their latest album, *The Golden West* (2008), is a mix of original and traditional bluegrass music with elements of old-time music and honky-tonk thrown in.

However traditional the original concept may have been, the Foggy Hogtown Boys are not the old-timey throwback that the group's whimsical handle and public-domain-heavy repertoire suggest. The way

they pick runs, phrase lyrics and interact harmonically has clearly been influenced by the past fifty years of bluegrass evolution and the cultural reality of living in a cosmopolitan Canadian metropolis.

Seeing is believing. The live show is the thing, with the Foggy Hogtown Boys. The band always delivers a highly entertaining and diverse show; ballads, breakdowns,

Marvelous March Double-Bill

And don't forget to mark March 6 on your brand new calendars, as Folkus finishes up their season with a great double-bill: **The Good Lovelies and The Wild Turkeys**. What more do you need to know? Lovelies and Turkeys — it's gotta be good! But if you require more information to make your decision... The Good Lovelies' vocal harmonies, swinging fiddles, country-swing and pop music hearken back to the Carter family and Patsy Cline. Winners of the 2009 Canadian Folk Music Award for best New / Emerging Artists of the Year, these three women are the perfect antidote to the long cold dark winter. Armed with a pile of instruments, a repertoire of sassy and sophisticated songs and an effervescent sense of humour they never fail to charm even the toughest audiences.

Partnering the Lovelies are Northern Ontario's pickin' and grinnin' cowboys: The Wild Turkeys. With a fun stage presence and energetic sound, their "Swamp-Stomp Country" will set your toes a tappin'. With their fiddles, mandolin, guitar, bass, harmonica, tin can percussive suitcase contraption, and melodic four-part harmonies, the Turkeys have shared the stage with artists such as Fred Eaglesmith, Prairie Oyster, Harry Manx, The Good Brothers and Elliot Brood.

Doors open at 7:30PM; shows begin at 8PM. Single tickets are \$23 in advance or \$27 at the door. For ticket orders and information call The Miller's Tale at 256-9090 or visit <www.thehummm.com/folkus>.

gospel quartets and lots of laughs!

The show will be opened by Elphin's Joey Wright, a Black Hen Music recording artist, and it is rumoured that Joey will also be joining the boys on stage for a few tunes. Should be a blast!

As always, with the talent on the bill of the Folkus Concert Series, you really won't want you miss this show.



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Kelly's Success Tip of the Month:
The spring real estate market is much closer than you think! In our area, the market heats up with buyers by the end of January. Don't wait for the snow to melt before you list or you may miss the best opportunity. We recommend digging out some pictures of your property when it's green. No worries if there are people having fun in the pictures; that just shows how great it is to live there. Set a little booklet of warm weather pictures out for prospective buyers to look at when they view your house. If you are planning a move in the future but not this year, it would be a good plan to take pictures of your property throughout the seasons and keep them handy. This way, no matter what season you decide to sell in, you can show how lovely your property is throughout the entire year.



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A Call for Artists

The Westport and Area Dandelion Gardens and Fall Colours Studio Tour committees are now accepting applications for new area studios and/or guest artists for the 2010 Studio Tours to be held Victoria Day (May) and Thanksgiving (October) weekends. Studios should be within 15km of Westport but are subject to individual consideration. Guest artists may live outside of the Westport area but must either have a host or will be assigned a host. Artwork should be of excellent quality and original in design, with most of the work being done by the applicant.

For details on the jurying process and payment policy, please contact Loretta Blucher-Moore at 273-8347 or <hookedonthelake@kingston.net>, or see the website application at <www.artatwork.ca/westport_studiotours/fall-colours/application.htm>.

All submissions must be received no later than January 15 in order to be considered for jurying. Submissions must include a minimum of five photographs or samples of the artist's work and a twenty word artist statement, as well as payment dated January 15.

— Loretta Blucher-Moore



Past Westport studio tours have featured a wide range of media, including traditional rug hooking (above, by Loretta Blucher-Moore), stained glass, clay, photography, watercolour and acrylic paintings, and many more.

Get Involved, Get Connected

Our February issue will feature the annual resource for organizations seeking volunteers (and volunteers seeking organizations).

If you are running a community organization or service club, festival, cultural event, museum, conservation area, arts or activities organization within our catchment area, we'd like to hear from you!

Send us 80 words (maximum) describing what your group does, what volunteer opportunities you offer, and how people can contact you, and we'll run them (free of charge) in our February issue.

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Pet Peeve - Lips stuck to a frozen mouthpiece



Bryan Briggs - Guitar
Specialty - Rock, Metal and Country Lead
Pet Peeve - Boneless chickens



Roger Plant - Guitar
Specialty - Blues, Jazz & R&B
Pet Peeve - SM58 sandwiches



Al Miller - Guitar
Specialty - It's all about the groooove
Pet Peeve - Looking for golf balls in snow



Meghan Woodbeck - Woodwinds & Piano
Strengths - Building confidence
Pet Peeve - "Cannon" (Canon?) in D



Victor Maltby - Violin and Fiddle
Strengths - Bringing the two together!
Pet Peeve - Accidentally igniting my fiddle



Peter Brown - Piano
Specialty - All that Jazz
Pet Peeve - hauling my Bechstein to gigs



Alison Fay-Turner - Voice
Specialty - Well, singing, actually!
Pet Peeve - Feedback



Sandra Vorobej - Piano & Woodwinds
Strengths - Patience
Peeve - Chairs that leave my feet dangling



Terry Tufts - Guitar
Specialty - Acoustic Fingerstyle
Pet Peeve - Query "what's my peeve?"



Dean Adema - Banjo
Strengths - Entertaining!
Peeve - Songs recorded sans banjo parts



Santana - Head of Security
Specialty - Warm Welcomes
Pet Peeve - Couriers with empty pockets



George Turcotte - Mandolin, Dobro & Drums
Specialty - Dynamics
Pet Peeve - Sweet Home Ali Badsong (or people who dis Neil Young)



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6. Your annual Christmas letter was simply a copy-paste of last year's.
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10. You've long wanted to take a certain class, and plan on doing it "some day".

— Rona Fraser

Echo echo Presents Dear Mrs. Martin

Echo echo Productions is excited to bring their second theatre piece to Burnstown. *Dear Mrs. Martin*, written by Kate Aspengren, is sure to tickle all the senses.

When Barbara Martin's cleaning lady Gloria begins leaving revealing letters about her quirky family and frequent visits to her psychic, Barbara is enticed to write back and expose her own

life in return. When Barbara's husband dies, it is Gloria's letters and fellow socialite Hilary's frequent phone messages that make her re-examine who her true friends are. Without ever being in the same room, these women from opposite worlds find companionship and understanding. *Dear Mrs. Martin* is a play about family, friendship, loss and hope.

The roles of Barbara Martin, Gloria, and Hilary are played by Heather Sagmeister, Chris Kyte, and Steph McGregor respectively.

Dear Mrs. Martin can be seen January 21 to 23 at 8PM and January 23 and 24 at 2PM at Neat Coffee Shop in Burnstown. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at Neat (433-3819). For more information, email <echo_echo_prod@hotmail.com>.



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Westport Wonders

Completing the Circle

Here in Westport, we have it pretty sweet. We live where other people vacation. We have a group of people who beautify the village with hanging baskets of flowers in the summer and decorative baskets in the winter, along with plant boxes on every

by Steve Scanlon

corner filled to overflowing with bright colourful flowers — we even have brightly painted garbage receptacles. We have a group of people helping to maintain and organize events at Foley Mountain Conservation Area (eight hundred acres of pristine woodland).

There is a group of folks who help make Halloween a better evening and organize the annual Christmas parade (and much more). Another cadre of kindhearted souls collect for the Westport Food Bank. Still others organize the annual music festival and many other events throughout the year. People organize fundraisers for various needy causes, organize and host the village's first Farmers Market. Auctions help victims of catastrophes worldwide. In this town we give of our time and our energy. Things happen here

because people make them happen.

In other words, this little village of ours has heart. The heart of the village is made up of the many wonderful people who keep these various groups and organizations functioning and focused year after year. And year after year these groups and organizations rely on funding to keep their collective heads above water.

The funny thing about funding is that, whenever I hear the word, I want to precede it with "government". The two words seem to go hand in hand, "government" and "funding", however the sad fact is that they don't — go hand in hand that is. The fact is there is very little "government funding" to be had in support of groups and individuals that make villages like Westport better places to live. It's a case of priorities, and government funding is now geared towards other "worthwhile" causes like unwanted elections and yet more government sponsored inquiries — but I digress (whew, that was so close to yet another "Scanlon Soapbox" rant). That's the bad news. There *is* good news...

This village of ours has, without a doubt, the most giving business community. Take a look at the sponsors for any giv-

en community event and you are going to see the same business names over and over again. I'm not going to name names, not because the names don't deserve to be mentioned but because my memory is good, but it's short, and I will undoubtedly forget to mention somebody and that never ends well. Not that these businesses do it for recognition — I assure you they do not. Suffice it to say that, big and small, the vast majority of businesses support our local events in one way or another, from cash donations to the use of space, to helping with advertising, to providing materials.

Now I know that there are a lot of worthwhile organizations out there and that it's impossible to support them all. The businesses of Westport are in the same boat — they are inundated with requests for support and they try to accommodate, but inevitably they have to pick and choose. That being said, there are events in Westport that simply would not happen without the support of the local business community. Now here's the kicker: the business community wouldn't exist without your support. So in effect, you make these events happen. How's that for Scanlon logic? I kind of like it. Not only

would these events not happen without you attending them, but you are actually the reason they happen. A good proportion of the great events happening in Westport are a direct result of you visiting our village. You visit the village for the events and the circle is complete. Raise your right hand, reach across your left shoulder and give yourself a well-deserved pat on the back.

At the end of the day, the local businesses have a choice, to give or not to give. Thankfully for our village, they generally choose to invest in the town.

So, to the many, many organizers, organizations, volunteers and committees out there doing good work in our community and making things happen, listen to the endless applause — that's your standing ovation. To the businesses in our community contributing to these organizers, organizations, and committees, some well deserved (and often overlooked) kudos to you! To the people supporting the local businesses in Westport, thank you so much for making the circle complete — keep up the good work. Through your contributions we all enjoy a better place to live.

— Steve Scanlon lives, works and writes in the delightful village of Westport.



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A Pageful of Poetry

Here Comes the Slam

2010 is already shaping up to be an amazing year for spoken word poetry in and around Lanark County. Two years ago, a slam poetry scene sprouted out of a shared love of performance and poetics. In 2008, Lanark County sent the first rural slam poetry team to the Canadian Festival of Spoken Word (CFSW). If this is the first you are hearing of slam poetry, then here is a brief history.

1986, Chicago — a man named Marc Smith decides to create a poetry event that encourages poets to create three minute pieces, memorize them, and perform them. The audience would then judge the work based on two simple criteria: performance and content. The poets were pitted against each other in the beginning, but out of that grew a community, which is getting larger and larger every day. It is a community of people who inspire others to find their voices. They learn from each other and have built a network of poets across Canada, hence the national festival: the CFSW. The Lanark County team, hatched out of the nest that was the LiPS competitive poetry series in Lanark County, went to the festival again in 2009 and returned, changed by the experience.

The returning team members were asked: "What advice or suggestions would you pass on to poets for the new Slam season, after having gone to the festival?" Here are their responses...

Emily Kwissa, the youngest person to ever compete at the national level: "Really, it's all about being yourself and doing what makes you happy. The Festival is about getting everyone together to share their words and experience, not about winning a title. I think it's really important to do poetry for yourself, and to always enter a slam with a positive attitude."

Britt Pruden-Faraday, a Carleton Place resident and aspiring writer: "What all of this really comes down to, in my mind at least, is having a venue to share our voices. When we slam, we pass on little pieces of ourselves. Whether or not we make the

team, our pieces can have a huge impact on someone else."

Ken Kicksee lives near Almonte and is the organizer of Words in the Wolfgrove: "Do it. Bring your voice forward. We all have unique stories to tell, and we should never hold back. And if performing is not your thing, come out and be part of the audience. Give it a chance. You're sure to be entertained."

Monica Squires is a force of nature and advocate for the mental health consumer. Since the festival, she has decided to pursue writing and has applied to the Spoken Word program

citing environment. You might even end up on the team representing Lanark County at the CFSW in 2010, which will take place in Ottawa. There will be six chances to compete. Watch your local newspaper for more information or contact <danielle.gregoire@hotmail.com>.

The Spoken Word Plot

On January 3, the Spoken Word Plot, a spoken word series that runs the first Sunday of every month in Almonte at JR's Downstairs Pub, will be holding the first LiPS slam poetry competition of the 2010 season. It will

feature an open mic, the competition and a performance by the National Slam Champions, Team Ottawa. They awed the crowds at the national festival and are sure to do the same in Almonte. These five poets really work as a team, and their poems are a collective poetic experience. Watching them is like watching a finely tuned instrument make beautiful music as if beauty was a simple thing to create. Their poems are gut-wrenching and magnificently executed. Come out and experience the



Some of the finalists from last year's Lanark County Poetry Slam got to represent this area at the 2009 Canadian Festival of Spoken Word. This year they are looking for new faces and voices — read on to find a slam near you!

at the Banff Centre for the Arts. She says, "It's all worth it. Take a chance."

Tammy MacKenzie, the 2009 Lanark County slam champ: "If you are going to slam, I really suggest you practice, practice, practice! Make sure you are loud enough, have a good flow, and remember it's a performance, not a reading, LOL. And have at least a few good pieces under your belt that you are comfortable doing."

The Lanark County Live Poets Society wants to thank everyone who was a part of raising the funds for the team to get to Victoria.

The Lanark County slam series begins January 3 and takes place in Almonte at JR's Downstairs Pub, from 6–9PM. There will be an open mic at the beginning, followed by a slam competition. In order to compete, all you need is two poems, each under three minutes long. If you've never been to a slam before, this is your chance to share your work in an encouraging and ex-

team that wowed the nation. \$5 at the door.

Poetry and Potluck

On Tuesday, January 12, Vancouver's Brendan McLeod will be stopping by Almonte for a special Poetry and Potluck performance. Brendan McLeod is a spoken word phenomenon, a member of The Fugitives and author of *The Convictions of Leonard McKinley*. Brendan is a high-energy storyteller, equally at home with social and political commentary, family histrionics, surreal love poems, and powerful personal stories. He runs the gamut of performance poetry, making him an effective live performer and an artist well equipped for collaboration. The Poetry and Potluck series allows the audience and performers to blend, blurring the lines between stage and onlooker. Plus the food is always really good! \$10 at the door, and be sure to bring a dish for the potluck. Doors open at 6PM. — Danielle Grégoire

www.thehummm.com

CLASSES COURSES LESSONS CLASSES COURSES LESSONS



Sunday Sessions at Bally's

There's nothing better, on a cold winter's night, than to walk into a warm pub and hear a smokin' band heating things up. That's why it is so nice that Ballygiblin's in Carleton Place is serving up Sunday Sessions with Roger Plant and Peter Brown every week. From 7 to 10PM you can hear these two fine performers and their musical friends play a wide variety of songs — everything from originals to Van Morrison, Randy Newman, Eric Clapton, Neil Young and classic blues tunes. As Roger says: "We're a community of musicians who love songs, not genres."

Roger and Peter both have long histories of making music locally. Peter is well-known as a solo pianist and vocalist, a member of Mumbo Jumbo Voodoo Combo, the bandleader and arranger for the Mississippi Mudds' musical productions, leader of the Peter Brown Jazz Trio, and a regular at St. James Gate where he and Don Patterson have developed quite a following for their weekly jazz night.

Guitarist and singer Roger Plant has just moved back to the area after a three-year absence. Before moving away, Roger was a working musician with many projects on the go, and was one of the driving forces behind the famous Sunday night blues jams at the Leatherworks. Currently he fronts the Roger Plant Band with drummer Bill Searson and bass player Barry Buse, and he also appears weekly at Poppies. Both Peter and Roger can be seen attending the monthly blues jams at the Thirsty Moose as well. "We're very fortunate that there is definitely an audience in Carleton Place that supports local music," says Peter.

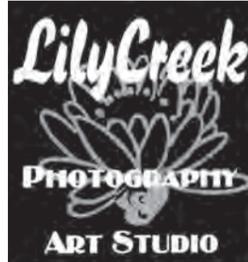
The duo is also quick to mention the support they are getting from Ballygiblin's. For a project like this to work, the venue has to share in the commitment to make it a success, and that certainly seems to be happening. The audience is growing and the roster of guest musicians who come out to join Roger and Peter is very impressive. As the post-

ers for Sunday Sessions indicate, "you never know who may appear." The event is not truly an open mic setup — guest musicians are invited to join Roger and Peter for a song or two — so the quality of the performance stays consistently high.

There is definitely a feeling that a "scene" is developing in Carleton Place. They seem to have cracked the chicken and egg conundrum of which comes first — the musical community or the audience. Somehow, magically, they are both appearing, and the Sunday Sessions are a great example of how well things are working in this vibrant town.

As the deep freeze of winter sets in and cabin fever starts to take hold, give yourself a mini-getaway. Drop by Ballygiblin's (151 Bridge Street, 253-7400) from 7 to 10PM on Sunday for some good music, good food and good company. It will warm your heart and give you energy for the upcoming week.

— Rob Riendeau



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Sunday, January 24 — the theme is *Movie Music*
Sunday, March 7 — the theme is *Ensembles*
Sunday, May 9 — the theme is *Composer Anniversaries*

For more information contact:
Kathryn Briggs 613-256-7464 or Suzanne Snelling 613-256-3639

Claiming Column

Into the Woods, Perth, Feb 4-7, 11-14
Folkus Concert, Almonte, Feb 6
BOTR Concert, Westport, Feb 19-20
The Young Awards Gala, Almonte, Feb 20
Valley Players Radio Show, Almonte, Feb 26-28
Folkus Concert, Almonte, Mar 6
Almonte in Concert, Almonte, Mar 13
Laura, Perth, Mar 18-21, 26-28
BOTR Concert, Westport, Mar 19-20
The Mousetrap, Perth, Mar 20-23, 28-30
Maple Run Studio Tour, Pakenham, Mar 27-28
Masquerade Mystique, Carleton Place, Mar 27
Pakenham Home Show, Apr 9-11
Spirit of the Garden, Almonte, Apr 10
BOTR Concert, Westport, Apr 23-24
High School Reunion, The Musical, Carleton Place, Apr 23, 24, 30, May 1
Almonte in Concert, Almonte, Apr 24
BOTR Concert, Westport, May 14-15
BOTR Concert, Westport, Jun 19
Nonsense the Mega Musical, Carleton Place, Dec 3-5, 9-11

Visual Arts

Arnprior Traditional Rug Hooking Get Together, Jan 6, 6:30-9PM. All skill levels welcome. Free. Info: kat153@yahoo.com. Arnprior Public Library, 21 Madawaska Street, Arnprior

Vernissage, Jan 8, 7-9PM. Featuring oils & acrylics by Jack Neilson. Brush Strokes, 129 Bridge St., Carleton Place 253-8088

Almonte Area Artists' Association meeting, Jan 11, 7-9PM. Speaker: Wayne Williams. New members welcome, info at 256-4207. www.4a-artists.ca. Almonte Library, 155 High Street

Almonte Quilters Guild, Jan 18, 7-9PM. Featuring Brynhild Gunther with a scrap happy night. New members welcome. Almonte Civitan Hall, 500 Almonte Street

Photography Matters Meeting, Jan 20, 7-9PM. A mixed group of amateur and professional photographers. Info at kbthomp@295.ca. Waterside Retirement Community, Theatre Room, 105 McNeely Ave. Carleton Place

Flippin' Art Night, Jan 21, 5-8PM. Featured artists: Heather McTavish & Leslie Davis. Drop in, watch the installation, enjoy appetizers & meet the artists. Ballygiblin's, 151 Bridge St. Carleton Place, 253-7400

Lanark County Quilters Guild, Jan 26, 12-2PM. Speaker: Pat Hardie, "Recycling Queen". Complete with "stash" sale. All welcome, guests \$3. Info at 267-3178. Lions Hall, Perth Fairgrounds

Arnprior Quilters' Guild, Jan 27, 6:30-8:30PM. Guest speaker Sylvia Naylor, all welcome. Christian Education Centre, 257 John St. N., Arnprior

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday |
|---|---|--|---|
| 4 | 5 Green Drinks, Perth Mississippi Blues Society, Thirsty Moose | 6 Arnprior Traditional Rug Hooking Get Together, Arnprior Mudds Info Night, Carleton Place CP Celtic Jam, Ballygiblin's Karaoke, Fiddleheads | 7 Terry Tufts, The Barley Mow |
| 11 Mayan Code Study Group, Almonte Almonte Area Artists' Association meeting, Almonte | 12 Women's Business Group, Carleton Place Poetry and Potluck, Almonte | 13 CP Celtic Jam, Ballygiblin's Karaoke, Fiddleheads | 14 Peter Brown Jazz Duo, St. James Gate Whiskey Mike, The Stone House Terry Tufts, The Barley Mow |
| 18 Eat Local Film Series, Carleton Place Almonte Quilters Guild, Almonte | 19 Cold War Cinema, Carp | 20 MM Chamber of Commerce Mixer, Almonte Photography Matters Meeting, Carleton Place CP Celtic Jam, Ballygiblin's Karaoke, Fiddleheads | 21 Flippin' Art Night, Carleton Place Peter Brown Jazz Duo, St. James Gate Whiskey Mike, The Stone House Terry Tufts, The Barley Mow Dear Mrs. Martin, Burnstown |
| 25 | 26 Lanark County Quilters Guild, Perth | 27 Arnprior Quilters' Guild, Arnprior CP Celtic Jam, Ballygiblin's Karaoke, Fiddleheads | 28 Peter Brown Jazz Duo, St. James Gate Whiskey Mike, The Stone House Terry Tufts, The Barley Mow |

Theatre

Mississippi Mudds **Info Night**, Jan 6, 7-8PM. For spring show: *High School Reunion the Musical*. **Auditions** Jan 10, 1-3PM. Call Don at 253-1571. www.mississippimudds.ca. Carleton Place Town Hall, 175 Bridge St.

Eat Local Film Series presents **Food, Inc.** Jan 18, 7-10PM. 3-course dinner at Ballygiblin's + show for \$25+tax. Movie only \$8. Reserve at Bally's early! 7PM wine & food tasting at CP Cinemas, 8PM movie. Ballygiblin's & CP Cinemas, Carleton Place

Cold War Cinema, Jan 19, 6-9PM. 6PM museum tour, 7PM *Fail Safe*, a televised play, broadcast in 2000, w/ George Clooney, Richard Dreyfuss, Noah Wyle. Movie (incl popcorn) \$6, movie & tour \$15. Info at www.diefenbunker.ca. Reservations required: e.espig@diefenbunker.ca or 839-0007. The Diefenbunker, 3911 Carp Rd. Carp

Literature

Echo echo Productions presents **Dear Mrs. Martin**, Jan 21-23, 8PM; Jan 23-24, 2PM. \$10. Hilarious & touching play of 2 people who find friendship through letters. Neat Coffee Shop Burnstown, 433-3819

The Affections of May, Jan. 22, 23, 29, 30, 8PM; Jan. 24 & 31, 2PM. \$18 in adv (Shadowfax, Book Nook), \$20 at door: 267-SHOW. A heart-warming romantic comedy by Norm Foster: The Studio Theatre, 63 Gore St. E. Perth

Spiritual Cinema Circle, Jan 31, 2PM. Movies with heart and soul, different films each month. Info at fp@superaje.com. Myriad Centre, 1 Sherbrooke St. Perth

Poetry and Potluck presents poet Brendan McLeod author of *The Convictions of Leonard McKinley* Jan. 12, 6PM. \$10 at the door and be sure to bring a dish for the potluck. Almonte United Church, 106 Elgin St.

Photographer/Naturalist Michael Runtz, Jan 17, 2-4PM. Presentation/discussion on the role of colour in nature (Legion); refreshments & book signing (Bookshop). \$10 (MMLTC fundraiser). Info: 259-5654, www.natureloversbookshop.ca. Lanark Legion & Nature Lover's Bookshop, Lanark

Artist/Author Blair Paul, Jan 23, 2-4PM. Book signing, presentation & discussion of the Lanark origins of his art. Info: 259-5654. Nature Lover's Bookshop, 62 George St. Lanark

Ontario Bats — Discussion/Presentation, Jan 31, 2-4PM. Ecologist Amy Cameron. Bat behaviour, habitats, threats & stewardship opportunities. Info: 259-5654. Nature Lover's Bookshop, 62 George St. Lanark

Music

Christmas Concert, Jan 10, 2PM. Blue Skies Community Fiddle Orchestra, Celtic Heritage Fiddle Orchestra. Adults \$5, kids are free. Fiddle, Christmas & Hanukah tunes. Yes, in Jan. Maberly Hall

Blues on the Rideau, Jan 15 & 16, 7-10PM. David Rotundo Band: high energy, dancin' blues. \$55 dinner & show. Proceeds to Westport's Rideau Vista & St. Edward's Schools. www.choosetheblues.ca. The Cove Inn, 2 Bedford St. Westport 273-3636

Brock Zeman, Jan. 16. \$10 at Neat, adam@neatfood.com. Neat Coffee Shop, 1715 Calabogie Rd. Burnstown, 433-3205

SRO Tea Dance, Jan 17, 1-4PM. 15-piece big swing band Standing Room Only. \$10 (cash only). Casual or period dress (20s-40s). Refreshment table. Almonte Old Town Hall, 14 Bridge St.

JANUARY 2010

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>1</p> <p>⌂ Polar Bear Plunge, Perth ⌂ Open Mic, The Downstairs Pub</p> | <p>2</p> <p>⌂ Free Skating, Almonte ⌂ Brock Zeman, The Downstairs Pub</p> | <p>3</p> <p>⌂ Magnolia Rhythm Kings, The Royal Oak ⌂ Semi-Acoustic Jam, The Stone House ⌂ The Spoken Word Plot, Almonte ⌂ Sunday Sessions, Ballygiblin's</p> |
| <p>8</p> <p>⌂ Live Music, The Stone House ⌂ Vernissage, Carleton Place ⌂ Billy Armstrong, The Downstairs Pub</p> | <p>9</p> <p>⌂ A Morning with Fr. Richard, Amprior ⌂ Ben San Pedro, The Cove ⌂ Shot Gun Kiss, The Downstairs Pub</p> | <p>10</p> <p>⌂ Valley Singles Club, Cobden ⌂ Mudds Auditions, Carleton Place ⌂ Christmas Concert, Maberly Hall ⌂ APEX Jazz Band, The Royal Oak ⌂ Semi-Acoustic Jam, The Stone House ⌂ Sunday Sessions, Ballygiblin's</p> |
| <p>15</p> <p>⌂ Open Mic, The Downstairs Pub ⌂ Blues on the Rideau, The Cove Inn ⌂ Live Music, The Stone House ⌂ Jazz at the Swan, The Swan at Carp</p> | <p>16</p> <p>⌂ Brock Zeman, Neat Coffee Shop ⌂ Blues on the Rideau, The Cove Inn ⌂ Andrew McDougall, St. James Gate ⌂ Mike Ryan, The Downstairs Pub</p> | <p>17</p> <p>⌂ SRO Tea Dance, Almonte Old Town Hall ⌂ Photographer/Naturalist Michael Runtz, Lanark ⌂ Traditional Song Circle, Barley Mow Pub ⌂ Magnolia Rhythm Kings, The Royal Oak ⌂ Semi-Acoustic Jam, The Stone House ⌂ Sunday Sessions, Ballygiblin's</p> |
| <p>22</p> <p>⌂ Live Music, The Stone House ⌂ Almonte Lecture Series, Almonte ⌂ The Affections of May, Perth ⌂ Dear Mrs. Martin, Burnstown ⌂ Billy Armstrong, The Downstairs Pub</p> | <p>23</p> <p>⌂ Carp Ridge EcoWellness Open House ⌂ Artist/Author Blair Paul, Lanark ⌂ Dear Mrs. Martin, Burnstown ⌂ Old Time Country (Contra) Dance, Almonte ⌂ Joe Chalmers, St. James Gate ⌂ The Affections of May, Perth ⌂ Dear Mrs. Martin, Burnstown ⌂ Little Rock, The Downstairs Pub</p> | <p>24</p> <p>⌂ Almonte in Concert Music Club, Almonte ⌂ Robbie Burns' Celebration, Middleville ⌂ Dear Mrs. Martin, Burnstown ⌂ The Affections of May, Perth ⌂ APEX Jazz Band, The Royal Oak ⌂ Semi-Acoustic Jam, The Stone House ⌂ Sunday Sessions, Ballygiblin's</p> |
| <p>29</p> <p>⌂ Breakfast With Soul, Almonte ⌂ Open Mic, The Downstairs Pub ⌂ Jazz at the Swan, The Swan at Carp ⌂ Live Music, The Stone House ⌂ The Affections of May, Perth</p> | <p>30</p> <p>⌂ Almonte in Concert, Almonte ⌂ Rachelle Behr, St. James Gate ⌂ The Affections of May, Perth ⌂ Johnny Spinks & Kool Water, The Downstairs Pub</p> | <p>31</p> <p>⌂ Ontario Bats Presentation, Lanark ⌂ Spiritual Cinema Circle, Perth ⌂ Magnolia Rhythm Kings, The Royal Oak ⌂ Semi-Acoustic Jam, The Stone House ⌂ Sunday Sessions, Ballygiblin's ⌂ The Affections of May, Perth</p> |

Traditional Song Circle, Jan 17, 2-4PM. Come to sing or enjoy. Info at 256-7840. Barley Mow Pub, 79 Little Bridge St. Almonte, 256-5669

Old Time Country (Contra) Dance, Jan 23, 8-10PM (beginner's session at 7:30PM). Band: The Barley Shakers. Caller: David Baril. Contact: Judy Durjancik at 256-2689. www.AmonteContra.ca. Almonte Old Town Hall, 14 Bridge Street

Almonte in Concert Music Club, Jan. 24, 2PM. The theme is movie music. Almonte Old Town Hall, 14 Bridge St. 256-3639.

Almonte in Concert, Jan 30, 8PM. Tonal Divergence, Sonic Confluence (cello/clarinets/piano). \$27 adult, \$14 student. Tickets at Millers Tale or 253-3353. Almonte Old Town Hall, 14 Bridge St.

Jazz at the Swan (The Swan at Carp, Fall-down Lane Carp, 839-7926) 7-10PM. Jan 15, 29

The Stone House Bar & Grill (3740 Carp Rd., Carp, 839-1091), Whiskey Mike Thursdays (7-11PM), Live Music Fridays (7-11PM); semi-acoustic jam Sundays (5-10PM)

The Downstairs Pub at J.R.'s (385 Ottawa St., Almonte, 256-2031), Fridays 6-12AM (no cover); Saturdays live music from 9PM-1AM.

Jan 2 Brock Zeman
 Jan 8 Billy Armstrong
 Jan 9 Shot Gun Kiss
 Jan 15 Jacob Desjardin
 Jan 16 Mike Ryan
 Jan 22 Billy Armstrong
 Jan 23 Little Rock
 Jan 29 Jacob Desjardin
 Jan 30 Johnny Spinks & Kool Water

St. James Gate (111 Bridge St., Carleton Place, 257-7530), Peter Brown Jazz Duo Thursdays (Jan 14 on) from 7-10PM, Live at the Gate Saturdays from 8-10PM.

Jan 16 Andrew McDougall
 Jan 23 Joe Chalmers
 Jan 30 Rachelle Behr

The Barley Mow (79 Little Bridge St., Almonte, 256-5669) Terry Tufts Thursdays (8-11PM), Fri/Sat shows start at 9PM

The Royal Oak (329 March Rd. Kanata, 591-3895), jazz on Sun (3-6PM), no cover. Jan 3, 17, 31 Magnolia Rhythm Kings
 Jan 10, 24 APEX Jazz Band

The Cove (2 Bedford St., Westport, 273-3636)
 Jan 9 Pianist Ben San Pedro (6-9PM)
 Jan 15, 16 BOTR with David Rotundo

Ballygiblin's Restaurant & Pub (151 Bridge Street, Carleton Place, 253-7400), CP Celtic Jam Wednesdays (7:30-10PM), all ages/levels (davidh@rogers.com), Sunday Sessions with Peter Brown, Roger Plant & Friends (7-10PM)

Community

Polar Bear Plunge, Jan 1, 10AM-12PM. Jump into Tay River to raise funds for Perth and District Food Bank. Info: www.perthfoodbank.com, Food Bank (267-6428), Plunge Chair (cpbrack@cogeco.ca). Free breakfast for plungers. Perth Legion

Free Skating, Jan 2, 7-8PM. Open to the public. Almonte and District Community Centre, 182 Bridge St.

Green Drinks, Jan 5, 5:30-7:30PM. People in the environmental field meet for drinks, monthly. Everyone is welcome, invite a friend. www.greendrinks.org. The Crown Pub, 71 Foster St. Perth, 267-4500

A Morning with Fr. Richard, Jan 9, 11AM-1PM. Fr. Richard Rohr explores some of the practices in his latest book: *The Naked Now: Learning to See as the Mystics See*. Suggested offering: \$5. Info: 623-4242 x28 or jlau@galileecentre.com. Galilee Centre, 398 John Street N. Amprior

Valley Singles Club, Jan 10, 12:30-2:30PM. Singles brunch, all welcome, to register, call Faye at 256-8117. The 17 West Bar and Grill, Highway 17, Cobden

Mayan Code Study Group, Jan 11, 8:30-10:30AM. All welcome. Info at www.lillywhite.ca. White Light Retreat, 237 Christian St. Almonte, 256-0216

Women's Business Group, Jan 12, 7:30-8:30AM. Networking, support & volunteer group. Info at www.wbgroup.ca. Carleton Heritage Inn, 7 Bridge St. Carleton Place

MM Chamber of Commerce Mixer, Jan 20, 6-8:30PM. Snacks, networking. Speaker: Craig Hall, president, Equator Coffee Roasters. Chamber members free, 1 guest free, otherwise \$10. Barley Mow, 79 Little Bridge St. Almonte

Almonte Lecture Series, Jan 22, 7:30PM. "The Pierre Berton We Forgot We Knew" w/ Brian McKillop. Free, donations accepted. Almonte United Church, 106 Elgin St.

Open House & Free Talk, Jan. 23, 1-3PM. "Menopause" with Katherine Willow, ND. Carp Ridge EcoWellness Centre, 2386 Thomas Dolan Pkwy, 839-1198.

Robbie Burns' Celebration, Jan 24, 2-5PM. Scottish-style entertainment, dessert, coffee & soft drinks, and yes — haggis! Info: 259-2671 or 256-5474. Middleville Community Centre, 4203 Wolf Grove Rd.

Breakfast With Soul, Jan 29, 8-9AM. Open discussion facilitated by spiritual coach Lilly White. Open to all. Info: www.lillywhite.ca. \$5 to cover coffee/muffins. Register at 256-0216. White Light Retreat, 237 Christian St. Almonte

To ensure that your event makes it onto

our February calendar,

please email the

information to

calendar@thehummm.com

by January 22nd.

We are also

accepting listings

for the Claiming Column

right through to the end

of 2010.

The Emigrant's Kist

The Story of the Early Scottish Settlers in Upper Canada

A pine chest containing hand tools, cooking utensils, linens, sewing material, a few personal letters, a framed picture, a family bible and very little else — that is the centrepiece of the Arnprior Museum's new exhibit. *The Emigrant's Kist* tells the story of early Scottish settlement in Upper Canada and around the world. This traveling chest, or kist, held the possessions of an entire Scottish family as they journeyed abroad to build a new life in a new world. What the exhibit eloquently expresses, according to Arnprior Museum curator Janet Carlile, is "how inadequate their warning was about what they would be facing and how hardy they

must have been to adapt to a new country with so little." Looking at the tiny hatchet that was intended to clear Canadian forests, it is clear that these early settlers had no idea what was in store for them.

Accompanying storyboards give background information on why these families would have chosen to emigrate — largely due to the forced displacements of the population during the Highland Clearances of the 18th and 19th centuries. They also relate what the passage to Canada would have been like for these early settlers and what hardships they faced as they adapted to a new and unforgiving country. At that time, land in Scotland was being "cleared"

of labourers in favour of sheep, while over in Canada settlers like Daniel McLachlin were

advertising Arnprior's 47 buildings, water power, timber and "deep rich soil" in the hopes of attracting workers to the area. Emigrants dreamed of escaping the feudal system and owning land of their own, but often found the uncleared and unsettled wilderness, coupled with long winters and heavy snow, to be more than they bargained for. Many of the earliest settlers probably wouldn't have survived at all without the help of the native population, who taught them essential skills such as how to boil pine needles to make a tea to prevent scurvy.

The exhibit will be of great interest to anyone in the area with Scottish roots or who is interested in the history of settlement in the Arnprior or Ottawa Valley area. A detailed map of Scotland accompanies the exhibit, and visitors can place a marker to indicate where their family originated. The Arnprior Museum also houses a number of excellent permanent exhibits that expand on the themes presented in the Emigrant's Kist.

The exhibit was put together by the National Museums of Scotland and is currently traveling the world. It will be in Arnprior until September 2010. During the winter months, the museum is open on Tuesdays from 10–5 and by appointment. Admission is



The contents of an emigrant's kist (traveling chest) illustrate how poorly prepared many Scots were for life in Canada.



\$3, \$8 for families, and \$1.50 for students and seniors. Children under 8 are free. To make an appointment, contact the curator, Janet Carlile by phone at 623-4902 or email <jcarlile@arnprior.ca>. The museum will also be open for all of Heritage Week, February 15–19.

— Rob Riendeau

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Winter in Westport — Time to Get the Blues!

If you're looking to warm up to this cold winter, why not cast your eyes (and ears) towards the lovely village of Westport. Every month, Choose The Blues Production <www.choosetheblues.ca> brings "the best in blues with a focus on Canadian talent" in the form of the Blues on the Rideau series of dinner and show fundraisers to The Cove Inn. This year marks their fifth season, and the winter line-up is a great mix of favourites and newcomers alike.

In January, Blues On The Rideau (BOTR) welcomes **David Rotundo** and his fine band back to The Cove for a second visit — a two-night stand on January 15 and 16. He last played the series in January 2008 for two sold out shows, and people are still talking about them. A dynamite harmonica player (winner of the 2007 Maple Blues Award for Harp Player of the Year), excellent singer and high-energy performer, David has developed a passionately loyal audience in Canada, the U.S. and Mexico. His first CD in 2001 won him Best Blues Album of the Year by the Canadian Independent Artists Association, a Maple Blues Award for Best New Artist of the Year in 2002, as well as CBC's Galaxie Rising Star Award. Not a bad start! Since then he has recorded three excellent albums, played in bands with blues greats Jack de Keyzer and Ronnie Hawkins and shared the stage with many blues legends. His band supports him beautifully, having played together for years with David on vocals & harp, Dan Dufour on lead guitar, Des Brown on guitar, Shane Scott on bass & vocals and Chuck Keeping on drums. If you've never seen David Rotundo before, don't miss this show. The intimate atmosphere at The Cove is a perfect venue to see him — up close and personal.

Making his first appearance at BOTR on February 19 (and pos-

sibly the 20th, if tickets sell well) is another one of Canada's best blues harp players and singer/songwriters. Born and raised in Victoria, **Jerome Godboo** started his first band in Ottawa, then moved to Toronto where he has lived for the last twenty years. Anyone who has ever seen him perform knows what a charismatic, powerful, emotive artist he is. With a belt clip full of harmonicas (and a couple of briefcases full of back-ups), gyrating stage movements and soaring vocals, he comes on like a blues



Catch the David Rotundo Band in Westport on January 15 & 16

gunslinger in the style of Mick Jagger and Jim Morrison. You can't help but stand and watch transfixed. Over the past twenty years he has recorded twelve albums (including his most recent — *Humdinger* — which is!), and played and toured with artists as diverse as The Phantoms, Alanah Myles, Dutch Mason, Jeff Healey, Ronnie Hawkins, Jack de Keyzer, Jimmy Bowskill, Suzie McNeil, Prince, Pinetop Perkins, James Cotton, the Tragically Hip, Levon Helm, Billy Ray Cyrus and many more. The Jerome Godboo great band includes Shawn Kellerman (Mel Brown) or Pat Rush

(Jeff Healey Band) alternating on guitar with Alec Fraser on bass (winner of the 2008 Bass Player of the Year) with Al Cross (Big Sugar) on drums. This will be another "must bring dancing shoes" night at The Cove.

On March 19 (and possibly the 20th), the king of slide guitar, the Cape Breton Celt, the mighty **John Campbelljohn** and his trio are coming back up from Nova Scotia for a weekend stand at The Cove — his first gig there since November 2006. He is better known in Germany and Europe than in his own country, but BOTR wants to help change that. Whether playing slide guitar (acoustic or electric), laptop Dobro or pedal steel, John and his power trio lay down some of the best rockin' blues you will hear on either side of the Atlantic. He is also a consummate songwriter. Most of the tunes on his CDs are originals, and even the covers he does have a unique Campbelljohn feel to them. He has been nominated for or won seventeen Maple Blues, East Coast Music, Real Blues Magazine and Harvest Jazz & Blues Awards since 1992. The other two members of the band, Andrew Lambert on bass and Neil Robertson on drums, are seasoned musicians who have played with John for years, and it shows. Don't miss the opportunity to see one of Canada's best bluesmen on one of his rare visits to Upper Canada — especially in the cozy confines of The Cove. Book your tickets now before these shows sell out!

BOTR tickets are only \$55 per person for a delicious Cove buffet (starting at 7PM) and show (8:30PM), including taxes and donation to a local charity. For more information and the full line-up of 2010 shows, visit <www.choosetheblues.ca>, or call 273-3636 or 1-888-COVE-INN. The Cove Inn is even offering a 25% discount on all suites for the month of January — what a great get-away!

Time to stock up!
We will be closed for renovations during February, so come in soon and fill up on freezer orders and lame jokes.

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